

IDEAS FOR HIDING GOD'S WORD IN YOUR HEART

I believe that memorizing God's Word is essential to godly interpersonal relationships. These are ideas that have helped me over the years. They may not all apply to you, but I encourage you to consider them.

1. Let your motivation to memorize Scripture be joyful love for God and His Word rather than a sense of duty. Doing it only because you should probably won't enable you to continue over the years. Begin with Scriptures that delight your heart.

Then learn "battle passages," Scriptures to use in doing battle with the enemy, just as Jesus did. Choose verses which speak to issues you're struggling with in your life right now.

2. Pray for God's enabling and His ministry in your heart as you do it. Psalm 119 provides 17 different ways to pray about God's Word. Confidently ask for God's help as you work at memorizing His Word, and He will enable you to do it, and richly bless you in the process.

3. Take your time. One great enemy to memorizing God's Word is being in a hurry. Don't learn so much so quickly, that you can't keep it. This leads to discouragement and often to giving up. See it as a lifetime project of growth. Discover your best pattern. Some do best through consistency; they learn one or more verses every week. Others do better through spontaneity; they learn one or more verses when something stands out to them.

4. Learn small portions (verses, paragraphs or other short passages) at the beginning, rather than chapters or books. Use Bible study helps to learn the meaning in context as you

learn them.

5. When first learning a portion, intense concentration is the key. Find a time and place with few distractions. Go through it aloud. Focus on a different word every time you repeat it.

6. Learn the reference well. Say it before and after you go through it each time.

7. Write the verses on cards. Carry them with you and put them where you can see them often.

8. Review! Review! Review! This is where the work really begins. Here is a system of review that has worked for me: The first week: three to five times a day. The next three weeks: at least once a day. The next three months: twice a week. The next six months: once a week. Then once every two or three weeks for the rest of my life to keep them ready for the Holy Spirit to use. Large portions need more review than short ones.

9. Let your review be a joyful opportunity to fellowship with the Lord. Be creative: pray through it, sing it (make up your own tune), claim it, praise God with it, personalize it, study it further, and meditate on it in the night. These ideas help get Scripture from your head to your heart. Begin to build lifetime patterns of review to redeem those moments that might otherwise be wasted.

10. Bring others into this part of your life. Learn Scripture along with others. Be accountable to them for your review. Say it aloud to a friend from time to time. Share it with others.