

5 WAYS SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION HELPS IN AFFLICTION

“If your law had not been my delight,
I would have perished in my affliction.”

-Psalm 119:92



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INTRODUCTION

Life is full of uncertainty. One thing that is certain is our experience of trouble and tribulation. Jesus Himself warned us of this in John 16:33 when He said, “In the world you will have tribulation.” Thankfully, as believers, we have something even more certain than our struggles in this life: our hope in Christ!

Directly following Christ's warning is a message of hope: “But take heart; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). How are we, as Christians, to take heart? In times of tribulation, how can we cling to precious promises of Christ such as this one? The answer to this question is clear. God has given us His Word for comfort, hope, a renewed perspective, stability, and strength in affliction. Christians are to run to Scripture for refuge, and it is there that we can behold the face of Christ.

Scripture memorization makes it easier to call truth to mind when our Bibles are out of reach. It carries us when we are spiritually too weak to study and provides the words to pray when we don't have any of our own.

In the following pages, we'll go deeper into five ways that memorizing God's Word helps us in our affliction.

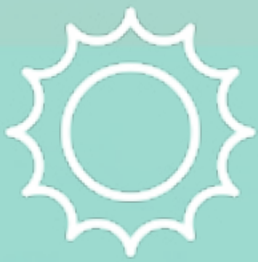


1. MEMORIZED SCRIPTURE BRINGS **COMFORT**

Each day, we need a source of comfort—one that won't change under the pressures of this world. The greatest comfort we can receive is that which comes from God. We access God's comfort through His Word. Because we can never exhaust the all-encompassing comfort that He gives, we will always be supplied with enough to sustain both ourselves and others. 2 Corinthians 1:3-5 says,

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. For as we share abundantly in Christ's sufferings, so through Christ we share abundantly in comfort too.”

Because of what Christ has done for us, we now have access to our Heavenly Father and the comfort that He gives. We're able to receive this comfort when we internalize His Word in affliction.



2. MEMORIZED SCRIPTURE RENEWS OUR HOPE

We see the psalmist finding hope in affliction through the written Word of God seven times in Psalm 119:

Vs. 43 - "And take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth, for my hope is in your rules."

Vs. 49 - "Remember your word to your servant, in which you have made me hope."

Vs. 74 - "Those who fear you shall see me and rejoice, because I have hoped in your word."

Vs. 81 - "My soul longs for your salvation; I hope in your word."

Vs. 114 - "You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in your word."

Vs. 116 - "Uphold me according to your promise, that I may live, and let me not be put to shame in my hope!"

Vs. 147 - "I rise before dawn and cry for help; I hope in your words."

When we meditate on Scripture, our minds soak up its truths. Because of the goodness of our God, He has not withheld His Word from us. With the psalmist and the apostle Paul we too, can conclude, "whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).



3. MEMORIZED SCRIPTURE FIXES OUR EYES ON ETERNITY

The apostle Paul reminded first-century churches, and us, about the value of fixing our eyes on eternity and our heavenly hope. Philippians 2:16 encourages us to be “holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.” God’s Word equips us for daily living, promising a reward to those who cling to it. When we prize God’s Word, we can, with Paul, be certain that our race for Christ was not in vain.

Likewise, 2 Corinthians 4 concludes,

“For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal” (vs. 17-18).

Though the things of this world are temporal, the truths of God are eternal. How much more will our minds be set on these truths if we store up the Scriptures in our hearts?



4. MEMORIZED SCRIPTURE POINTS US TO OUR ANCHOR

In a world where change and uncertainty abound, people value security and steadiness. The only anchor that can sustain us through the tumultuous winds and waves of this world's afflictions is the sure and steady anchor of a true hope in Christ. This hope is revealed to us in the written Word of God.

As we read in Hebrews 6:18-19, "We who have fled for refuge might have strong encouragement to hold fast to the hope set before us. We have this as a sure and steadfast anchor of the soul, a hope that enters into the inner place behind the curtain." God's Word, though never referred to as an "anchor" directly, paves the way to our living anchor—Jesus Christ.

The man who builds his life upon the foundation of the Scriptures will be firmly planted because God's Word is secure (Psa. 1:3; Matt. 7:24). A wise man, according to Luke 6:48, "is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built."



5. MEMORIZED SCRIPTURE PROVIDES STRENGTH

The psalmist says in Psalm 119:92, “If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction.” This verse applies to us today. Without the life-giving power of God’s Word, we have no strength. Yet with God’s Word, we will be preserved from perishing. In our times of distress, we can delight in the Scriptures and find the strength we need to continue on in the faith for the glory of God.

For our God “has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has not hidden his face from him, but has heard, when he cried to him” (Psa. 22:24). Scripture reminds us of the God we serve—the God who will faithfully carry us through every hardship in this life until we see Him face to face.

Application Questions:

1. What verses will you store up in your heart for the day of trouble (Psa. 119:11)?
2. How can the sufferings and victory of Christ bring us comfort (1 Cor. 15:57-58)?