

Benefits of Scripture Memorization

By Beth Moller

*"I have hidden Your word in my heart that I might not sin against You."
(Psalm 119:11)*

Many people know familiar passages of Scripture by memory such as John 3:16 or Psalm 23. But what are some specific ways that we can benefit from memorizing God's Word? Several different thoughts came to mind when I was thinking about this subject.

First of all, God tells us to meditate on His Word. Joshua 1:8 says, *"Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so you will be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful."* In this passage, Joshua is telling the Israelites that if they think about the things God commands them to do, they will do them, and they won't fall into the temptations of sin. If we memorize verses, often they remind us to act as God would want us to. Most important of all, we are obeying God by meditating on His Word. It is easier to meditate on His Word when we have it with us in our hearts.

Another benefit of memorizing Scripture is that you always have Scripture with you, regardless of where you are. The Bible is very important to us as Christians, and by memorizing different passages of Scripture, we can think about it at any minute of the day. Have you ever looked at a beautiful sunset and instantly thought, *"The Heavens declare the Glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands"* (Psalm 19:1)? When thoughts such as this pop into my head, they make me very appreciative of God's goodness to me, and I am amazed at the beautiful world that He has created for us. Often, verses we have memorized will suddenly be in our mind, reminding us of God and how He cares for us.

By having Scripture in our hearts and minds, we can have great personal growth and encouragement from it. I am often encouraged by verses that I have memorized, and they remind me of different things that God wants me to do. I haven't memorized nearly as much Scripture as I want to, but I love being able to think about the verses that I do know by memory. Sometimes a certain verse will really help me, and I can gain a lot of encouragement from it. For example, Romans 12:1-2 reminds me to act as Jesus would want me to act and to not follow the ways of the world. This isn't to say that I always do the right thing of course, but when I am tempted to sin, these verses are a good reminder to me to press on and live as Jesus would want me to live.

Another benefit of memorization is that it teaches us discernment. We live in a world filled with lies and deception. As Christians, we need to be discerning in what we believe and take part in. A good verse to remember is Acts 17:11, which says, *"Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true."* Since there are so many people in the world who are being deceived by false teaching, it is important that we know what our Bible says and that we know what is false. By memorizing Scripture, it can help us determine whether or not we are being taught the truth.

Another benefit of memorizing Scripture is that it helps us grow by being in the Word and focusing on it. If we memorize Scripture, it also helps keep our minds focused on God. If our thoughts are thoughts of verses and other thoughts that are pleasing to God, we will be obeying God by obeying what Paul and Timothy wrote in Philippians 4:8. *"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is*

admirable-if anything is excellent or praiseworthy-think about such things.” I certainly think that Scripture fulfills all of those things perfectly! So, if we memorize Scripture and think about it, we will be obeying this passage of Scripture.

Another benefit of memorizing Scripture is that it teaches dedication. I learned quickly that I can’t memorize a verse well by just reading it through a few times. It takes practice and determination. If you half-heartedly memorize a verse or memorize it quickly, you often forget it within a few days. Sometimes it doesn’t even take that long. I know this by experience. Only if I am dedicated to learning and studying the verse will I remember it well. However, I know that if I spend time on memorizing something really well, I will remember it for a long time! One year, my dad had us work on memorizing Psalms for a short time after dinner each night. We memorized Psalm 1, Psalm 8, and Psalm 23, and I remember them all really well today because we worked on them until we really knew them and we worked together as a family.

Last, but definitely not least, memorization of Scripture should be our best tool for witnessing to others. If people that you are witnessing to have questions, it is good to answer their questions with Scripture that backs up what you told them. And, by memorizing Scripture, you can be sure to have verses with you even if you don’t have your Bible!

One way to memorize Scripture is with a group. Memorizing with others often spurs you on to memorize more. As kids, we can have several opportunities to memorize Scripture. One way is by being a part of a Bible quizzing team or participating in a program such as the Bible Bee. I participated in the Bible Bee in 2009. My experience was good, and I did memorize quite a few passages of the Bible that were on the list that the organization gave the participants. Of course, it often works very well to memorize verses with your parents or siblings, too! By memorizing with others, you can have an added motivation to help each other learn the passage. And remember, anyone can (and should!) memorize Scripture!

When I am trying to memorize a verse, I often try to work on it after I read my daily devotions. Another thing that I find helpful is to write the verse on paper a few times, while thinking about the verse and what it says. Once I think that I have the verse mostly memorized, I try to recite it to someone, so they can tell me what I still need to work on. Finally, I try to practice the verse often right after memorizing it so I don’t forget it. I find that this method helps me remember verses months after I first memorize them.

I hope this has been an encouragement to you. Memorizing Scripture is something that we can do our entire life! Just like we are always learning something new from the Bible, we can always be memorizing more Scripture that we can meditate on. I have only memorized a very, very small portion of the Bible, but a goal that I have is to memorize the book of Philippians as it is one of my favorite books. I want to always be learning something new from God’s Word so that I might grow in Him. I hope that you will make memorization of God’s Word a personal goal of yours too.

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

(Galatians 6:9)