



Memorization Bible Study programs

What is the best way to memorize Scripture? The best way to memorize Scripture is to incorporate it into your *daily Bible study*, then to meet with someone *weekly* to recite what you've memorized and share what you've learned.

Exactly what do I do in my daily Bible study time ("quiet time")? First, decide if you want to:

1. Memorize 1 or 2 verses each week, and...
2. Use commentaries or only your Bible.

Below are suggested programs for each combination of answers. Because I don't know when you will meet, the days are numbered (Day 1, Day 2, etc) instead of named (Monday, Tuesday, etc).

Can I meet with just anyone? Of course. It is better to meet with someone than not to, but it is even better to meet with an older, wiser believer who can help you find answers to questions that come up, both about the verses and about the way Scripture might speak about your life. Perhaps you may find an older, wise Christian, a *mentor*?

What is the "context" of a verse? Every program asks you to read the verse's "context." The *immediate context* is the verses and paragraphs just before and just after the verse itself. Just as the word "bar" has many meanings but only one of those meanings fits the sentence, so the context shapes the meaning of a single verse. The *larger context* is the entire book and can include the entire Bible. How much context you read depends on several things:

- How much time you have.
- How big the book is. You might read all of Philippians but only a couple chapters of Joshua.
- If the verse is in the very beginning or end of a book.

What is a commentary? Commentaries are books written by *commentators* who are in the end, "common taters" just like you and me, but they have usually studied the entire Bible far more than other folks. I'd recommend using their insights as confirmation that, after you read and think about a verse and its context, you are thinking in the right directions. Always do your own research and thinking before reading the commentaries.

Do you have any recommendations for commentaries? Yes. Here are a few. I like to recommend reading at least one "dead guy" and one "live guy." That is, one commentator who lived centuries ago and one who is currently alive and writing today. Each have different insights and cultural biases.

1. (dead) Matthew **Henry**, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994).
2. (dead) Simeon
3. (dead) Calvin
4. (dead) Luther
5. (live) *New Bible Commentary: 21st Century Edition*, ed. D. A. **Carson**, R. T. France, J. A. Motyer and G. J. Wenham, 4th ed. (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994).
6. (live) Warren W. **Wiersbe**, *The Bible Exposition Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996).

Can I use my study Bible notes? The notes on verses in a study Bible are a form of commentary. Do your own thinking before reading them. Notes in the beginning of books about the book's author and historical context can be very helpful. I'd recommend reading them as part of your study of *context*.

Study Bibles also have *cross references*...

What are cross references and where do I find them? Cross references are other verses or passages about the same subject as the verse in question. You can use them to find what else the Bible says about the same subject. After all, the Bible is the best commentary on itself.

If you don't have a study Bible, you may still have cross references in your Bible. Or you can use resources like the *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge* which is available within such resources as <https://www.blueletterbible.org/> and <https://www.e-sword.net/> (a downloadable Bible study program).

What will I need? You'll need your Bible, a notebook, pen or pencil, notepad and any other tools you find helpful in memorization. Journal and record your observation, questions and application each day in your notebook. Jot down on your notepad things to do later that intrude on your study time.

What is the goal of all this study and reading? To not only memorize the verse but to also *understand* what the author (and God!) intended it to say. Then you'll not only know what it *says* but also what it *means*.

Where did you get these verses? We didn't make them up. They are chosen and organized by the **Navigators Topical Memory System**: [Navigators.org/resource/topical-memory-system/](https://www Navigators.org/resource/topical-memory-system/)

Program 1: One Verse Per Week, No Commentary

Day 1: Read the verse in context – a *paragraph* or two *before* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 2: Read the verse in context – a *paragraph* or two *after* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 3: Read the verse in context – a *chapter* or two *before* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 4: Read the verse in context – a *chapter* or two *before* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 5: If you have a study Bible, read the information about the book, its author and history. If you don't have a study Bible, look up the background information on gotquestions.org.

Who wrote it? To whom did they write it? How does that effect the meaning of the verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 6: Look up three cross references for the verse, either in your study Bible or by using a resource like the *Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge* which is available within such resources as <https://www.blueletterbible.org/> and <https://www.e-sword.net/> (a downloadable Bible study program)..

How do these other verses effect the meaning of your verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 7: Review what God has been saying through the week.

What is He asking you to do/change through these verses (this is the application)?

Meet and discuss the verse using the following questions

- **What?:** What is the verse (verbatim)? What is the context? What does it mean?

- **So What?:** What does it say about God? About Jesus?

Why is this verse important today?

- **What next?:** How does this verse shape my walk with God?

What situations would it likely be useful in?

Program 2: Two Verses Per Week, No Commentary

Day 1: Read verse 1 in context – the chapter(s) *before* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 2: Read verse 1 in context – the chapter(s) *after* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 3: Read verse 2 in context – the chapter(s) *before* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 4: Read verse 2 in context – the chapter(s) *after* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 5: For verse 1 read the beginning of the book (and the intro if you have a study Bible):

Who wrote it? To whom did they write it? How does that effect the meaning of the verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 6: For verse 2 read the beginning of the book (and the intro if you have a study Bible):

Who wrote it? To whom did they write it? How does that effect the meaning of the verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 7: Review what God has been saying through the week.

What is He asking you to do/change through these verses (this is the application)?

Meet and discuss the verse using the following questions

- **What?:** What is the verse (verbatim)? What is the context? What does it mean?

- **So What?:** What does it say about God? About Jesus?

Why is this verse important today?

- **What next?:** How does this verse shape my walk with God?

What situations would it likely be useful in?

Program 3: One Verse Per Week, With Commentary

Day 1: Read the verse in context – a *paragraph* or two *before* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 2: Read the verse in context – a *paragraph* or two *after* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 3: Read the verse in context – a *chapter* or two *before* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 4: Read the verse in context – a *chapter* or two *before* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 5: *If you have a study Bible, read the information about the book, its author and history. If you don't have a study Bible, look up the background information on gotquestions.org.

Who wrote it? To whom did they write it? How does that effect the meaning of the verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 6: For verse 2 read a "dead guy" and a "live guy" commentary.

How does that effect the meaning of the verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 7: Review what God has been saying through the week.

What is He asking you to do/change through these verses (this is the application)?

Meet and discuss the verse using the following questions

- **What?:** What is the verse (verbatim)? What is the context? What does it mean?

- **So What?:** What does it say about God? About Jesus?

Why is this verse important today?

- **What next?:** How does this verse shape my walk with God?

What situations would it likely be useful in?

*As you begin to memorize verses in books you have already researched, consider how the book's background information impacts the verse, then feel free to read one "dead guy" commentary on Day 5 and the "live guy" on Day 6.

Program 4: Two Verses Per Week, With Commentary

Day 1: Read verse 1 in context – the chapter(s) *before* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 2: Read verse 1 in context – the chapter(s) *after* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 3: For verse 1 read a "dead guy" and a "live guy" commentary.

How does that effect the meaning of the verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 4: Read verse 2 in context – the chapter(s) *before* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 5: Read verse 2 in context – the chapter(s) *after* the verse.

What is the author saying in the passage/verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 6: For verse 2 read a "dead guy" and a "live guy" commentary.

How does that effect the meaning of the verse?

What is God saying to you today in what you read? (write it down in a journal)

Day 7: Review what God has been saying through the week.

What is He asking you to do/change through these verses (this is the application)?

Meet and discuss the verse using the following questions

- **What?:** What is the verse (verbatim)? What is the context? What does it mean?

- **So What?:** What does it say about God? About Jesus?

Why is this verse important today?

- **What next?:** How does this verse shape my walk with God?

What situations would it likely be useful in?