

# How to Hide God's Word in Your Heart

We've watched so many movies that we can recite every line. We know every word to our favorite songs. Some of us can rattle off the stats of every team in the NFL. But are we crowding our heads and hearts with information that has no real eternal value?

Dr. Billy Graham once said, "The Bible is the only thing that can combat the devil. Quote the Scriptures and the devil will run." Yet Scripture memory is where we drop the ball. Instead of tackling the enemy, we face life unprepared, like a football player going on the field without pads. Sooner or later we get hit with struggles and decisions. If we're left without the defense of Scripture, we're not ready.

Life is a battle. Through the principles and truths of His personal word to us, God has given us "everything we need for life and godliness" (2 Pet. 1:3) in order to "fight the good fight of the faith" (1 Tim. 6:12). As we consider the importance of Scripture in our lives, think about how different your life would be if you could experience the following:

- A prayer life that is strong and meaningful
- An outlook on life that is hopeful
- Confidence to share your faith with your friends
- Wisdom to make good decisions
- Encouragement even when circumstances are hard
- Defense against temptation and sin
- A deeper, intimate relationship with God

These benefits are available to anyone who desires to dig deeper into God's Word. Below are some ways you can make these a reality in your life.

## Scripture Memory

Psalms 119:11 states, "I have hidden your word in my heart ..." The word "hidden" means to treasure. We should handle the Scriptures like a priceless gift and make every effort to keep them close to our hearts.

The second part of the verse says, "... that I might not sin against you." Obedience to God will be a natural outcome in a heart that treasures His Word. Here are 10 practical tips to successful Scripture memory:

1. Set realistic goals. Learning one verse every week is more obtainable than trying to memorize the whole Old Testament.
2. Find a quiet time and place where you won't be hindered by outside distractions.
3. Say the verse out loud. Hearing the words will help cement them in your mind.
4. Break the verse down into natural phrases. Add them one by one as you learn them.
5. Learn the reference along with the verse. It's important to know where to find it in your Bible.
6. Write the verse on a card and put it in a place where you'll see it regularly, like on a bathroom mirror or next to your bed. Keep your cards to review all the verses you learn.
7. It's better to learn a small amount perfectly than a large amount poorly.
8. Find an accountability partner who will strengthen your commitment and celebrate your progress.
9. Always relate the verses to what's going on in your life.
10. The only failure in Scripture memory is quitting.

## **Meditating on Scripture**

If meditating on God's Word brings to mind chanting and burning incense, then you're headed in the wrong direction. Instead, picture a good meal; the word "meditate" literally means to digest.

Be still and ponder how the Scripture speaks to you. Let God's words sink in. Spend time talking with Him as you "chew on" the truth of His Word. Ask Him with a teachable heart, "How can You use this to change me? In what way do I need to obey You?"

Talk about the Scripture in conversations. Look for opportunities to tell others how God is working in you.

## **Keeping a Journal**

Keep a small, spiral notebook with your Bible and use it as your spiritual journal. During your quiet time, write down your thoughts as you consider how the devotional reading and truths from Scripture relate to your experiences. Include quotes from your devotion book, song lyrics, poems, or other writings that encourage you. Keep a list of people for whom you want to pray. Write your sermon notes in your journal too.

Don't be afraid to write in your Bible. If a verse speaks to you, write down the date and a brief note next to it in the margin. You'll be encouraged when you look back through your Bible and see all the times God has spoken to you.

The disciplines of memorizing and mediating on Scripture, along with keeping a journal, take time, effort, and commitment; but you don't have to see it as spiritual busywork or some boring obligation. You're making an investment in eternity. Fill your heart and mind with the things of God. The payoff will revolutionize every area of your life.

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