

SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION & MEDITATION



By Pastor Jerry Truex

Scripture memorization and meditation go hand-in-hand. **Scripture memorization** refers to the process of learning and remembering a verse of Scripture, so that you are able to recall it word-for-word and know its location (chapter and verse). **Scripture meditation** refers to a slow contemplative repetition of a verse, so that its meaning becomes more-and-more clear and its

power become more-and-more inscribed within you.

The purpose of Scripture memorization and meditation is to **transform your mind**, and through your mind, **transform your entire being** (Rom 12:2), so that you participate in the divine nature (2 Pet 1:4), live by the Spirit and bear fruit (Gal 5:16, 22-23), and realize your divine destiny in Christ (2 Cor 3:17-18).

Romans 12:2: Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God-- what is good and acceptable and perfect. (NRSV)

Scripture Memorization Works. Every time we think a thought, including when we memorize and meditate on scripture, our brains are changed. Dr. Amen, a clinical neuroscientist and psychiatrist and author of *Making a Good Brain Great*, says, "Every time you have a thought your *brain releases* chemicals. ... Your thoughts ... positive or negative ... make you feel good or they make you feel bad."

What you read and what you say to yourself, changes ever so slightly the neuro-pathways of your brain and that, in turn, influences your attitudes, behaviors, and emotions. Scripture memorization allows you to choose words and images that shape your mind and heart. It works in us even when we are not conscious of its doing so.

The "secret" to living the life God wants you to live is found in the greatest commandment.

Deut 6:5. ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. ⁶ Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. ⁷

Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. ⁸ Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, ^{6:9} and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (NRSV)

Notice how the greatest commandment is linked to the secret of how to keep them. We need to put it in our hearts (memorization) and we need to never forget it (repetition or meditation).



The Memorization process

1. Write out the verse including the chapter and verse. You can use file cards, blank business cards, or three-column paper for the topic, location, and verse.

2. Say the topic and the location. For example, “Spiritual strength, Philippians 4:13.”

3. Say the verse. Work in chunks of two or three words at a time. Keep going back to the beginning of the verse. For example: “Spiritual strength. Philippians 4:13. I can do ... I can do all things... I can do all things through him... I can do all things through him who strengthens me.”

4. Recite the verse aloud several times when getting up, when going to bed, when walking or driving, or another other time of the day you have time.

5. Repeat the verse over and over. Once you have memorized the verse (said it about 100 times), review the verse at least once per month for the first year and then two or three times a year after that.

The Meditation process

1. **Quiet the mind.** Sit upright. Focus on the breath to stop the whirling of the mind.

2. When the mind is quite, **read or recite the verse** aloud several times at a normal rate.

3. Then slow down the read or recitation by **emphasizing one word at a time** for each repetition and ponder its meaning (or talk to a partner if doing in groups of two).

4. Next, move into silence. Work at **shutting down the senses temporarily** (hearing, sight, etc.) and silently ponder each word one at a time. Let the word slip into your conscious awareness. Let each word drop inward one at a time. If your mind wanders, bring it back to the verse.