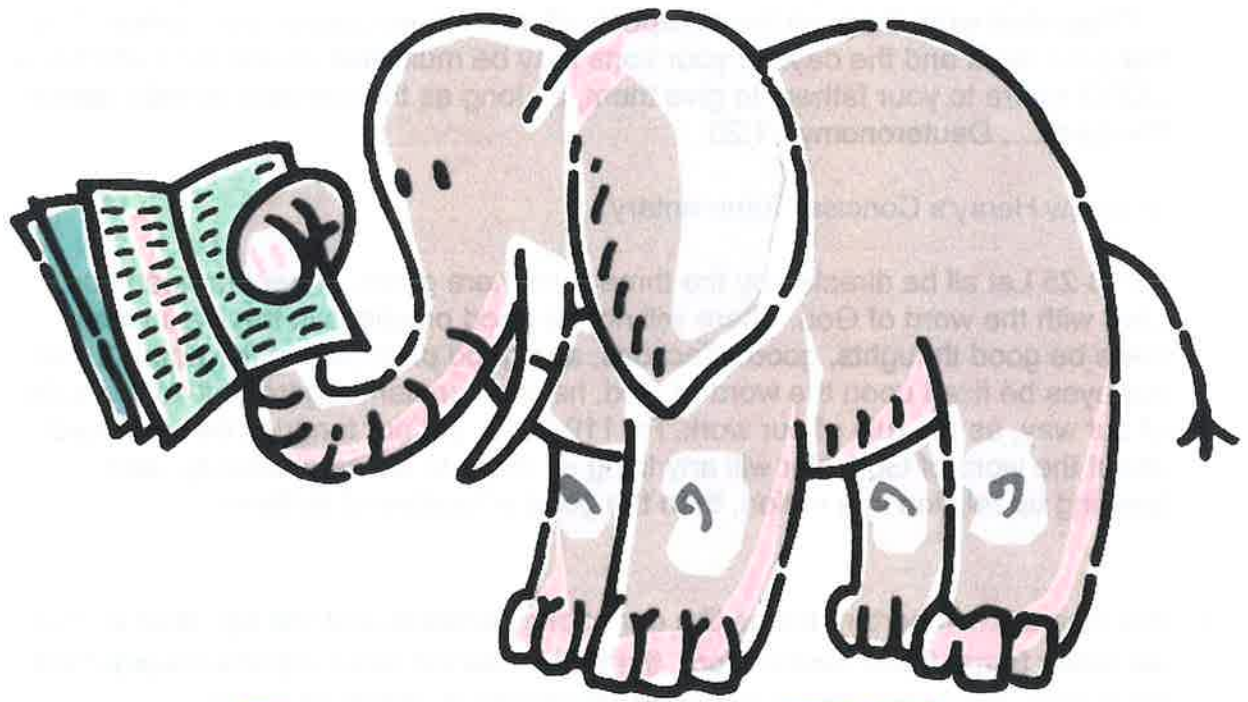


# Fun and Effective Ways to a Teach a



Memory Verse

# Why is Bible Memory important?

1. "I have hidden your word in my heart so that I won't sin against you" (Psalm 119:11).

"Your word is like a lamp that shows me the way. It is like a light that guides me" (Psalm 119:105).

*And the words of the LORD are flawless, like silver refined in a furnace of clay, purified seven times. Psalm 12:6*

You shall teach them to your sons, talking of them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road and when you lie down and when you rise up. 20" You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, 21 so that your days and the days of your sons may be multiplied on the land which the LORD swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the heavens remain above the earth.... Deuteronomy 11:20

Matthew Henry's Concise Commentary

11:18-25 Let all be directed by the three rules here given. 1. Let our hearts be filled with the word of God. There will not be good practices in the life, unless there be good thoughts, good affections, and good principles in the heart. 2. Let our eyes be fixed upon the word of God, having constant regard to it as the guide of our way, as the rule of our work, Ps 119:30. 3. Let our tongues be employed about the word of God. Nor will any thing do more to cause prosperity, and keeping up religion in a nation, than the good education of children

2. We memorize important things like our phone numbers and the alphabet so that we never forget them. God's Word, the Bible, has the most important words! We memorize verses to help us remember God's Word wherever we go.
3. Chuck Swindoll wrote, "I know of no other single practice in the Christian life more rewarding, practically speaking, than memorizing Scripture. . . . No other single exercise pays greater spiritual dividends! Your prayer life will be strengthened. Your witnessing will be sharper and much more effective. Your attitudes and outlook will begin to change. Your mind will become alert and observant. Your confidence and assurance will be enhanced. Your faith will be solidified" (*Growing Strong in the Seasons of Life* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994], p. 61).
4. Dr. Howard Hendricks of Dallas Seminary once made the statement that if it were his decision, every student graduating from Dallas Theological Seminary would be required to learn one thousand verses word perfect before they graduated.

5. Dallas Willard, professor of Philosophy at the University of Southern California, wrote, "Bible memorization is absolutely fundamental to spiritual formation. If I had to choose between all the disciplines of the spiritual life, I would choose Bible memorization, because it is a fundamental way of filling our minds with what it needs. This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth. That's where you need it! How does it get in your mouth?"

Where do I begin?

1. Purpose: We need to communicate the importance of Bible Memory to children. Let them know why we memorize scripture. We complete tasks that we believe to be important.
2. Meaning: Memory has to have meaning. Children need to know the meaning of what they are memorizing for it to be effective.
  - Define isolated words that may be unfamiliar
  - Hebrews 10: 24 - 24" And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds" Be sure to define multiple meaning words.
  - Acts 3:19 "**Repent** therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out."
  - Big picture meaning: *Putting it all together.*
3. Start some large group activities which allow optimum participation and many opportunities to recite the verse.

## **Activities to introduce a verse**

### **Erase a word**

Write the verse on the white board. Repeat the verse together several times then choose children to erase a word. Repeat the verse with the word missing then choose another child to erase a word. Depending on the length of the verse you can have two children at a time erase a word. Repeat the verse as a whole group after each eraser.

### **Post-it Note Pull**

This uses the same principle as erase a word but instead write each word on a post-it note. Repeat the verse several times then choose a child to take a post-it note off the board. Repeat the verse with the whole group after each word(s) is removed.

As an additional activity you can pass out the post-its after they have all been removed and have the children reconstruct the verse.

### **Post-it Cover Up**

For this activity write the memory verse on the front board of the classroom. Practice reading it several times together and then use post-it notes to cover up one of the words. Read the verse with the covered word and continue this pattern until the entire verse is covered and the children are saying the verse from memory.

### **Balloon Pop**

Print a word or short phrase of the memory verse on balloons. This works best with a short verse. Pin or tape the balloons in order on the board or wall. Recite the verse together. After each recitation have a child pop one of the balloons. Then recite the verse with the missing word(s). Do this until all the balloons are popped.

### **Ping Pong**

Divide the kids up into two groups. Write the verse on the board. Have that groups go back and forth repeating every other word. Switch sides and repeat. You can use one word at a time, phrases or the whole verse to play this game.

### **Egg Toss/Bean Bag Toss**

This is a variation of the ping pong activity. Make two lines across from each other as you would for an egg toss. Use a plastic egg or a bean bag to practice the verse. The partners say every other word while tossing the "egg". Start close together and then take a step back and repeat. This can be a competition to see which partners can keep going the longest without dropping the "egg."

### **Verse Symbols**

**Great for Emergent readers:** To help memorize the verse, assign symbols to the key words and phrases. **Psalm 19:1 The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork.**

### **Sing the Verse**

**Great for Emergent readers:** Set the verse to a familiar tune. Some verses have already been set to music such as 1 John 4: 7-8. Some tunes that lend themselves well are: Are You Sleeping? Mary Had a Little Lamb, The Farmer in the Dell. Isaiah 53:6

### **Move it or Lose It**

Many children learn best by moving. Brainstorm motions with the students to match their memory verse. When children learn movements they are less likely to “lose it” from their memory.

## **Activities to review a verse...**

### **Hot Potato**

Play Hot Potato and the child holding the potato when the music stops says the verse. I give children the option of saying the verse only or asking the group to repeat it with them. This helps support children that may not be secure in the verse.

### **Pass the Potato**

Have all the kids sit in a circle. Write the verse on the board and review it a few times. Pick one child as the starting point. As he/she passes the ball, have each child say one word from the verse until they reach the end. I usually leave the verse up on the board to support children who still may not be secure in knowing the verse. A variation on this is to time how long it takes to complete the verse and then try to beat the record.

### **Catch the Verse**

You will need a soft ball or a beanbag. Have the kids recite the verse several times. Then form a circle and give one child the ball. The child that catches the ball says the verse, then tosses the ball to someone else in the circle, who will then say the next word. Continue until the verse is complete. I make a rule that you cannot toss to someone who has already said a word.

### **Word Scramble**

Write each word of the verse on separate index cards (I usually just print the verse using a large font and then cut the verse up. You can print in several colors if you are making more than one set so that the sets don't get mixed up) Each child or team is given a set of cards which holds one complete verse. The children spread their cards out on the table or floor upside down, turn them over and unscramble the words to put the verse in the correct order. I have then group/team stand up and say the verse in unison once they have it unscrambled. As a review activity, the children can also create their own cards to be kept in individual baggies.

### **Hula Hoop Scramble**

You will need a pool noodle and a hula hoop. I cut the noodle into 4 inch lengths and slit each section so it can be attached to the hoop. Put the hoop on a table or the floor. Put the sections inside the hoop. Children have to put the words/phrases in the right order and put them on the hoop. If you are using several hoops be sure the noodles are different colors so each set of verse sections can be differentiated. You can use this for a relay. Put all the sections in a laundry basket or tub. The teams run to the tub and select one of their team's color sections. When the team has all their sections they can put the verse together.

### **Scrambled Eggs**

For this activity, you will need 5 manila folders. Inside each folder, write a portion of the verse. You can play this in teams or whole group. Choose 5 kids to come to the front of the class and stand in a line. Have them open up their folders to reveal the Scripture. Have the whole class recite the verse 2 or 3 times. Close the folders and "scramble" the kids or the folders. On the word "Go", have the kids open the folders and put the verse in order. Once the verse is unscrambled have the kids recite the verse. Then have the kids that have the folders choose 5 new kids, scramble them and repeat the process.

### **Memory Verse Basketball**

Use a soft ball and a large, empty, round trash container. Read the verse aloud and have the class repeat it several times from memory. Line up the kids. Before handing each child the ball, he or she must say the memory verse correctly. If the child does so, he or she can shoot the basketball. Always give the option of having the group or team say the verse if a child isn't ready to say the verse on his/her own. You can also play teams. Keep track of how many baskets each team has scored. Use this activity as a review when all or most of the children know the verse. Be sure the verse poster is available for children to read or refer if they aren't secure in reciting the verse.

### **Sparkle**

This is a whole group game intended to use as a review of verses already learned. The children will stand in a circle facing one another. The teacher says a reference for a recent memory verse. The game travels around the circle with each child saying the next word to come in the verse. If the child says an incorrect word or does not know the next word they sit down. The verse continues around the circle until the final word is said and then the next child says "Sparkle!" to finish the verse. The next child sits down. The children continue to play until there is only one child standing who is the winner.

## **Musical Colors**

Musical Colors is a variation of musical chairs. Arrange a circle of chairs so that each child has a chair to sit in. Tape four different colors of paper to the chairs so that each chair has a piece of colored paper taped to it. (Note: there is a chair for every child. This is not an elimination game.) Make an extra set of cards for the leader to pull. Play music, when you stop have children sit down on a chair. Pull a color card and have each child sitting in the chair with that color stand and recite the memory verse together. Play again, pulling a different color card each time until all of the children have had one or two opportunities to recite the verse.

## **Stack a Verse**

Write phrases along the rim of Styrofoam cups. Be sure you do this with the cups upside down. They will be much easier to stack. (They won't fall over.) Spread the cups out on a table or the floor. Children stack the cups to put the verse together. When they complete the stack, stand and recite the verse. You can do this a competition with more than one group or use a timer to see if the kids can get faster.

