

Memorizing Scripture

Why Should the Young Memorize Scripture?

By Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, D.D.

The matter of memorizing is a question regarding the boys and girls. Grown people memorize, but it is by a strong effort. Children memorize, almost as ducks swim. It "comes natural" to them.

And the question, Why should the young memorize Scripture? needs only to be asked, one would think, to be already answered.

A vital portion of the curriculum of the public school is the committing to memory of choice passages from the best writers, in prose and poetry. There is a double profit in this. The child is brought under the uplifting influence of the great master minds—moulded into a finer, nobler shape; and what is memorized becomes a permanent deposit, a sort of mental bank account, to be drawn on at will to the end of time.

There is no other literature which, for beauty of form, depth of sentiment, loftiness of ideals, far reach into the unseen and eternal, can for a moment compare with the contents of those sixty-six books which we call the Old and New Testaments. It is well recognized, for instance, that the preacher who takes the strongest grip of the heart and conscience, and holds it longest, is the man who is saturated with the Word of God: it is as if God Himself, in very truth, spoke in him and through him. Nothing can take the place of this spiritual equipment.

We owe the children the best. They take what we give; and if, in their training, we hold back anything they ought to have, we are their defrauders. No child has the best, either for time or for eternity, who sets out in life lacking a goodly portion of scripture stored in his memory. It is a very swift transition from childhood to manhood or womanhood,—often, like the sudden exit from a quiet harbor into the open, unprotected ocean. The words of weight and wisdom from the holy book have proved, in many a case, the ballast that has steadied the ship in the storm, and saved it from

certain wreck. Bitter, often, are the regrets from aged people as they draw near to the end of life's journey, and look back unavailingly on the past; but a universal cause of rejoicing, with them, is some sweet Psalm, or some word of hope from the lips of the blessed Lord, or some enriching experience of an apostle, which they learned by heart as children and which shine out now like bright lights in the growing darkness.

How to Promote Memorizing

[The four examples here given of how the memorizing of Scripture may be promoted are from actual experience.—EDITORS.]

MEDALS FOR MEMORIZING

By William Ewart, Esq.

Superintendent, St. Paul's Sabbath School,
Smith's Falls, Ont.

1. The superintendent and teachers fully realize the importance of the boys' and girls' memorizing scripture before being promoted from the Senior Classes to the Junior Bible Class, because, if they do not, they are not likely ever to do so. Therefore we keep kindly urging and encouraging them.

2. For a number of years, we have been favored by having gentlemen in the School and congregation, and also some outsiders interested in our School, who generously donate a gold and silver medal to the scholars who memorize the highest number of scripture verses (one girl recited over twelve hundred verses).

The pastor, superintendent, assistant superintendent, and secretary are a committee to hear verses recited. Scholars must not come to the committee with less than fifty verses to be heard. The passages to be memorized are first to be from General Assembly's Lists I, II, III, then fifty verses from the Psalms and fifty from John's Gospel alternately. While the scholars are memorizing for the medals, they are preparing for the General Assembly's Certificates, Diplomas, and Seals. They have thereby every encouragement given them.