

Your Word, My Heart

By Michael Sanders

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Psalms 119:10-12 I have sought You with **my whole heart**; do not let me wander from **Your Commands**. (11) I have hidden **Your Word** in **my heart**, that I might not sin against You. (12) Blessed *are* you, O LORD; teach me Your Statutes. LITV

Scripture memorization is something we all ought to pray about. For some of us it seems easy, for others of us it is a difficult thing to do. Not only that but it's hard to decide exactly what scriptures we ought to commit to memory.

Certainly, when we have a clear purpose such as evangelism, it's a little easier; but what about everyday life? I'm not talking about the tough times when we need the mighty assurances of G-d's love and sovereignty but rather those "normal" times as we go about our daily lives, the "humdrum" times. How do we determine what scriptures?

Well, let's start with looking at where we put them. The verses above give us clear direction. Let's look closely.

Where we put the Word is "in our hearts," but what does this mean? The word translated "heart" is the Hebrew word:

lêv לב

Though this word is used widely to refer to feelings, it is also used to refer to the will and even the intellect. More importantly, the idea behind the word is "center" or "core." We communicate this idea when we say, "that's the **heart** of the matter."

It's important that we hold on to this idea behind the word heart.

Mat 15:18-19 But **the things which come out of the mouth come forth from the heart**, and these defile the man. (19) For out of the heart come forth reasonings, evil *things*, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, lies, blasphemies. LITV

Luke 6:45 The good man brings forth good out of the good treasure of his heart. And the evil man brings forth evil out of the evil treasure of his heart, **for his mouth speaks out of the abundance of his heart**. LITV

From these passages we see clearly that what we say as well as what we do, good and evil, comes out of our hearts. That which is in our hearts, treasure or trash, has an unavoidable affect upon every facet of our lives.

So, we are to inundate our "hearts" with the Word of God. But which Word of God?

I suggest that the first thing you do is consider your life. Are you in business? Are you a boss or an employee? Are you a homemaker, a Mom, a Dad? Who are the people you associate with daily? You see, while we do want to hide the Word in our hearts so that we grow in Him, we also want to be light and salt in the world.

What kind of situations do you face on a regular basis? Now when you reflect on this question don't just focus on the hard things. Certainly we face trials and temptations but we also face the humdrum times as well. We go to the market, we drive in traffic, we wait in lines. These situations are no less important than the trial and from my experience (what I learned about me) it's easy to forget to be light and salt when we're not in a tough situation.

One example I learned was from my step-dad. Whenever we went out to eat he was always gracious to our servers. If there was a name tag he called them by name. He would also ask about their day and even ask what they recommended. Eating out with him was a wonderful experience, even when the food wasn't so good.

Why did this strike me so deeply? Well, if you've ever been a server in a restaurant, you know it's a tough job, even grueling. So, he wanted to bring a little joy into their lives. He wanted them to know that he appreciated them and what they were doing for him. He wanted to make their day just a little brighter than it might have been.

I try to do the same. When Patti and I go to the store I always thank the cashiers by name. I try to remember the name of as many of them as I can so I can ask them about their day. I want them to know that I recognize them as a person, a person who is doing me a service for which I am grateful. Just today as I was picking up a few things and a cashier who has checked me out several times ask me how I was doing. He remembered when I was so sick earlier this year and wanted to know how I was doing.

So what's the big deal? Well, I don't know if I'll ever have the opportunity to share the Gospel with him but my chances are better because he knows I see him as a person and over time he sees me the same. We have a relationship based upon kindness and respect that has now moved into a relationship of mutual interest and caring.

So what Word in my heart prompts me to this?

Rom 12:18 If **possible**, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

ESV

We can only be at peace with all men if we take the initiative to be peace givers. We should treat all men and women with dignity and respect and kindness.

Have you ever noticed this verse? A lot of folks have but they charged past it. It has served me well both in business, ministry and most importantly family.

This is an interesting verse. "Peaceably," isn't tough to figure out but the word "possible," is important. It's the Greek word *dunatos* 'doo-nat-os'. This word comes from the word *dunamai* 'doo'-nam-ahee which carries the idea, to be of power. From understanding this, and experience, I learned that it sometimes take power to live at peace with others. It takes effort, intentional effort. It takes sacrifice and patience and it takes perseverance.

The "power" I need to live at peace with others comes from Him through me. I can not be passive in this. I have to make the effort to use the power he gives me to live at peace with all kinds of folks both believers and non-believers. But the effort to make use of His power is well worth it. It changes me and it changes those I come into contact with. Sometimes it means speaking up, other times it means keeping my mouth shut and it takes intentional effort to discern which to do.

I've shared this to demonstrate that although the "standard" verses folks hide in their hearts are good and powerful, there are a lot of verses we usually don't think of or think through that can be even more powerful. Even more important to me, this isn't a negative command but a positive one that really stretches me mentally, emotionally and spiritually.

So what about you? As you read the Word, what verses touch something within you? What verses does the Lord move you with? What verses does He convict you with? These may be the verses He desires for you to hide in your heart. Certainly we hide these Words so that we might live righteous lives but it doesn't have to be a "don't" verse it can be a "do" verse.

How do you find them? First, just read the Word. Just read it and trust Him to bring out those verses that touch your heart. Second, you can go hunting. Hunting? Sure. Take stock of the issues you face both positive and negative. Then take a tool like Strong's Concordance, Nave's Topical Bible, Thompson's Chain Reference Bible or just the Concordance in the back of your Bible. Read the verses you find prayerfully and thoughtfully. Trust Him to be completing in you the work He began.

When you have some verses, prayerfully think about how they can help you be light and salt. Pray and think about how they can apply to the humdrum of living as well as the tough times. These verses are your verses. Well, they're our verses but you are a totally unique and dearly beloved child of the Father and He desires to transform that unique you to His image.

Remember that memorizing Scripture isn't memorizing magical incantations. Memorizing Scripture is our role in the work of the Holy Spirit He has given us.

John 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will **teach** you all things and **bring to your remembrance** all that I have said to you.

If I can be of any help, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Shalom,

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