

# Scripture Memorization: Help to Get You Started

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One of the most valuable aids to meditation is Scripture memorization. In fact, when I encounter someone who is battling discouragement or depression, I often ask two questions: “Are you singing to the Lord?” and “Are you memorizing Scripture?” These two exercises are not some magical formula to make all our problems go away, but they do have incredible power to change our perspective and attitude toward the issues we are facing.

“But I can’t memorize,” some will quickly respond. Don Whitney points out that the issue is not so much our ability to memorize as our motivation:

What if I offered you one thousand dollars for every verse you could memorize in the next seven days? Do you think your attitude toward Scripture memory and your ability to memorize would improve? Any financial reward would be minimal when compared to the accumulating value of the treasure of God’s Word deposited within your mind. <sup>1</sup>

The fact is, we can and do memorize all the time. We memorize people’s names, television commercials, directions to places we frequent, credit card numbers, and phone numbers. How? We remember information that is important to us or that we frequently use or repeat. Scripture memorization is no different. It requires motivation and regular, systematic review.

If you have not memorized Scripture before, start with small portions, perhaps one or two verses a week. Select verses that relate to specific concerns or needs in your life. You may want to write out the verses on a card that you can keep with you and review several times a day. Reviewing Scripture before going to sleep at night is one of the best ways to reinforce it in your memory.

Once you have mastered a verse or a paragraph, go on to the next, but review daily the verses you have memorized most recently. You may find it helpful to memorize with a

partner so that you can encourage each other and check up on each other's verses on a regular basis.

Scripture memory and meditation will bring about many benefits in your life, including:

- cleansing and renewing your mind;
- keeping you from sin;
- providing insight and direction in the midst of real-life situations;
- strengthening your spirit;
- combating the attacks of the Enemy on your mind and emotions;
- stimulating spiritual desires;
- diminishing the demands of your flesh;
- protecting you from wrong thinking patterns; and
- fixing your mind and affections on “thing above” (Colossians 3:2).

*Evidence Not Seen* is the moving story of Darlene Deibler Rose, a young American missionary who spent four years in a Japanese prison camp during World War II. She recalls the way God used Scriptures she had memorized as a child to sustain her through her terrifying ordeal:

As a child and young person, I had had a driving compulsion to memorize the written Word. In the cell I was grateful now for those days in Vacation Bible School, when I had memorized many single verses, complete chapters, and Psalms, as well as whole books of the Bible. In the years that followed, I reviewed the Scriptures often. The Lord fed me with the Living Bread that had been stored against the day when fresh supply was cut off by the loss of my Bible. He brought daily comfort and encouragement—yes, and joy—to my heart through the knowledge of the Word. . . . I had never needed the Scriptures more than in these months on death row, but since so much of His Word was there in my heart, it was not the punishment the Kempeitai had anticipated when they took my Bible.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* (Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1991), 38.

<sup>2</sup> Darlene Deibler Rose, *Evidence Not Seen* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988), 143.

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