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When my siblings and I were young, our mom helped us memorize many Bible verses by setting them to music. We sang them so much that even now, I can remember each verse just by humming the tune that goes along with it. Little did we know then that our mother was not just teaching us to memorize verses, she was also teaching us how to retain God's Word in our hearts and to live it.

Proverbs shows us that Solomon learned to retain the words of his father, David, who was a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). By remembering the words of his father, Solomon would have learned to retain God's Word—to keep His commandments and live.

Proverbs 4:3-5:

For I [Solomon] was my father's [David's] son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother.

He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.

Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

God's Word exhorts us to remember His Word and to let it dwell in us.

Psalms 105:5:

Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth.

Colossians 3:16:

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly....

As we put scriptures in our memory, that allows us to hold fast to God's Word. Holding fast to the Word is doing the Word, living it.

II Timothy 1:13:

Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

Titus 1:9:

Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.

Here are some benefits of retaining the Word, of putting the Word in our memory and living it.

RETAINING THE WORD HELPS US GROW AND PROSPER.

Psalms 1:2,3:

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

IT SETS US FREE.

John 8:31,32:

Then said Jesus to those Jews [Judeans] which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;

And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

The word translated “disciple” here is one who retains and practices what he has learned. The Word that we know, that we practice, that we live, is the truth that makes us free.

IT HELPS US OBEY GOD’S WORD.

Psalms 119:11:

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

IT HELPS US STAY FIRM ON THE TRUTH AND RESIST TEMPTATION.

In Matthew 4:1-10, Jesus Christ set a great example by responding to the Devil's temptations with God's Word: "It is written...." "It is written again...." He had scriptures at the ready so that he could stay firm through all the temptations, instead of giving in.

RETAINING GOD'S WORD BRINGS US PEACE.

Isaiah 26:3:

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

IT KEEPS OUR WORDS POSITIVE.

Luke 6:45:

A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

IT ENABLES US TO HELP OTHERS BY SHARING THE WORD WITH THEM.

I Peter 3:15:

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear [reverence].

In order to receive those benefits, it starts with putting God's Word in our minds so we can retain those truths. Here are some practical keys to help us remember scriptures.

- **UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE MEMORIZING.** When we have context for verses, remembering can be easier. II Timothy 2:15 tells us, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." Understanding the meaning of a verse through personal study can certainly help in the memorizing process.
- **MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS.** God is not the author of confusion, but of peace (I Corinthians 14:33). When we can find a peaceful place to focus, minimizing distractions, our power of memorization increases that much more. Is there somewhere you like to go when you need to concentrate? That could be a perfect place to work on retaining God's Word!

- **LEARN BY REPETITION.** Have you ever waited until the last minute to study for an exam and tried to memorize all the information in one marathon study session? When I did this, I would forget everything right after the test. Setting aside a little time every day to keep going over the same verses helps us retain them in our memory. Using repetition works!
- **FIND WHAT WORKS FOR YOU.** When I was young, setting verses to tune worked especially well. Now I keep verses on index cards in my purse, and my sister and I text each other verses that we want to remember. Maybe reciting each verse out loud or associating mental pictures with them will work best for you. Having a partner with whom you can work on memorization could be advantageous, or perhaps you want to keep all of the verses you memorize in a book. When you discover what works for you, you can develop a firm system to build from.
- **ENJOY IT!** Psalms 119:162 says, “I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil.” When we enjoy working to retain Scripture, we will be much better at it.

Let's enjoy memorizing scriptures so that we can hold fast to those truths and live them, reaping the benefits of retaining God's Word.

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