



METHODS

for Learning and Remembering Scriptures

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. —2 Timothy 2:15

GOD'S EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

God has shared with us the most valuable educational textbook in the world. It prepares students for an eternal future. He Himself is the founder and has personally inspired every word. So as a parent, you will never have to worry about its content or validity. After all, it is the truth!

God expects us to do our daily homework by reading, studying and praying. Our textbook is the Bible—the very Word of God, the truth, the sword of the Spirit. It is designed to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path ([Psalm 119:105](#)). There are history lessons, poetry and songs to read. There are mysteries, biographies, futuristic studies and social studies. We are told to ask Him directly when there are things we don't understand, and He will answer us ([Matthew 7:7](#)).

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God uses the very best teaching method for long-term memory: teach, review and repeat, review and repeat, review and repeat. For example, along with our daily studies, every week on the seventh day He calls us together—to teach us. And He never misses a class! By applying this method of repetition, we learn who God is and what unfailing love He has for us. We learn why we are here and what His plan is for all humanity. Teach, review and repeat can be very effective!

Listed next are a variety of methods you can begin using as you introduce, practice and review the scriptures your children have recorded in their memory books. These methods can be used with almost any verse. Search for the ones that work best for your children.

Method #1: Ask for God's Help

Pray daily with your child, asking God to give each of you a zeal for His Word. Ask God to help you remember the verses you study and to embed them deep into your hearts.



Method #2: A 7-Step Plan for Introducing a New Memory Scripture

This is a method guided by [Proverbs 4:20-22](#).

1. Pay attention.

Ask the children to pay close attention as you introduce the new memory verse (or separate verses if there is a wide gap in the ages of your children).

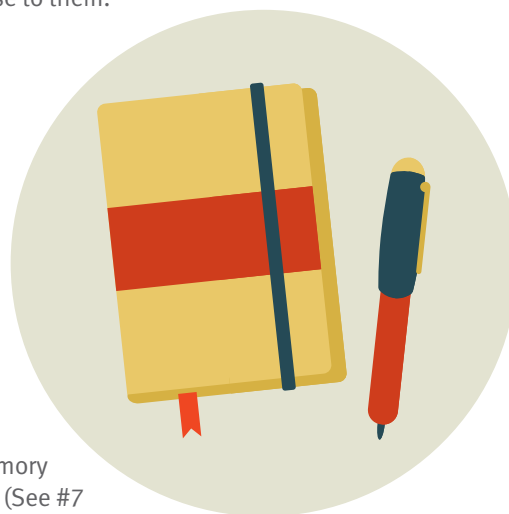
2. Listen.

Instruct them to listen carefully as you read the scripture aloud. State the book, chapter and verse as you turn to it. Modeling what you will be asking the children to do will help them learn to do it.

3. Read.

Ask the children to open their Bibles and find the book, the chapter and the verse from which you just read. (Provide all the help needed for the very youngest to find this.) Then ask them to focus their eyes and mind on the words in that verse and to read the words silently. You can stand by young children and show them how to point to each word as you read the verse to them.

If possible, supply a memory book in which the children can record memory scriptures.



4. Write, read and remember.

Have the children open their Bibles to the memory verse and copy it as neatly as they can. If possible, supply a memory book in which the children can record memory scriptures. (See #7 at the bottom of this list for more information.) Ask them to be sure to write out the name of the book and record the number of the chapter and the verse in which it is found. (With young children, use **Method #3: Copywork**.) Next, practice reading and saying the verse. After reading it aloud several times, ask the children to close their eyes and see how much of it they can say without looking at the verse. As the children become accustomed to this, they may enjoy forming partner groups. Each one of the partners would take a turn at being the teacher and the pupil. They would encourage and help each other learn small segments at a time and would listen to each other repeat these segments without looking back at the verse. Those who feel they are ready may want to stand up and recite the verse.

5. Clarify.

Check to see if the children understand the meaning of all the words in the verse. Then create ways to involve them in a discussion about the verse. Ask one of the children to paraphrase the verse. Encourage all of the children to give an answer to why it is important to learn and remember this verse.



Draw a picture, write a poem or a song, or create a poster with artistic designs that get to the heart of each verse.

6. Display.

Ask the children to prepare something they can display that illustrates the meaning of this verse. Draw a picture, write a poem or a song, or create a poster with artistic designs that get to the heart of the verse. Encourage the children to come up with their own ideas. They may want to work on this all week and share it with the family at your next appointed time.

7. Commit.

Encourage your children to commit to learning God's Word. Provide them with something permanent in which they can write each memory verse you introduce, date each verse as it is memorized, and still have space to record their thoughts concerning the verse. Suggest they make a plan and set aside a time for learning God's Word. Encourage the older children to record their own favorite verses as they find them in their Bibles, to write them in their memory books as an "extra," and to memorize them as they can.



Children thrive on repetition as long as what's being repeated is approached in a variety of different ways.

You will think of many other ways to begin etching a new memory scripture in your child's mind and heart. Feel free to try your ideas or to interchange other methods found below into this 7-step plan as you use it. Children thrive on repetition as long as what's being repeated is approached in a variety of different ways.

Method #3: Copywork

This method can be set up in a few different ways depending on the child's age and ability. Basically, have the scripture your child is in the process of learning printed on a work sheet with space for the child to write it out. Sometimes the scripture can be on the top of the page with lines below. Sometimes the scripture can be traced. The value of this approach is that it allows the child not to worry about spacing, spelling, capitalization, and the like. The child can just focus on writing out God's Word. Copywork can also be used to occupy a younger child during a family Bible study when the discussion becomes too long or goes beyond his or her level of comprehension. The copywork can keep him or her focused on learning God's Word.

Method #4: Read Your Age

As you are able, provide each child with a Bible. Build a habit of opening your Bibles and reading at least one verse each day. One method is to read the same number of verses as your age. For example, if you are six years old, you read six verses; if you are 70, then you read 70 verses; if you are 12, you will read a dozen Bible verses each day. It is amazing how regularly reading God's Word helps us to memorize it!



Place visible copies of these verses in key places throughout your house—places where children will be sure to see them and remember them.



Method #5: Say Them, Display Them

This approach is explained in detail in [Deuteronomy 6:7-9](#). God has assigned this method specifically to parents. A modern version of this scripture might read this way: “Teach God’s Word diligently to your child. Talk about these verses when you are sitting in your house and when you are riding in your car. Listen to your child say them before you go to bed at night and when you get up in the morning. Place visible copies of these verses in key places throughout your house—places where children will be sure to see them and remember them. Write the verses out, say them and display them.”

Many of these active games will require the participation of family or friends.

ACTIVE GROUP PARTICIPATION METHODS

Children learn best by repetition and by active participation. Listed next are activities that can be modified and adjusted to help a child memorize more easily. Many of these active games will require the participation of family or friends. So join in—that’s what makes them fun!

Method # 6: Missing Words

Write each word of the scripture you are trying to memorize on a different note card. (You can simplify this by writing each phrase on a different card.) The object of this game is to place the words in the correct order to recreate the verse you are learning. [Matthew 22:37](#) will be our sample verse.

For younger children, lay almost all the words out and place them in their correct order, leaving out only the key words. The words you did not use in the verse should be randomly placed near and visible to all the children—in this case “God,” “soul,” “love,” “mind,” and “heart.” You can read the verse without the words to your young children: “You shall _____ the LORD your _____ with all your _____, with all your _____, and with all your _____.” Then hold up the missing words one at a time and read them aloud if needed. Allow the children time to think about where that word should be placed. When all the blanks are filled in with the correct words in the correct order, the verse is complete and it is time to read it aloud.



For older children, add the scripture reference by writing the book, chapter and verse on separate cards and including them. You can approach this in two different ways depending on how well you think the children know this verse. (And if you have two sets of word cards, you can let the children play in teams and see which team can complete the puzzle first.)

Follow the same directions as above, except leave out more words in the verse and omit the numbers or the name of the book in the scripture reference. They pick up the missing words and place them in the correct blanks.

Scramble the words and randomly lay them out like puzzle pieces. Allow the group time to look at all the pieces and decide where each fits.

Be sure to stop and read the verse aloud when it is complete.

Method #7: The Matching Game

This game can be very challenging or quite simple. It is a good method to use when your children are trying to learn the Commandments in order or need to remember where a certain story, person or verse in the Bible can be found. As you will see, each game will require two sets of cards. We'll use the 10 Commandments as an example.

Players take turns turning two cards at a time face up so all can see.

You will need one set of cards on which each Commandment is written out and another set of cards on which the numbers 1 through 10 are written. The game can be played as an easier version with all the cards face up and the players taking turns matching them. If a player incorrectly matches, he or she loses the next turn. The player with the most correct matches is the winner.

Or you can mix the cards up and lay them face down and play the game like you would "Concentration." Players take turns turning two cards at a time face up so all can see. If the two cards match (for example, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy" would match the number 4), that player has made a match and stacks the two cards together then continues to try to make more matches. If the two cards do not match, the player turns the cards face down leaving them in the spot they were originally in. This goes on until all the cards have been matched. The player with the most matches is the winner.

If you want to create a memory verse match, you could do it by writing each of your memory verses on separate cards to form one deck with the scripture reference for each of those verses on separate cards to form the other deck. Then follow the same directions as before.





EXPRESSIVE MEMORY METHODS

Method #8: Express it Through Drawings

Encourage all ages to express a memory scripture by drawing it. When finished, write the memory scripture on the back of the drawing as the child dictates it to you, or if the child is old enough, ask him or her to write the scripture. Then have the “artist” point to the key elements of the scripture in the drawing and describe them.

Method #9: Express it With a Rhythm and a Beat

(This method works wonderfully well for younger children.)

Find a scripture that has a little rhythm and create movements that fit the rhythm and words. Then let the children move with the words and see just how quickly they learn that scripture!

Method #10: Express it in Song

Using the words in the scripture, create a melody, or use a well-known tune. Sing the verse.

Method #11: Wash, Rinse, Repeat

Sometimes there is no substitute for repetition, going over and over the verses you would like your child to remember. Make it a part of their school work and rehearse the scriptures when you are traveling, when they are waiting with you for an appointment, or when riding to swimming lessons, the library or the store.



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Method #12: Sword Drills

The idea for “Sword Drills” comes from [Ephesians 6:17](#) and [Hebrews 4:12](#). In [Ephesians 6:17](#), the Word of God is called the “sword of the Spirit,” and it is listed as part of the armor of God. [Hebrews 4:12](#) says, “The word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

1. Have your child, the “soldier,” stand straight and tall with Bible held by his or her side (the spine of the Bible directed at the floor).



2. The parent says “Attention!” At this command the soldiers crisply place their Bibles in front of them with one hand under the Bible, one hand flat on top of the Bible. The front cover of the Bible faces the child.

3. The parent says “Draw swords!” At this command the soldier sandwiches the closed Bible between his or her hands (the spine of the Bible again directed at the floor).

4. The parent then gives the directive of where the soldier will go: “**Ephesians 6:17**,” for example. The soldier holds still even after the book, chapter and verse are stated. Then the parent says “Charge!” At that command, the soldier as quickly as possible finds the passage, and once his or her finger is on the exact scripture silently steps forward indicating completion of the task.

5. As each child steps forward, the parent quietly checks to see if he or she has found the correct scripture. When all children have stepped forward, the parent asks the first one who found the correct scripture to read it aloud while the other children follow along reading silently.



As children get more familiar with their Bibles and more comfortable using them, challenge the children with “directives” that require knowledge of how the Bible is organized.

The sword drills method can be expanded upon to help reinforce your children’s memory work. Try these add-ons or variations:

Familiarize children of all ages with their Bibles.

When children first begin to learn the names and placement of books of the Bible, the directive may be simply to find the name of one book of the Bible. Next, progress to adding a chapter, then finally add book, chapter and verse. As children get more familiar with their Bibles and more comfortable using them, challenge the children with “directives” that require knowledge of how the Bible is organized and where certain key stories and verses can be found. Simple directives, for example, might be to find the first book of the Bible and say its name, find the last book of the Bible and say its name, find the first book of the New Testament, find the last book of the Old Testament, find the middle book of the Bible, etc. Move to more complex directives as the children show ability and interest.

Practice and review verses your children are working to memorize or have memorized.

Conduct the sword drill using those scriptures your children are striving to memorize. After finding the book, chapter and verse, have them read it out loud. Then have all of the children read or say it together. Ask all the children to look up at you. Then call on them one at a time to tell you where this verse was found or to repeat the verse from memory. Remember, reviewing and repeating a verse or passage over a long period of time is the best way of etching and retaining it in your mind and heart.

**Help children remember where to find Bible stories and retain the key concepts.**

As a variation, have children locate specific Bible stories instead of specific Bible verses. For example say, “Find the book of the Bible in which we find both the story of Samuel anointing David as the future King and the story of David facing Goliath. Charge!” After everyone has found the book, ask the one who found it first to name the book. If this came easy for the children, challenge them to find and look through chapter 16 for a key verse that explains why God chose David to be King. If

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needed say, “You will find it somewhere in verses 1 through 10.” Then call on the one who found it first to read it. Think of other ways to use sword drills to help your children remember what they are learning and to challenge them to stretch their memories.