

**Tina
Houser's**

Hiding

the

Word

in My

Heart

**Fun ways
to memorize
the Scriptures**

PART 1

Why Memorize Scripture?

2 TIMOTHY 3:15-17 (NLT)

You have been taught the holy Scriptures from childhood, and they have given you the wisdom to receive the salvation that comes by trusting in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.

If people are very legalistic in their faith and addicted to a "To-Do" list, then memorizing scripture might be something they do "because they're supposed to." But there are great benefits to memorizing scripture. Most of them you can't begin to understand until you've immersed yourself in the process. There are special moments when you realize its value... like when you're troubled and your mind immediately goes to scripture that is hidden inside you, or when you lack assurance and God's promises assure you. Scripture is only able to do that because you know what they are.

Let's just take a few moments to look at what God's Word says are the benefits of memorizing scripture.

Arms against temptation

(Psalm 119:11, NLT) *I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.*

(Ephesians 6:13 and 17, NLT) *Therefore, put on every piece of God's armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm.... Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.*

Scripture memorization is a weapon. It's one of the weapons that we can pull out to slay Satan. Jesus did exactly that when Satan confronted Him in the wilderness. With each temptation, Jesus referred to Scripture for guidance and His defense. You are not alone to fight against temptation. When you question whether something is right or wrong to continue doing, then Scripture can guide you away from the temptation. But it can't do that if you don't know it!

Helps in processing problems and solutions

(1 Chronicles 29:17, NLT) *I know, my God, that you examine our hearts and rejoice when you find integrity there. You know I have done all this with good motives, and I have watched your people offer their gifts willingly and joyously.*

Scripture instructs us as to what actions God wants us to take. When we know Scripture by heart, then the road of integrity is easier to walk down. When God looks at our hearts, we want Him to find good motives there, and if our decisions and problem solving are based on the scriptures that are within us, then God will find integrity there.

Provides a way to pray

(1 John 5:14, NLT) *And we are confident that he hears us whenever we ask for anything that pleases him.*

The Word of God is full of His promises. When we pray we can claim those promises ...if we know them. I don't know about you, but this is what happens to me. (I think it probably happens to you, too.) I learn something, and I can repeat it, but it hasn't reached a place of really meaning something personal. Then, something happens and I need that information. Calling upon it and putting it into action changes how I value it. It's that way with praying Scripture. I learn it and then one day, it fits exactly what I'm trying to express. I pray it out loud and it means so much more than ever before, because it has touched a personal experience and helped me pray.

When we don't know the words to say when we pray, knowing Scripture gives us a voice. It's a way that the Holy Spirit guides us when we can't express ourselves. Again, that guidance isn't available if you don't have the scriptures in you.

(Romans 8:26, NLT) *And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.*

There are a couple of things to keep in mind when praying scripture that will make it more meaningful.

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Substitute with "I", "my", "mine", and "me" whenever possible in the scripture to make it more personal. The child will understand that God's Word is truly written to them personally.

Throughout the scripture, substitute the person's name who you are praying for. This puts a name and face to what God is saying.

Address God personally. Instead of saying, "The Lord is my shepherd", say, "You are my shepherd, God."

Say the scripture out loud. Doing this defines each word and it doesn't just flit through your brain.

When there is a lack of understanding, pray Proverbs 3:5 (THE MESSAGE), *Trust God from the bottom of your heart, don't try to figure out everything on your own.*

When you need help, pray Hebrews 4:16 (NLT), *Let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.*

When someone has done wrong against you and you're having a difficult time forgiving them, pray Luke 6:37 (NLT), *Do not judge others, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn others, or it will all come back against you. Forgive others, and you will be forgiven.*

Becomes a tool for witnessing

Scriptures like Romans 3:23, ((NLT) *For all have sinned and fall short of God's glorious standard,* are there to aid you when trying to explain God's plan of salvation. You can call on these verses as confirmation of what you're saying and knowing them shows others that you're serious about your belief in God's Word.

Provides a way to meditate

As you memorize Scripture, there's no getting around the fact that you have to say it over and over again. You have to come back and review it. One of the best tools for memorizing is getting to know the scripture, understanding the context, and embracing the importance of specific phrases. Each one of those becomes part of meditating and once the scripture is memorized you have a totally new understanding and relationship with it.

Read through this passage and be amazed at how many different facets there are to meditate upon. Colossians 3:12-13 (NLT), *Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.*

Strengthens personal faith

When I memorize Scripture, I can't help but learn more about the God I serve. I can't help but more fully understand the people of faith that it tells me about. I can't help but be challenged to raise the bar on my spiritual walk. My personal faith is strengthened. I cannot go unchanged.

(Hebrews 6:18, NLT) *So God has given us both his promise and his oath. These two things are unchangeable because it is impossible for God to lie. Therefore, we who have fled to him*



for refuge can have great confidence as we hold to the hope that lies before us.

Offers encouragement

There are verses that encourage me when God knows I need His encouragement. His Word is one of the main ways God makes Himself known to us, and if we don't know it, He can't provide the encouragement we need. There is the encouragement that He will walk with us, that He will be faithful to never leave us, and the ultimate encouragement that there is an eternity to spend with Him.

(Hebrews 3:14, NLT) For if we are faithful to the end, trusting God just as firmly as when we first believed, we will share in all that belongs to Christ.

Allows the Holy Spirit to speak

Memorizing Scripture gives voice to the Spirit. It's more than a warm fuzzy feeling. It's words of instruction...or reprimand...or encouragement...or understanding...or assurance—things that the Holy Spirit wants to communicate with us at a particular time. The Word of God is personal. It's a personal letter to you that the Holy Spirit uses.

(1 Corinthians 2:10, NLT) But it was to us that God revealed these things by his Spirit. For his Spirit searches out everything and shows us God's deep secrets.

Today is always a good day to start!

Key #1

Get It Right

A caution when memorizing Scripture: you can't just "get the idea." When memorizing other subjects, often it's good enough to "get the idea" or "get close." You can't do that with the Word of God when you are hiding it in your mind.

You must learn each verse word-for-word. **Close enough is not good enough!** Get it right. Once you change one word, and say it several times that way, it's difficult to break that habit. It also gets easier to replace another word and another. When you do that, you're altering the Word of God, and I know you don't want to do that. Re-memorizing a scripture is really difficult when you've already committed it to long-term memory.

An excellent idea when you are beginning on the memorization process with a specific passage is to give the scripture card to someone and let that person listen to you. They can point out words you left out, phrases you switched, or new words you've used instead of the right ones. It's wise to highlight those troubling words that you want to stray from. You may not even realize you've been learning it incorrectly, so the highlighting flashes a caution light.

Graphic suggestion: caution light (last line)

Key #2

Link the Scripture to Something You Already Understand

Through motions.

If you determine the motions that kids are going to use to represent words in the scripture, they're using their bodies, which is good, but they're not relating it to something THEY already understand. The motion YOU choose may not mean anything to them. The motion THEY choose may not mean anything to you. But, the key is for each person to use motions that depict the word/phrase by linking it to a thought or memory they already possess.

Through emotions.

As a freshman in college, I posted all of Philippians 4:6-7 in my dorm room. I cut each letter out of felt and glued them on the wall, and it took most of the wall. (I'm sure they were happy with me for leaving all that glue on the wall when I moved to a new dorm.) But, I can't think of that verse without going back to that dorm room. Philippians 4:6-7 is tied to an emotion for me.

