

SCRIPTURE EXERCISES

“Exercise thyself unto godliness.” -1 Timothy 4:7

How did your week of memorization go? Was it hard? Did it get easier? Let's explore some memory aids that will make your hard work at scripture memorization more productive and successful.

You can memorize Scripture!

Even if you fell short of your seven-verse goal this week, hopefully you realized that memorization is possible. And you probably realized the truth: if we aren't memorizing Scripture, *it's not because we lack a good memory, it's because we lack discipline!*

The words of Moses to Israel are even more true for Spirit-filled believers in Jesus Christ today:

“For this commandment that I command you today is not too hard for you, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will ascend to heaven for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will go over the sea for us and bring it to us, that we may hear it and do it?’ But the word is very near you. It is in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it.” (Deuteronomy 30:11-14)

Let's look at a few tools and memory aids that will help you grow and maximize your efforts in Scripture memorization.

Have a plan.

Your plan should consist of (1) how much you plan to memorize, (2) what kind of verses you want to memorize, and (3) when you are going to devote time to practice. The more regular you can make your plan, the easier it will be to keep it up.

- *How much:* One verse a week? One verse per day?
- *What kind:* Verses on a topic (faith, love, temptation, etc.) or a passage/chapter/Psalm (7 to 14 verses in a row) or a whole book (1 John, James, Colossians)
- *When:* Find a regular time/daily activity that can be Scripture memory time (shower, exercise time, morning commute, breakfast/lunch/coffee break)

Write out the verses.

It may seem so convenient to memorize verses using your iPhone screen, but don't do it! The

temptation to distraction is too great. Instead, take advantage of the way God has wired our brains, and write the verses out on a note card. It's proven that writing and *re-writing* the verses in a daily journal helps them stick better in your brain!

If you write verses on an index card, break them up into 4-6 word phrases per line. It will make them easier to memorize and recite.

If you laminate the card, it becomes (relatively) indestructible—to sweat, shower water, kitchen spills, and children. Take it with you!

Draw pictures.

If you are artistic—and even if you aren't!—little pictures or symbols added to a verse can help you remember certain phrases and keywords. “For instance, for Psalm 119:11, you might make a crude drawing of a heart with a Bible inside to remind you of treasuring God's Word in the heart.” (45)

Memorize word-perfectly.

There will be a great temptation to think: *Close enough*. Don't be satisfied with *close enough*! Pick a translation and memorize it word-for-word—including the reference! Remember, it boils down to discipline.

You need to have a standard in order to measure your success. If word-for-word recitation isn't the goal, what will be? “Moreover, if you don't have the verse memorized exactly, you lose confidence in using it in conversation and witnessing.” (46)

Find a method of accountability.

“Because of our tendency toward sloth, most of us need more accountability on Scripture memory than on other disciplines.” (46)

Perhaps the greatest determining factor in your Scripture memory success is finding a good partner to do it with. Memorization in a group can work, as long as you aren't going to be able to slip through the cracks, but I would recommend one-on-one accountability.

Review and meditate every day.

“Without adequate review you will eventually lose most of what you memorize...It's not unusual to reach a point where you spend 80 percent of your Scripture memory time in review. Don't begrudge devoting so much time to polishing your swords. Rejoice instead at having so many!” (46)