

5 WAYS TO ENGAGE WITH

scripture

pray it

write it

memorize it

journal it

mark it

WHAT IS SCRIPTURE ENGAGEMENT?

Have you ever read a Bible passage and when you were finished had no idea what you just read? It's one thing to simply read scripture, but when you engage with it, when you learn to slow down & REALLY read it, suddenly key words and principles start popping off the page.

While there isn't really one definitive definition of what it means to engage scripture, I think of it this way - scripture engagement is any method I use to spend time in God's word while gaining insight - both of the meaning of the text and how scripture applies to my life.

Here are a few other thoughts:

"Scripture engagement is interaction with the biblical text in a way that provides sufficient opportunity for the text to speak for itself by the power of the Holy Spirit, enabling readers and listeners to hear the voice of God and discover for themselves the unique claim Jesus Christ is making upon them."

Dr. Fergus Macdonald, Taylor University Center for Scripture Engagement

"Bible engagement is the process whereby people are connected with the Bible such that they have meaningful encounters with Jesus Christ and their lives are progressively transformed in Him."

Dr. Lawson Murray, President Scripture Union Canada

"Bible engagement is 'the process of taking in and living out God's Word for the purpose of knowing him better and experiencing him more.'"

Whitney Kuniholm, President of Scripture Union USA

Remember - Anytime you engage with scripture, always begin with PRAYER.

PRAY IT

What does it mean to “pray Scripture”?

Evan Howard in his book Praying the Scriptures writes, “To pray the Scriptures is to order one’s time of prayer around a particular text in the Bible.”

- You can pray the prayers of the Bible word-for-word as your own prayers, personalizing portions of the Scriptures in prayer, or praying through various topics of the Bible.
- Unsure about what you should pray? The Bible is full of prayers! From Genesis to Revelation there are biblical prayers you can pray to strengthen your spiritual life. These prayers express every kind of emotion and experience.
- The whole book of Psalms is a prayer book and it is a great place to start praying scripture!
- The prayers of the Bible (especially the Lord’s Prayer - Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4), are a guide to help you have conversations with God.
- Another way of praying scripture is to look up passages on specific topics as you feel led. Perhaps you are struggling with forgiveness. By looking up passages on forgiveness and then praying through those passages and applying them to your life, you will begin to see how very relevant the Bible is to your life today.

Suggested passages to pray:

- Matthew 6:5-14
- Psalm 23
- Psalm 20
- Hebrews 4:14-16
- Psalm 19:14
- Psalm 27:1
- Romans 8:26

Check out these resources -

[My Favorite Way to Pray Blog Post](#)
[Guided Prayer Journals](#)

WRITE IT

Scripture writing has gained popularity in the last few years. It is a wonderful way to spend time meditating on God's word.

It is so easy to read the Bible and immediately forget what was read within minutes. Writing scripture out by hand gives you the space to slow down the process of reading and have a more reflective engagement with God's Word.

Writing scripture out by hand gives you more time to think about the passage and process the meaning and applications.

- Choose a specific notebook that will be dedicated to your scripture writing or get one of our Scripture Memorization Journals [here](#).
- Find a quiet place that allows you to focus on what you're writing.
- Identify a passage or a book of the Bible that you would like to interact with or spend time memorizing. You may want to spend a period of time focused on one topic such as faith, love, patience or faith. Or you can use scripture writing as a practice that focuses your attention on God during a specific season such as Advent or Lent.
- Start small, with just a few verses, so you don't get overwhelmed.
- Once you have the hang of it, you may want to write out a whole book of the Bible instead of isolated sections, especially of narrative-style books. This will help you view the book as a whole, understanding its complete message in context.
- Always begin in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to help you focus and reveal his truth to you in the passage.
- Take your time as you write. The goal is not to finish writing out the passage but to spend time in God's Word and spend time with God. Savor the process of looking closely at every word.
- Along with your hand copying, consider keeping notes about what you're learning, prayer requests, and/or questions you might have.

You can find our seasonal Scripture Writing Journals [here](#).

MEMORIZE IT

It's no secret that memorizing scripture and hiding it in your heart has great benefits. (Check out our [blog post About the Importance/Benefits of Hiding God's Word in your Heart](#))

Here are a few of our favorite Scripture Memorization Techniques:

- Schedule it!

There are only so many hours in a day; we make time for the things that matter to us. Sometimes, making time looks like scheduling/building little moments into our day. Memorizing scripture is a prime example of an exercise you can employ this method for. You are far more likely to succeed at forming a habit if you set a time or routine for yourself and stick to it.

- Listen to it or Say it Out Loud!

Some people learn better when they hear something spoken out loud. Scripture is no exception. One simple, but effective technique for committing scripture to memory is saying out loud, or listening to it being read.

- Try the Process of Elimination!

Grab a spiral notebook and write out your verse. Turn the page, then write out the verse, but omit a couple of key words. Turn to the next page, then write out the word omitting the previously omitted words, as well as a couple more. Continue the process until you are down to very few words (or none at all). Each day, progress further through the series, until you reach the end and are able to recite the whole verse from memory.

- Initialism!

Sometimes all it takes is just a little hint to help jog our memories. Whether attempting to memorize a long or short passage, initialism can be a useful tool for helping remember. Read over the passage, then write out only the first letter of each word. Study the passage, then, attempt to say it from memory, using only the first initials of each word. Posting the initials in high-traffic areas is a great way to exercise your mind throughout your day.

- Color It!

There are scores of Coloring Bibles (including our best-selling Inspire Coloring and Journaling Bibles) and Scripture Coloring Books on the market. Additionally, a quick web search can yield TONS of free scripture coloring pages and printables. For many, coloring is an excellent way to meditate/let words soak in. This works great with both coloring a picture with a scripture as a caption, or coloring in block letters of the actual words, themselves. (You can also create your own scripture coloring art by using a hollow/outlined font to type out the verse you'd like to memorize, print it out, and color it in.) If you want to double-up, you can even listen to a Bible reading, sermon or podcast over the scripture you're coloring!

Want to become a scripture memorizing pro? Check out these resources -

[10 Reasons to Make Memorizing Scripture a Priority Blog Post](#)

[Hide it in Your Heart Scripture Memorization Course](#)

JOURNAL IT

Journaling Scripture helps you to focus and concentrate on a passage, allowing you to gain greater understanding of what you read. Writing often helps us clarify our thinking. You can use different journaling techniques to observe, interpret, and apply what you are reading.

A few journaling methods to try:

- SOAP

SOAP stands for SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, and PRAYER. When using this method of journaling, you will write out the scripture (or summarize a passage), then write down your observations, ways you might apply the scripture to your life, and a prayer regarding the scripture.

- SUMMARY METHOD

1. read the passage at least twice
2. highlight or underline key words or concepts
3. divide the passage into sections (2-4 sections)
4. journal the sections - you might choose to outline the sections, pull out key words and what you learn about them from the passage, write a summary for each section, or write answers to "who, what, when, where, why, and how?" regarding the passage.

- IDENTITY JOURNALING

We all want to know who we are. We seek and search and read books and take quizzes as we look for our identity. But do you ever ask, "What does God think about me? Who does he say that I am?" The truth is that God has a lot to say about who we are — a whole Bible full. And often, He tells us who we are by telling us who He is. Think about it this way, "God is _____, therefore, I am _____." God reveals our identity by revealing His in His word.

For example -

But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. Isaiah 43:1

God is: my creator and redeemer. Therefore, I am: redeemed, called, known, His, not alone, protected and saved.

Check out these resources -

[Where do I Start with Bible Journaling?](#)

[Bible Study Journals](#)

[Identity Journals](#)

MARK IT

Highlighting and marking key words as you read is a great way to engage with God's word.

You can choose a color or a symbol to mark key words in your Bible as you read.

What are key words and why are they important?

- Think about the keys to your house. What is their purpose? They unlock the door to your house. Biblical key words unlock Biblical truths and principles.
- Identifying key words and phrases helps us to understand the context and main points of any Biblical passage or book.
- As you identify key words and phrases you will then be able to unlock the author's main subjects or points which will lead you to understand the author's theme.

How to locate and use key words as you study:

- Authors often repeat key words. Synonyms, pronouns, and nearly identical phrases often indicate that a word is key.
- Rule of Removal: If you are unsure whether or not a word is a key word, try removing it from the sentence. If the meaning remains largely intact, it's not a key word. Key words are vital to the understanding of the text and cannot be removed without leaving the passage devoid of meaning.
- Key words will ALWAYS answer one or more of the 5W/H questions.
- Key words form a basis for lists of truth. After selecting key words in a passage, make a list for each word stating what you learn about the word each time it is used.
- It can be helpful to look up the original Hebrew or Greek translation of a key word and compare how it is used in other passages.

Check out these resources -

[Key Word Journal](#)

[Books of the Bible Journal](#)

RESOURCES

[Farm Girl Journals Bible Study Blog](#)

[How to Get Started With Verse Mapping](#)

[My Favorite Way to Pray](#)

[Where do I Start with Bible Journaling?](#)

[Scripture Writing Journals](#)

[Key Word Journal](#)

[Bible Study Journals](#)

[10 Reasons to Make Memorizing Scripture a Priority Blog Post](#)

[Hide it in Your Heart Scripture Memorization Course](#)

[The Bible Study Collective Membership Group](#)