



How Will Scripture Memory Help Me Become A Better Fisher?

by Kurt von Schleicher

Good question! It really won't help you in fishing for souls if you are unregenerate and don't apply the Scriptures, if you are not filled and controlled with the Spirit or get all puffed up by what you know, if you never pray or you never share the Scriptures wisely with people who know you care about them. You remember the Pharisees of old? They wouldn't repent or be born again, but they liked to memorize Scriptures and they were even proud about it. They were mean-spirited, cruel, hypocrites who didn't have any intention of putting these precious words from God into practice. They did their religious drills for show and for the applause of men. Jesus told us not to do that. Unfortunately, there are lots of religious leaders and Christians today with the same attitude and motivation. It's so important for Christians to memorize with the right attitude. You know that letting a phone number slip from your mind is trivial, but keeping a mental grip on God's Word with the right motive — to glorify God — is of the utmost importance! Dawson Trotman, the founder of The Navigators ministry was a great fisherman and he had the right motivation. And he gave us three principles for Scripture memory: Review! Review! Review! He urged memorizing the reference with the text and believed that anyone who learned a verse and then reviewed it daily for seven weeks would never forget it. Like he did, maybe you desire to live for the applause of One, instead of seeking it from the crowd. Well, if you make the choice to apply the Scriptures that you memorize, as you walk in humility and in love, here are some equipping benefits that will come from filling your mind with the Word of God! "Your Word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You." —Psalm 119:11

- ***KNOWING SOUND DOCTRINE***

When you memorize Scripture, this will without a doubt, enlarge your awareness and knowledge of biblical doctrines, and of God's strong feelings of compassion for the unbelievers around you. And that in turn, should affect your behavior in how you relate to them with kindness and respect. Proper Scripture memorization will provide you with a practical foundation for the way God expects you to live and witness!

- ***NO TIME WASTED IN FRONT OF THE TV SET***

When you memorize Scripture, it will help you make great use of what might otherwise become wasted time while watching some banal TV show, a weak movie or fruitless computer game. The Bible teaches us to redeem the time, to be edified by pouring over God's Word day and night (see Psalm 1, 1 Corinthians 10:23,). The Bible says, "Make the most of every opportunity for doing good in these evil days " (Ephesians 5:16 NLT). You can even make good use of your time memorizing while you wait in a long line at the grocery store, at the gas station or while driving to work. Write the verses out clearly on a three by five card that you can carry if you must. There are so many audio Bible recourses on CD or in MP3 today, that can help you memorize without any dangerous distraction while you are on the road. We might find that occupying our time by putting our minds on the truth of God's Word, it will keep us from becoming impatient, anxious or angry while on the road. If only everyone did this in Christ, all road rage would evaporate.

- **WISE GUIDANCE**

When you memorize Scripture, you can expect God to instruct you in the right way you should go. God's Word is His love letter to the born again Christian. He will speak to us through His Word ...especially through the Scripture verses we know by heart. "Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors" (Psalm 119:24).

- **BIBLICAL PRAYING**

When you memorize Scripture Jesus promised this: "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you" (John 15:7). Our prayer life is enhanced hugely as we pray Scripture back to God. Christian, do you want to get God's attention. Pray His word instead of self-centered prayers. Pray Bible-prayers with the nations in mind, with fishing for lost people in mind, with pleasing the Lord in mind.

- **BIBLE STUDY**

When you memorize Scripture, this old but good discipline will aid you in your Bible study time. The Holy Spirit will give you fresh illumination, rather than new revelation in this. We need so badly to get back to the old paths and Bible memorization is what points us towards them. The Lord said to Jeremiah, "Thus says the Lord: 'Stand in the ways and see, and ask for the old paths, where the good way is, and walk in it; then you will find rest for your souls.'" (Jeremiah 6:16). My watchword is this: If it's new it isn't true, if it's true it isn't new. Many Christians will rehearse Scripture verses trying to find new revelations, new Christian trends and gimmicks that will sell their Christian products, but Jesus isn't for that kind of thing. Christ and the martyrs died to give us the old Revelation of God – the Bible and we don't need any impressions that go against what it says in God's book. When you memorize verses in the old Revelation, God will give you more light. You will know more cross-references, and you can more easily tie various parts of Scripture together to increase your own understanding and insight. When you verbally witness, God will bring back to you and flood your very mind with so many great, exciting truths dealing with maybe ...the same subject, that you won't even be able speak fast enough to get all those verses out. But don't worry about it or or strive. Just enjoy speaking in a natural way and God will speak through you the truths that He wants you to impart. Some of those verses He retrieves back to your

memory, might just turn out to be for you alone, because He loves you so much ...or maybe they are for another person or time later that same day.

- ***FINDING PASSAGES***

When you memorize Scripture by audibly rehearsing key verses, you can locate specific passages on a particular teaching. God will be like the Librarian and your mind will function kind of like a concordance. Reviewing Matthew 5:6, out loud for example—"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled."—will help you remember that Christ's satisfaction comes to those who place God's concerns above their own physical desires and that this is found in Matthew 5. Pray: "Oh dear Holy Spirit, please quicken my mind, heart and spiritual ears so that I will yield to You as you quickly give to me the verses that will be most helpful to those that I come in contact with today. Remind me to give them an opportunity to join me in a prayer at the right moment and place."

- ***MEDITATION ON WHAT'S WORTHY***

When you memorize Scripture this will allow you to meditate on what's worthy to be meditated upon—to ruminate on truths that transform and plant them deep within your spirit-man. People of our generation love to meditate on any and everything but the truth. Today, you could meditate on an apple that's sitting on your desk, Mr. teacher in a school, and the world will clap and call you a hero. But you wouldn't be one. God measures heroes differently. You'll always have something scriptural to think about that's just right, as long as you meditate on what God wants you to meditate on – even when it is not possible to open up a Bible. The concepts of truth, the verses above all other verses will be delivered to the forefront of your focus. "Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long" (Psalm 119:97).

- ***EXPERIENCING THE HOLY SPIRIT***

When you memorize Scripture, the Holy Spirit will use those verses to empower you for fishing ministry, to strengthen you for edifying ministry, to help you with personal ministry so that you will experience abundant life – life during life – in Christ's wonderful, loving presence. Paul expressed this when he said, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Corinthians 13:14). The Bible says, "This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent" (John 17:3). It says, "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son" (1 John 5:11).

- ***PROPER WORSHIP***

When you memorize Scripture, you are better prepared to praise and worship God in Spirit and in truth. Worshipping Him is to be your first-priority and only vertical ministry. This is your first calling in Christ, so you want to go about it in the best possible way. In our personal, joyful worship of God at any moment during the day, we can praise God with Scripture. "Seven times a day I praise you for your righteous laws" (Psalm 119:164). God loves that! The Holy Spirit went fishing and

caught you for God. We have every reason to be at our best in worship to the Lord. And true worshippers make for the most effective fishers.

▪ ***INLARGING OUR FAITH***

When you memorize Scripture, it increases your vertical trust—your faith in God. I'm not talking about increasing faith in faith. But you will begin to look at life with God's perspective—more and more ...from God's point of view. Paul penned, "Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind" (Philippians 3:15) and "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5). He said: "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5). The memorized word of God helps you grasp God's mind, His same attitude ...yes, like that of Christ Jesus as you walk through life close with Him. It builds your faith in such a way that God's friendship, love, truth and guidance appear more acceptable. Those things are always totally acceptable, but we perceive them better when we memorize and see through the eyes of the Spirit as He wants us to. Bob Foster calls Scripture memory "the daily habit of supplying the subconscious with God's material to chew upon." It gives God more to work with in you. Bob wrote this: "When you memorize Scripture there is a vast difference between 'I have a verse' and 'It has me.'" We want God's Word to take more and more of us each day. We want God's Word to have all of us! If He is not Lord of all, He's not Lord at all. Independent of the Spirit, memorizing can be boring as the parrot-like repetition of reciting telephone book words ...or it can be the very transforming by the renewing of your mind when you focus on Scripture, remaining dependant upon the Word!

▪ ***TEACHING***

When you memorize Scripture and apply the principles of Scripture in your life, year after year, God will make you able to teach Scripture to others. Anyone who teaches God's word publicly should be able to quote Scripture to make his points or to answer questions from his listeners. Too many Bible teachers teach philosophy, humanism, political views, science, opinions, or what other Bible teachers teach—anything but the Bible. But when you memorize Scripture and put it into practice, God's Word will be the treasure of your heart. And what's most on the heart will be most on the lips. Too many people want a Word-light church minus all the counsels of God, but you should never apologize for copiously teaching what the Bible says. If you are a Bible teacher and do not teach the Scriptures, you should do us all a favor and get out of the ministry.

▪ ***COUNSELING***

When you memorize Scripture, you will be better prepared to counseling others. The wonderful Counselor will work through you to help people in a practical way, in a spiritual way, and in a way that might get them hooked on Jesus Christ. God can counsel though you with Scriptures that address the real need of those visiting you! You will be able to say what Isaiah said: "The Sovereign Lord has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary" (Isaiah 50:4). The Holy Spirit will bring to your mind the Scriptures that perfectly suit the particular crisis or tragedy of the one you are talking with.

▪ ***INNER CLEANSING***

When you memorize Scripture it will have a super cleansing effect inside of you. When you walk in a dirty world, you might get dirty and that's why you regularly need a washing in the water of the Word. Yes, to get rid of unclean thoughts in your head or in your family, which can lead to unclean conversation and filthy actions, you can substitute clean thoughts by concentrating on the Scriptures of God that you (individually or collectively as a family) have memorized or are currently memorizing (see Eph 5:26). Overcome evil with good! Instead of suppressing dirty thoughts, reject them at the outset and replace them with thoughts of the Prince of Peace and His thoughts of peace. The prophet said, "You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You" (Isaiah 26:3).

- ***VICTORY OVER SIN***

When you memorize Scripture and put feet to your faith, you will conquer in God's Name. Sin, Satan, the world system and your old fleshly nature will not have dominion over you. You will live above the circumstances of life, even though trials and persecution might come. Prayerful Scripture memory with a heart to go for it ...will aid you in gaining the victory over sin: The psalmist wrote about this: "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:11).

- ***FISHING FOR SOULS***

When you take the time to prayerfully memorize Scripture, you will be equipped and enabled to witness, to set the hook and to reel people in effectively. By knowing verses that present the basic plan of salvation (possibly coupling this with your personal testimony, however the Spirit leads you in this) you will be built-up and ready for personal evangelism at any time. It's like how the apostle Pete who quoted the Old Testament words of Joel and David in response to the people's question, as he spoke to the crowd that were assembled together on the day of Pentecost (see Acts 2). We too can give the people Bible answers when they ask us about our hope, our joy, our belief system, our personal walk with Jesus Christ. We may not always have a Bible or the internet with us in some spur-of-the-moment witnessing situation, but we are never without evangelistic Scripture portions that we have committed to memory. If you've put it in, God can help get it out ...out where the people are hungry and taking the good bait.

***Deposit God's Word in your memory bank and
you can then draw interest for life!***