

Mr. Danish's Ten Step Bible Memory Method for Life

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The problem many people have with Bible memorization is they don't have a plan. Some people try what I call the "*Open a Trap Door on the Back of the Head and Stuff it in Approach.*" I know students do this sometimes when "cramming" just before saying their quarterly verses. For short-term results, this sometimes works, but I don't find it very satisfying in the long run. I want to take time to treasure God's Word in my heart so I can keep it for life. I don't want to just stuff it in there like a crumpled up wad of paper.

A good Bible memory plan should not only help us memorize, but should lead us beyond rote memory to deeper practical meaning. God tells us to "treasure" His Word in our heart like pieces of fine gold that no one can ever take away from us. Some of the reasons He says this are so that we can: **1.** be equipped for life (2 Timothy 3:16-17), **2.** understand the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Hebrews 4:12), **3.** avoid sin (Psalm 119:11), **4.** become successful and prosperous in God's kingdom (Joshua 1:8), and **5.** enjoy life that is deeply rooted and always fruitful (Psalm 1:2-3).

The first five steps below give you an effective way to memorize a verse of scripture in about 15 minutes. The last five steps show you how to go beyond memorization to deeper meaning and own the verse for a lifetime. I'm sure there are other steps that can help, but these are the ones that work for me, and that I have used for years. The goal of scripture memorization is not just to be fast and efficient, but to also be systematic and methodical. It is not just so you can recite the passage, but so you can learn to live with it and grow with it for years to come.

CAPTURING A VERSE BY MEMORY

Steps One to Five (All five steps take about 15 minutes)

Step One: Read the Entire Passage Out Loud 10 Times.

Find a place where you can concentrate (no TV, radio, stereo or iPod). Look up the passage in the Bible version you want to memorize. Have the printed passage in front of you with the reference. Saying the reference first, in a slow, normal voice, read the passage out loud ten times. Read slowly enough to see it, say it, hear it and think it. This will get the sound of the verse in your ear and on your tongue. And it will help you begin to see the passage in your mind. Believe it or not, every time you read a passage in this way, your brain is automatically starting to memorize it. If you do this step well, you will avoid other mistakes later in the process.

Step Two: Say the Reference 3 Times.

Next, read the reference once more while looking at it. Then close your eyes and try to say it three times slowly. If you have trouble, look at the reference again, read it out loud, and then try saying it again three times with your eyes closed.

Step Three: Say the Reference and First Phrase 3 Times.

Now read the reference and the first shortest phrase of the passage. Remember to read it slowly enough to see it, say it, hear it and think it. Then close your eyes and try saying the reference and the first phrase three times.

Step Four: Add Each Phrase and Say it 3 Times.

Continue adding one phrase at a time until you complete the passage. Remember to look at the printed passage each time you add a phrase, reading everything slowly from the

beginning. Then say everything from the reference to the new phrase three times. If you have trouble at any point, back up and repeat the previous step, and then try adding the new phrase again.

Step Five: Say the Entire Passage Perfectly 3 Times.

Read the entire passage one more time saying the reference first. Then try to say all of it perfectly three times. Again, if you have trouble at any point, back up and repeat the previous step, and then try adding the final phrase again until you can say everything.

KEEPING WHAT YOU'VE MEMORIZED

Steps Six to Eight (Each step takes about 30 minutes.)

Step Six: Write Out the Passage by Hand and Give it a Title.

Look at the printed passage again. Notice sentences, phrases, capital letters, and punctuation. Then try to write out the entire passage by hand. Compare your written copy to the printed one and correct any mistakes. Try it again until you can write the entire passage perfectly by memory. Then give it a title that will help you remember what the verse is about, for example, "Praising God" or "Confessing Sin."

Step Seven: Type the Passage on a Computer and Save It.

With the printed passage in front of you, type it on a computer exactly the way you see it in print. Or download it from an electronic Bible. Be sure to type the reference first on the top line. Check it carefully with the printed original and make it look the way you want to remember it, exactly like the printed original. Add your title in bold letters above the reference line. Now save it to a folder called "My Favorite Bible Verses." Print it out and put it in your pocket.

Step Eight: Compare the Passage in Three Different Translations.

Read the passage in three different translations such as the King James Version, the New American Standard Bible, The New International Version, the Amplified Bible, the New Century Version, or the New Living Translation. Compare the different ways each translation presents the passage. Then try writing out the passage in your own words.

TREASURING IT IN YOUR HEART

Steps Nine and Ten (These steps never end, but continue for a lifetime.)

Step Nine: Pray the Passage as a Conversation with God.

Turn the passage into a conversation with God by asking four questions. How does this passage lead me to: 1. Praise God for who He is, 2. Confess my shortcomings and failures, 3. Thank God for what He has done, and 4. Ask God for His help? As God speaks to you through His Word, respond to Him in prayer.

Step Ten: Live the Passage and Teach It to Someone Else.

Live with the passage for a while. Keep a printed copy in your pocket and review it regularly for at least a month. Let it continue to be a source for more conversations with God. Share what you have learned with someone else.

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