

MASTERING THE WORD: SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Welcome to the CMF Training page on **SCRIPTURE MEMORY**. For so many Christians, the prospect of memorizing Scripture seems quite intimidating; yet, it produces unlimited blessing. It nearly goes without saying that to be consistent in Scripture Memory takes discipline and tenacity. Many people start well, but soon peter out.

We want to encourage you to fully internalize God's Word through the blessed discipline of hiding His Word in your heart through Scripture memorization. If taken slowly and methodically, ANYONE can experience success! The key is to set reasonable goals and stick with it. Soon, it will become a habit that will bear untold benefit for your walk with God.

Believer's in the Risen Lord want to know God fully through His Word. We want Him to dwell richly in our hearts and take up residence in every aspect of our lives. Yet, the world seeks to squeeze us into its own mold.

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will. (NIV)

We can fight against the pull of the world by renewing our mind by letting the Word of Christ dwell richly in us.

Col. 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. (NIV)

Our struggle becomes letting God's Word dwell richly in us. I have a theory about how to go about this. If we merely **hear** the Word spoken to us in church or at some other location, we retain about 5-10% of what was shared. If we **read** the Word, we retain a little more, probably up to 10-30%, depending upon your reading comprehension. If we really **study** the Word, we retain much more of it, possibly up to 50-60% of what we studied. Yet, if we **memorize** the Word, we retain 100%! Wow—that's significant!

Are you convinced yet? Let's look at some passages from the Bible that speak to hiding God's Word in your heart through **Scripture Memory**.



BIBLICAL MOTIVATION

What does the Bible say about Scripture Memory?

God commands us to know His Word and to incorporate it into our hearts.

Deut. 6:4-9 "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. [5] Love the Lord your God

with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. [6] These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. [7] Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. [8] Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. [9] Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."

Scripture memory can help us lead obedient and holy lives apart from the world's sinfulness.

Psalm 119:9, 11 "How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. [11] I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

Romans 12:2 "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will."

Scripture memory is extremely beneficial in evangelism as God calls us to master His Word.

Isaiah 55:10, 11 "As the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return to it without watering the earth and making it bud and flourish, so that it yields seed for the sower and bread for the eater, [11] so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it."

Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart."

2 Tim. 2:15 "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth."

1 Peter 3:15 "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,"

God's Word are our lives; they are the gateway to a wonderful walk with Christ as we keep them close to our hearts.

Deut. 32:46-47 "he said to them, "Take to heart all the words I have solemnly declared to you this day, so that you may command your children to obey carefully all the words of this law. [47] They are not just idle words for you--they are your life. By them you will live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to possess."



GETTING LAUNCHED

Now that we have a Biblical basis for memorizing God's Word, let's figure out the basics of *how to do it*.



REMEMBER – The two essentials of a successful Scripture memory program are:

- A. Consistently memorize new verses each week.
- B. Follow a daily program of reviewing the verses you have already memorized. (we'll discuss a review program in the "Continuing Further" section (below).

1 Memorizing a Verse

- A. Write the reference of the verse on one side of a card.

(index card, blank business card.....)

- B. You can give the verse a topic title if you want to memorize by topics— [Click here for topic titles 1-31](#)
- C. Write the verse itself on the other side of the card.

John 3:16
Eternal Life.

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life.

- D. Learn the reference and topic first.
- E. After learning the reference/topic, learn the first phrase of the verse. Once you have learned the reference and first phrase and have repeated them correctly several times, add more phrases one by one.
- F. Always include the reference/topic as part of the verse as you learn and review it. Repeat the reference both before and after the verse.

2 Meditation – Key to fully acquiring the verse and allowing it to *renew* our minds is to meditate on the verse. You do that by dwelling on the verse in your mind and in your heart.

- A. Word by word examination. Look at every word in the verse and ask yourself, "Why did God place that word there?"
- B. Ask questions—who, what, when, where, why, and how about the verse. Barrage the verse with questions.
- C. Look at the context of the verse.
- D. Paraphrase verse in order to fully grasp its meaning.
- E. Pray through the verse as you meditate.



CAUTION – Don't forget to REVIEW the verses you have previously learned. IN FACT, the key to successful Scripture memory is to Review, Review, Review.

3 Personal Daily Review

- A. Establish a review system that works for you.
- B. Review! Review! Review! Diligent daily review is a must. Repetition is the best way to engrave the verses on your memory.

4 Reviewing Memory Verses with Someone Else



CONTINUING FURTHER

- A. One person hold the other person's verse card and read the reference of the card. The other person then repeats the reference/topic and goes on to quote the entire verse, with the reference/topic again at the end. Then go to other verses in the same way.
- B. Make it your goal to repeat each verse word-perfect.

Now that you have the basics down of Scripture Memory, let's go further.

1 The first thing to consider doing is to incorporate Scripture memory into your Bible study.

- A. Every week you do Bible study, pick one or two verses from your Bible study that really capture the essence of what you studied or are the source of inspiration for a good application.
- B. Memorize these verses.

For information on Bible Study, visit the CMF Training web page on "Bible Study." Click here.

2 Consider working through a Scripture memory program. There are many developed, but a good program to start with is The Navigator's "Topical Memory Program." You can find this program at your local Christian book store or at the NavPress web page (<http://www.navpress.com/>).

3 Another suggestion is to begin memorizing Scripture on key topics that will help you live the Victorious Christian life. here are some suggestions:

- A. Controlling your Tongue/Language: Proverbs 10:19; Proverbs 17:27; Proverbs 25:15; Eccles. 5:1-7; Ephes. 4:29; James 3:9-10.
- B. Walking in Purity: Romans 6:13-14; Romans 6:19; Romans 13:12-14; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 1 Cor. 6:12-13; 1 Cor. 6:18; Ephes. 5:1-5; 1 Thes. 4:3-4; 1 Thes. 4:7.
- C. Being a Good Financial Steward: Psalms 50:9-10; Proverbs 3:9-10; Proverbs 11:24-25; Proverbs 22:7; Proverbs 30:7-9; Malachi 3:8,10; 2 Cor. 9:6-7.

Click here for a good list of Scripture memory topics.

4 The **most important** thing you can do to continue on in Scripture memory is to set up a good Review System.

Click here to learn how to set up and work a Scripture Memory Review System.



REMEMBER – We encourage you to avoid these Mental Blocks to successful Scripture Memory:

Block #1: *Expecting Scripture Memory to be some sort of secret formula to spiritual success.* It certainly helps us live the Victorious Christian life and share our faith, but the Christian life involves more than a memory program. We must always remember the importance of Bible study, prayer, and obedience, among other things.

Block #2: *Thinking you should set Goliath-size Scripture Memory goals.* Stay conservative starting out and grow into more ambitious goals. Maybe a verse a week is a good place to start. Steady plodding will bring success.

Block #3: *Failure to include a simple review system.* Why memorize only to forget? Set time aside each day to review.



FURTHER STUDY

For further study, we encourage you to consider memorizing entire books of the Bible or larger portions of Scripture.

Memorizing large sections of Scripture can give us new understanding of God's Word as we immerse ourselves in large contexts instead of the single ideas of isolated verses.

[Click here to learn how to memorize large sections of Scripture.](#)



CAUTION – If Memorizing Scripture Becomes Too Routine:

Don't get discouraged if your Scripture memory work begins to seem too routine. The process of recording Scripture on your mind and heart does have a mechanical aspect. It requires certain methods and a great deal of perseverance. But as long as the process of imprinting God's word on your heart is moving forward, the Scriptures will be continually be available for life-giving work.

There are helpful things you can do, however, if your Scripture memory program begins to seem lifeless. Try spending more time going over your verses in prayer and meditation. Also begin using the verses in your conversations or in letters. New freshness can come through sharing the Scriptures with others. Keep in mind that memorizing and meditation on the Scriptures is a practical way of making them available to the Holy Spirit to use in your life.