

Chapter09

Memorizing Scripture Takes Perseverance!

Memorizing Scripture begins with discipline. It's not hard, but it's every day!

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37)

Three Stages Of Scripture Learning:

As you get into the habit of memorizing Scripture, here's what will happen:

Stage #1 -- Discipline

At first it takes a determined effort to do these things. Call it a step of faith. You have to believe – though you can't see the result yet. Here's where most people quit. Don't be one of them.

Instead, reorder your priorities. Put God first! Start with just a few minutes each day. Do that for a week, then increase it little by little. As you continue diligently, you'll soon arrive at the next stage:

Stage #2-- Desire

At this point, you'll find that you are eagerly anticipating the time you spend in the Word each day. It becomes something you get to do, not a duty you feel you have to do. Press on for another 3 or 4 weeks to the final stage:

Stage #3 -- Delight

From this point on, your appetite for the Word of God will be insatiable. You'll know when you're there. It'll be like drinking salt water. The more you drink the thirstier you become. You cannot get enough. You will never look back; it will be difficult to comprehend how you ever lived without the Word of God at the center of your life.

Example of what not to do: Don't be like my late friend John.

He bought a membership at a health club because he needed exercise. He paid the money, then walked out the door saying to himself, "Problem: solved!"

But he never went back to work out! Don't let your Scripture memory be like that. Instead, make a decision to spend time in the Bible every day. And then do it every day, seven days a week, even if you have to start with just ten minutes a day.

Again from the Gospel of Matthew:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" (Matthew 22:37)

I ask you: how can a person say they love the Lord with all their heart — but they won't spend any time putting His Words into their mind and into their heart? How can a person love the God they do not know?

Answer: they cannot!

Suppose you purchased a gym membership like the man I described previously. But instead of wasting the money as he did, you actually went to the gym regularly and did your workouts.

After your first few workouts, would you say to yourself, "I don't see any difference. This isn't working!" Would you say that? Of course not!

You wouldn't expect to be able to see big changes right away. But you know that if you did those exercises regularly, by the same time next year you would see and feel an amazing difference.

In doing weight-bearing exercises, you wouldn't start with the heaviest weights either. You'd start with weights you could lift--with some difficulty--and work out with those. When it got easy to lift those weights, you'd go to heavier weights.

Scripture memory works very much like that. However, the benefits of putting God's Word into your mind and into your heart are eternal, not just for a few short years.

Don't Be Like This, Either!

I was giving a Bible presentation to a church men's group. (This was in a church that emphasizes rites and rituals over the Word of God.) I was attempting to show them from Scripture itself how important it is to God that we should all learn to handle His Word.

Now this was a small informal group. But right in the middle of my talk, one of the men actually blurted out, "Oh!! This Bible reading is just one more thing that the church is trying to pile onto a plate that is already full!"

First of all: if their "plate is already full", they need to seriously review their priorities. God ought to be first in our lives, not last, or in their case, missing entirely!

But how tragic, that they saw no real value in knowing God's Word. But then again, why would they? The church they are in teaches against the application of Scripture as I'm doing here.

According to them, Scripture is not to be taken literally. In fact, before the mid-1940's that church declared that it was a mortal sin--you would burn in hell--if you even had a Bible in your home! If I were the devil, that is **exactly** how I would manipulate the thinking of the people.

Anyway, the attitude of those men was an example of unbelief!

But not just unbelief; it was deliberate, hardened unbelief! And it turned out that most of them--perhaps all of them--agreed! Apparently, they just wanted their coffee and doughnuts and to hear something that would make them feel... comfortable. They didn't want education; they

wanted corroboration. They didn't want to hear that they were supposed to actually be doing something.

One pastor whose sermons I listen to regularly has referred to this as "an easy-chair faith in an easy-chair church."

That is so dangerous!

Paul tells us how God responded to the Jews that refused to accept His Word and His Son:

"What then? Israel failed to obtain what it was seeking. The elect obtained it, but the rest were hardened, as it is written, "God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that would not see and ears that would not hear, down to this very day."" (Romans: 11:7-8)

As I've said before, Satan gets permission from God to afflict us based upon our actions or inactions. God is saying in effect, "Since you want to be indifferent to My ways, I will allow a spirit of stupor to help you to have what you want". Paul describes it as having God's Word "veiled" before their eyes. And so, their capacity to understand and benefit from the Bible diminishes--eventually to nothing!

"And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." (2 Corinthians 4:3-4)

Here is Satan at work again, having obtained permission to — as I like to say it — "anesthetize" those who just don't seem to get it — and by continuing in this mode they are declaring that they don't want to get it!

It's so important to understand what's going on here.

The following passage is from Hebrews, Chapter 8:

"For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion to look for a second. For he finds fault with them when he says: "Behold, the days are coming, declares the

Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord."

The New Covenant

"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And they shall not teach, each one his neighbor and each one his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." (Hebrews 8:7~12)

Notice where he says: "For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord."

Isn't God putting us on notice? If we don't continue in His new covenant, He will show no concern for us either!

I don't know about you, but I don't want to be on the wrong side of that divide!

Then the writer goes on to describe the new covenant: "I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, ... they shall all know me..."

As I mentioned previously, I used to be in an "easy-chair faith in an easy-chair church." It asked nothing of me. There was no discipleship; no sharing of helpful Biblical principles. Just a secular lifestyle with--in the words of another pastor--a 'religious glaze' painted over it!"

Don't be like that. Invite God into your mind and into your heart.

Get into God's Word...

So that God can get His Word into you.

“Truly, truly, I say to you If anyone keeps my Word he will never see death”
(John 8:51)

You can't give what you don't have!

If you aren't becoming strong in the Word, you will never be able to use it to help someone else.