

## Should We Really Memorize Bible Verses?

The Bible is clear: We should memorize God's Word.

Over and over we read passages like, "And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart..."(Ex. 6:6, NAS), and, "Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you..."(Col. 3:15). Furthermore, in the book of proverbs we are told again and again about the importance of writing the "father's" teachings in our hearts (Prov. 2:1; Prov. 3:1-4; Prov. 7:1-3, Prov. 6:20-23).

But why is it so important for us to not only read and meditate in the Word of God but also to memorize biblical texts? Let us see what the Bible has to say about this subject:

First of all, we must memorize God's Word because it will help us not to sin. The Psalmist wrote: "How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word... I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119: 9,11 NIV). He understood the role of the Scriptures in the process of sanctification, as did Jesus, who prayed to the Father, regarding His disciples, saying: "Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth." (John 17:17)

When we write God's Word in us it helps us to live holy lives before Him, it molds our hearts to obedience; it cleanses us from evil desires and also rebukes us when we allow sinful thoughts into our minds. Jesus said: "from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly" (Mark 7:21-22, NIV). So when we plant His Word in our hearts, we have half the battle won!

We should also memorize Scripture because it is a most powerful weapon when facing temptation. In Matthew chapter 4, Jesus answered all of the devil's temptations by quoting from the Old Testament. He understood the authority of the Inspired Word and with it He crushed Satan's attacks! In the same way, when we are tempted, if we have hidden God's Word in our hearts, we will be more likely to successfully confront all diabolic and worldly lies and emerge victorious in the end. On the other hand, if we don't know the Bible well, our chances of overcoming temptation will not be so good.

Finally, the writer of Proverbs said to his son: "My son, observe the commandment of your father, and do not forsake the teaching of your mother; Bind them continually on your heart; Tie them around your neck. When you walk about, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk to you. For the commandment is a lamp, and the teaching is light..." (Prov. 6:20-23 NAS)

So through those Bible verses we memorize our heavenly Father will guide us everyday (v-22) because His commandments, His promises and His teachings will talk to us in the different situations we find ourselves (v-22). Those texts will be a lamp when everything seems dark (v-23); they will convert, revive and restore our souls (Psalm 19:7); they will make us wise (Psalm 19:7); they will give us joy (Psalm 19:8), they will enlighten our eyes (Psalm 19:8), and they will give us the "wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim 3:15 NAS). Not bad at all!

So let us memorize those passages that speak to our lives, those commandments and promises we want to always keep with us, and as many portions of the Bible as we can, for they will forever change our lives, one verse at a time. Amen!

In the love of Christ,

Miguel A. Canete