

Memory Verses— Learning Made Fun & Effective

I. God's Word is valuable

- A. We are commanded to teach the Word to our children (Deut. 6:6-7).

Illustration

"In this changing world we need something to which we may cling, something which is sure and steadfast, something which never changes . . . what could be better than the sure Word of God . . ."¹

- B. The Holy Spirit will use the Word that has been hidden in the heart to do the following:
1. To draw the unsaved to Christ—salvation verses (1 Pet. 1:23).
 2. To help the Christian in daily living—verses on conduct (Ps. 119:9).
 3. To prepare you to witness—verses on sharing Christ (1 Pet. 3:15).
 4. To bring comfort to a troubled heart—verses on comfort (Isa. 26:3).
 5. To combat unsound doctrine—verses on doctrine (Matt. 22:29).
 6. To help you praise God—verses expressing praise or worship (Ps. 119:171).

II. Steps to follow in learning a Bible verse

Introduce it

1. Introduce the verse with something that relates to children.
 - Use an object lesson.
 - Ask a question.
 - Show a picture.

Present it

1. Establish the Bible verse as the Word of God.
2. Read the verse directly from the Bible, not just from the visual.
3. Always teach the reference or address—where the verse is found.

Explain it

1. Teach the meaning of unfamiliar words or concepts.
2. If the verse comes from the Scripture portion you will teach, be careful not to give away part of the lesson as you explain the verse.

Apply it

1. Briefly explain how the verse relates to the unsaved child and to the saved child.
2. Some verses apply more specifically to one group than to the other.
3. Help the child see how to apply the verse to his life.
 - Is it a fact? Then remember it!
 - Is it a promise? Then claim it as your very own!
 - Is it a command? Then do what it says!

Repeat it

1. Repetition is essential to learning.
2. Repeating the verse once or twice is not sufficient—have the children repeat it at least eight or ten times.
3. Use variety in the ways you repeat verses from class to class.

- Crazy Stand-ups

“All those wearing blue, stand up and say this verse.” “All those who like pizza, stand up and say this verse.” “All those who ate breakfast this morning . . .”

- Add-A-Word

Divide the children into two groups. Then repeat like this:

Group 1: “First”

Group 2: “1 Peter”

Group 1: "1 Peter 5"

Group 2: "1 Peter 5:7"

Group 1: "1 Peter 5:7 Casting"

Group 2: "1 Peter 5:7 Casting all"

(Continue on until the entire verse is quoted.)

- First Letters

Choose a certain letter that begins several of the words in the Bible verse. Have the children stand each time they come to a word that starts with that letter.

Review it

1. Use the verse during different parts of your class hour that same day.
 - Quote it in an appropriate place in the Bible lesson.
 - Repeat it as you stand to sing a song.
 - Say it while you distribute take-home papers.
2. Review the verse the following week.
 - Check to see how many can say the words.
 - Check to see how many know the meaning of the verse.
 - Check to see how many obeyed what it said.
3. Continue to review the verse from time to time throughout the year using a variety of methods.

- One verse

Write the reference on a posterboard heart.

Write two or three key words from the verse on the back of the heart requiring students to remember the reference.

(Example: front of heart—"Ephesians 6:1" Back of heart—"Obey your parents")

- Several verses

Make these simple visuals and demonstrate these methods.

Put the hearts used to review a single verse in a large circle on the floor like stepping stones. Have the children step on these "stones," going around the circle, until you say "Stop!" Then, see how many can quote the verse they are standing on. Repeat!

Write verse references or key words on construction paper fish, one fish per verse. Place the fish in a fish bowl. Let a child select a fish and have someone quote that verse.

III. Ways to visualize a verse

A. Write the words on a chalkboard or posterboard.

Use only the first letters of the words in the verse.

Romans 3:23 would look like this: FAHSACSOTGOG

B. Be careful that the first letters do not spell out a word you'd rather not use!

C. Make or purchase flannelgraph visuals.

Teaching Aids to Help You Encourage Scripture Memory

1. Songbooks and CDs (CEF Press®) cefpress.com
 - *Growing Songs for Children 1 and 2*
 - *Kids Sing the Gospel 1 and 2*
 - *Salvation Songs Favorites*
2. Devotional Guides (CEF Press)
 - *The Wonder Devotional Book 1 and 2*
3. *Children's Ministry Resource Bible*
 - Full-page article "Teaching Memory Verses to Children" (page 734)
4. Children's Ministries Institute® cefcmi.com
 - Training opportunities

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¹Mildred Morningstar, *Reaching Children*, (Chicago, Moody Press, 1944), p. 48. Used by permission.