

Fun and Effective Ways to Teach Memory Verses

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.
3. How to impart meaning:
 - 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.*

Practical and Engaging Ideas for Teaching Verses:

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.

Now choose a child from the first team. He must turn his back to the line of 5 kids while you, the teacher, scramble their positions.

Close the folders and “scramble” the kids. 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. If you want you can play this in teams and give points for putting the verse in order.

Bible Verse Balloon Bat

For this Bible school activity you will need to blow up one balloon for each word in the Bible verse you want your class to learn. Include one balloon also for the reference of the verse. So, for example, if you are teaching Hebrews 9:22 which says, “...without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness...” you will need 10 balloons. Write one word from the verse on each balloon. Now, attach all the balloons to a long string in correct verse order. Hang this string of balloons from the ceiling low enough that the kids in the class will be able to jump up and “bat” or “tap” the balloons. You will also need to prepare 3 cards that have a picture of a baseball bat on them and one card with a picture of a pin on it. Place these 4 cards in a bag or a bucket. You are now ready to play this Bible school activity.

Before playing this Bible memory verse activity, you will want to introduce the verse you have displayed on your balloons. “Bat” or tap each of the balloons as you say the verse. Once you have done this several times, have a child come pick a card out of the bag you prepared. If the child pulls out a card with a bat on it, the child gets to “bat” the balloons with his hand while saying the verse. This card goes back in the bag. If the card with a pin is picked, the child gets to choose a balloon that he is allowed to pop with a pin. After popping this balloon, the child must say the complete verse. Keep playing till all the balloons have been popped. By this point the memory verse should be hidden in their hearts and minds.

3,4,5 Game

For this activity you will need to make a card for each word in the verse. Don't forget to include the reference. It would be best if you can display the cards in order on a pocket chart. Make 3 cards with a 3, 4 or 5 on them. Place these cards in a bucket or bag from which the kids will pick. Finally, make about 20 point cards. Four of them should have a 50 on them, four should have a 40 on them, four should have a 30 on them, four should have a 20 on them and four should have a 10 on them. Place these face down on the floor or table.

Have the class recite the verse several times in preparation for the game. Once the class feels comfortable with the verse, explain that you are going to play "3, 4 or 5." Have a child from team one come up and pick up a large point card. This is the number of points he could earn for his team. Now let him reach into the bucket that contains a 3, 4 or 5. The number he picks is the number of cards to the verse that he will turn over on the pocket chart. Now the child or his whole team must say the verse.

Hot Potato

Have all the kids sit in a line or a circle (it does not matter what you pick, as long as they are in some order). Write the verse on the board, and after practicing a few times, remove it. Pick one child as the starting point. Have each child say one word from the verse, starting with the first word and going to the end. If any child does not know his or her word, the entire class has to start over from the beginning.

Disappearing Words

Read the verse together several times, then write the verse on the board. Say the verse together as a class, erase a word or two and say the verse again. Continue in this manner until the words are all erased.

Post-it Cover Up

For this activity write the memory verse on the front board of the classroom. Practice reading it once together and then use post-it notes to cover up one of the words. Then, practice reading the verse again followed by covering up a second word with post-it notes. Continue this pattern until the entire verse is covered and the children are saying the verse from memory. This is an interesting spin on traditional drilling of a verse by repetition. You could also reverse the game beginning with some words covered and have children guess the missing words.

Catch the Verse

You will need a soft ball, a rolled up sock, or a beanbag. Have the kids recite the verse several times. Then form a circle and give one kid 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

Verse Symbols

(Great for Preschool) To help memorize the verse, assign symbols to the key words and phrases.

Sing the Verse

(Great for Preschool) 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.

Ping Pong

Divide the kids up into two groups. Have the two groups on opposite sides of the room. Taking turns have each group recite the verse. As soon as the first group finishes the second group should begin reciting the verse. Go back and forth reciting the verse several times. You can use one word at a time, phrases or the whole verse to play this game.

Verse Hunt

Write each word of the verse and the reference on a separate index card. Then hide the cards around the room, but so the kids can find them easily. (If you have two teams use two different colored cards one for each team). Show the children a blank card so they will know what to look for, and tell them how many cards in all they need to find. Once they find all of the cards, the children put their cards in order and say the verse in unison.

Balloon Stomp

Print each word of the memory verse on a separate slip of paper. Insert one slip of paper inside one balloon. Blow up all of the balloons and tie closed. Lay the balloons on the floor in a large open area of the room. Instruct the children to form a circle around the balloons, and on the count of three have the kids stomp on the balloons with their feet until all of them are popped. (*SAFETY NOTE: Children are not to pick up any slips of paper until instructed.*) After all the balloons are popped, have the children pick up the slips of paper and work together to arrange the words of the memory verse in the correct order as fast as possible.

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.

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.

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.

Word Card Scramble

Write each word of the verse on separate index cards and mix them 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 face-up and try to unscramble the words to put the verse in the correct order. As a review activity, the children can also create their own cards to be kept in individual baggies.

Pizza Frisbee

Pizza Frisbee is a fun game to play to incorporate verse memorization into a pizza party theme. Use clean paper plates for Frisbees and clean pizza boxes to catch them in. Divide the children into teams. Instruct one student or leader to hold the pizza box while others line up and try to throw the Frisbee into the pizza box. Before throwing the Frisbee, the children must correctly recite their memory verse. The team with the most plates in the box at the end of the allotted time wins first crack at the pizza

Musical Colors

Musical Colors is a good verse memorization game for young children. 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. Explain to the children that you will play musical chairs as a way of reciting the Bible verses they are memorizing. Play the music, and when it stops, have children sit down where they are. Name a color and have each child sitting in the chair with that color to stand and recite

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