

Benefits of Scriptural Memorization

An Introduction to Christian Meditation and Memorization

In my last post, we began to explore the concept of Scriptural Memorization. We learned that we are not only commanded to memorize scripture, but it is necessary if we are to fully put on the armor of God. In this post we will explore the benefits of Scriptural Memorization and some key steps to begin to memorize selected passages.

Yeshua clearly stated that our spiritual existence depends on the Word of God: ***"Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of Adonai"*** ~ Matthew 4:4. He also said that if we are to grow in our faith and become more like Him we are to be set ***"apart for holiness by means of the truth — your Word is truth"*** ~ John 17:17.

The Word of God must enter us through our mind – through our understanding – in order to change our hearts. That is exactly what Rabbi Sha'ul was referring to when he penned, ***"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect"*** ~ Romans 12:2 (ESV).

Once we memorize a verse or passage of scripture, a lifetime of reflection is now available through ongoing review...while taking a walk, driving on long trips, conversing with friends, contemplating a decision that needs to be made, etc. As the Psalmist asks and answers, ***"How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word ... I treasure your Word in my heart, so that I won't sin against you"*** ~ Psalm 119:9, 11.

Memorization of Scripture enables us to bless non-Believers with a powerful and vivid presentation of the Besorah. As Kefa writes, always be ***"ready to give a reasoned answer to anyone who asks you to explain the hope you have in you - yet with humility and fear"*** 1 Kefa 3:15. After all, ***"faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ"*** ~ Romans 10:17 (ESV).

By memorizing Scripture, we can find comfort during trials and bereavement, power and wisdom for counseling, manifestation of the fruit of the Ruach, conviction over indwelling sin, and fruitful passage of time when stuck in traffic jams. So, how do we get started?

Key Steps to Start Memorizing Scripture

Hopefully, you have already set aside some time each day to read God's Word. As you read, allow the Lord to speak to you about a verse or passage that catches your attention. In addition, there are almost unlimited resources online and apps that you can use to systematically memorize key verses from His Word. Personally, in addition to the Lord speaking to me during my morning devotions, I have used an app called "Remember Me" on my smartphone; YouVersion reading plans on my Kindle; and several books available from WORDsearch on my laptop.

When I've picked out a verse or passage to memorize, I usually will write it on a 3x5 index card, starting and ending with the address (biblical citation). I keep these in my journal so I have them readily available to recite during my quiet time. I can also store them in "Remember Me" so that they are always with me on my phone. Of late, I have actually begun to type them into a Word

document formatted for 4x6 photo paper and print them out. This format seems more durable than the traditional index cards.

Obviously, the key to memorization is repetition, repetition, repetition and then some more. Once you have it down, share it with your family, friends and strangers, as appropriate. As you progress in your journey, you will need to periodically go back and review what you have already memorized to ensure that it's still in the forefront of your memory. You know the old adage, *"if you don't use it, you'll lose it."*

I'll get into some more details of helpful tips in a later post, but now want to turn to the 'why?'

Application

Rick Warren has stated, *"the ultimate goal of all Bible study [and memorization] is application, not interpretation."*¹ You can't really get to know the Word of God unless you can apply it to your life. He sets forth four steps to practical application as you study God's Word.

- 1. Pray for insight on how to apply the passage.** God wants us to obey His word and share it with others.
- 2. Meditate on the passage you have chosen to study and memorize.** As I've indicated previously, meditation is the key to discovering how to apply Scripture to your life. Meditation is essentially thought digestion. One of my favorite methods is what Pastor Warren calls the "Pronounce It" method. As you practice your chosen verse, emphasize a different word each time you read it out loud. It's amazing the new insights that you can obtain by this method. Try it on this verse:

"I can do all things through Him who gives me power" ~ Philippians 4:13.
- 3. Write out an application that you can do.** Like any goal, make it personal, practical, possible and provable. For example, I need to lose 10 pounds before I have knee replacement surgery after the first of the year.
- 4. Memorize a key verse within the passage.** See Philippians 4:13 above. I really love the whole book of Philippians because it is so positive.

In my next post, we will dig a little deeper into some additional techniques for memorizing verses and even whole books of God's Word.

¹ "Bible Study Methods: Twelve Ways You Can Unlock God's Word" by Rick Warren, Zondervan, page 33. This is a great resource for learning how to utilize in various methods for studying God's Word.