

## 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](#)

Psalm 119:18-25 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 <sup>24</sup> "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.*
4. **Engagement**—involve all children

## **Practical and Engaging Ideas for Teaching Verses:**

### **Ideas that need little prep:**

#### **Hot Potato**

Have all the kids sit in a circle. 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.

Option 2: After learning the verse play Hot Potato as a review. Play music while the children pass the "potato". When the music stops the child holding the potato says the verse. Give the option of having the whole group say the verse for children that may struggle.

#### **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 Disappearing Words or cover up**

Write each word of the verse on a post-it. Practice reading it several times together and choose a child to remove a word. After removing a word repeat the verse again. Do this until all the words are removed. You can also use post-it notes to cover words until the whole verse is covered.

#### **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 or beanbag. The child tosses the ball to another child. The child that catches the ball says the verse, then tosses the ball to someone else in the circle, who will then say the verse.

#### **Sing the Verse**

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, Frere Jaques.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was, and is, and is to come." – Revelation 4:8

Youtube.com has many verses set to music.

### **Ping Pong**

Divide the kids up into two groups. Have the two groups sit across from each other. Write the verse out in this fashion.

For all	have sinned
and fall	short of
the glory	of God.
Romans	3:23

Go back and forth reciting each phrase. As soon as the first group finishes the second group should begin reciting the verse. Have the teams switch sides and recite the opposite phrases. You can use one word at a time, phrases or the whole verse to play this game. You can also have children do this with a partner.

### **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.

## **Ideas that take some prep ahead of time:**

### **Verse Symbols**

To help memorize the verse, assign symbols to the key words and phrases. Use rebus symbols to represent words.

Illustrate the verse.

### **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 Pop**

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 to the wall or white board.

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, choose a child to pop a balloon. After popping the balloon say the verse including the missing word. Keep playing till all the balloons have been popped. By this point the memory verse should be hidden in their hearts and minds.

### **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.

### **Word Search**

[www.puzzle-maker.com](http://www.puzzle-maker.com)

[www.lakeshorelearning.com](http://www.lakeshorelearning.com)

[www.abcya.com/make\\_a\\_word\\_search.htm](http://www.abcya.com/make_a_word_search.htm)

### **Balloon Stomp Relay**

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. Put the balloons in a bucket or basket. Children run to the basket. Choose a balloon, sit or stomp on the balloon to bust it. Take the word back to the team and tag the next runner. When all the balloons are busted the children put the scrambled words together to form the verse and recite the verse together.

### **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.

### **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 the memory verse. Play again, naming a different color each time until all of the children have had one or two opportunities to recite the verse.

### **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/sh could earn for his team. Now let him reach into the bucket that contains a 3, 4 or 5. The number he/she picks is the number of cards to the verse that he/she will turn over on the pocket chart. Now the child or the whole team must say the verse with the missing words.

## **Resources:**

Youtube.com—musical verses

Google Images—illustrations for verses

Create a word search—

[www.puzzle-maker.com](http://www.puzzle-maker.com)

[www.lakeshorelearning.com](http://www.lakeshorelearning.com)

[www.abcya.com/make\\_a\\_word\\_search.htm](http://www.abcya.com/make_a_word_search.htm)

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I John 4:19



## Bite-size Memorize

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1 John 4:14

Feasting on the scriptures one bite at a time!

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Word List:

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The grass withers



and the flowers fade,



but the Word of the Lord  
stands forever.

Isaiah 40:8

