

Psalm 119:11: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

Intro: Every year for the last twelve years: once a year, we've focused on the Word: reading the whole Bible in a year. Two years ago, same focus on the Word, challenge: listen to Mark Dever sermons on all the books of the Bible. This year, focus on the Word, challenge: memorize Romans chapter 8 together.

David Mathis: *Habits Of Grace: Enjoying Jesus Through The Spiritual Disciplines:* Before turning our focus to "the means of grace," and the practices ("habits") that ready us to go on receiving God's grace in our lives, this much must be clear from the outset: The grace of God is gloriously beyond our skill and technique. The means of grace are not about earning God's favor, twisting his arm, or controlling his blessing, but readying ourselves for consistent saturation in the roll of his tides.

- 1) We're chosen by grace: **Ephesians 1:4-5:** he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ
- 2) Jesus' work is grace to us: **Titus 2:11:** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people; Jesus came, full of grace & truth, & He lived a perfect life, died on that cross, & rose up from the dead!
- 3) We believe by grace: **Ephesians 2:8-9:** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.
- 4) We repent by grace: **2 Tim. 2:25:** God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth
- 5) We're justified by grace: **Rom 3:24:** justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus
- 6) We're sanctified by grace: **2 Cor 12:9:** My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness
- 7) We will be glorified by grace: **2 Thessalonians 1:12:** so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

David Mathis: The means of grace, & their many good expressions, will serve to make us more like him, but only as our focus returns continually to Christ himself, not our own Christlikeness. It is in "beholding the glory of the Lord" that we "are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another" (2 Cor. 3:18). Spiritual growth is a marvelous effect of such practices, but in a sense it is only a side effect. The heart is knowing & enjoying Jesus.

One way to know & enjoy Jesus: Psalm 119:11: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

John Piper: There are two ways to state the ultimate goal of life, one positively & one negatively. Positively we could say: the ultimate goal of life is to glorify God by enjoying him forever. Or negatively, we could say: the ultimate goal of life is not to sin. They both mean the same thing because sinning is falling short of glorifying God by embracing other things as more enjoyable. So if we could learn how to glorify God by enjoying him, we would know how not to sin. & if we could learn how not to sin, we would know how to glorify God by enjoying him. Psalm 119:11 tells us one of the keys to not sinning. It says, speaking to God, "Thy word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against thee." The way not to sin is to treasure the word of God in your heart. Which means that the way to succeed in the ultimate goal of life – to live for the glory of God by enjoying him forever – is to treasure the word of God in your heart.

Memorize God's Word that your hearts may be stirred to turn from sin absurd for Christ is always preferred.

1. Memorizing God's Word Forces You To Read God's Word

Psalm 119:11: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

You can't memorize something unless you read it or hear it first. Memorizing God's Word forces you to read it, & reading God's Word has always been a priority for God's people:

- 1) **Exodus 24:7:** Then he took the Book of the Covenant and **read** it in the hearing of the people.

- 2) **Kings: Deut 17:18-20:** when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. & it shall be with him, & he shall **read** in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law & these statutes, & doing them
- 3) **Joshua 8:34-35:** And afterward he **read** all the words of the law, the blessing and the curse, according to all that is written in the Book of the Law. ³⁵ There was not a word of all that Moses commanded that Joshua did not **read** before all the assembly of Israel, and the women, and the little ones, and the sojourners who lived among them.
- 4) **King Josiah's reforms: 2 Kings 23:2:** the king went up to the house of the LORD, & with him all the men of Judah & all the inhabitants of Jerusalem & the priests & the prophets, all the people, both small & great. And he **read** in their hearing all the words of the Book of the Covenant that had been found in the house of the LORD.
- 5) **Nehemiah 8:2-3:** So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could understand what they heard, on the first day of the seventh month. ³ And he **read** from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law.
- 6) **Jesus: Luke 4:16-17:** & he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. & as was his custom, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, & he stood up to **read**.
- 7) **The Church: Colossians 4:16:** And when this letter has been **read** among you, have it also **read** in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also **read** the letter from Laodicea.
- **1 Timothy 4:13:** Until I come, devote yourself to the public **reading** of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.
 - **Revelation 1:3:** Blessed is the one who **reads** aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near.

Memorizing God's Word forces you to read it, & reading God's Word will keep you from sinning against God.
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2. Memorizing God's Word Forces You To Meditate On God's Word

Psalm 119:11: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

- **Meditate (Webster's 1828):** To dwell on any thing in thought; to contemplate; to study; to turn or revolve any subject in the mind; appropriately but not exclusively used of pious contemplation, or a consideration of the great truths of religion.
- **Donald Whitney:** deep thinking on the truths and spiritual realities revealed in Scripture for the purposes of understanding, application, and prayer

- 1) **Joshua 1:8-9:** This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall **meditate** on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.
- 2) **Psalm 1:1-2:** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, & on his law he **meditates** day and night.
- **Psalm 119:15:** I will **meditate** on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways.
 - **Psalm 145:5:** On the glorious splendor of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will **meditate**.

Memorizing God's Word forces you to meditate on it, & meditating on God's Word will keep you from sinning against God.
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3. Memorizing God's Word Helps You Rightly Understand God's Word

Psalm 119:11: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

Most false teaching occurs when false teachers take God's Word out of context and focus on one truth in God's Word to the exclusion of all the other truth in God's Word.

Creflo Dollar: Jesus was not God while He was here on earth because the Bible says God never sleeps nor slumbers, and there we see Jesus asleep on the boat. So, you see, Jesus was not God while on earth. **Wrong!**

But what about all the other Bible verses that teach Jesus was (and still is!) God! John 1:1; 8:58; 20:28

Memorizing large portions of the Bible & memorizing verses that specifically shed light on certain Christian doctrines will help keep you from falling into false teaching & help you better understand God & His Word.

- **Colossians 2:4:** I say this in order that no one may delude you with plausible arguments.

- **2 Corinthians 10:5:** We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ

- **2 Timothy 2:15:** Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

Memorizing God's Word helps you rightly understand it, & rightly understanding God's Word will keep you from sinning against God.

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4. Memorizing God's Word Forces You To Think About God And Know Him Better

Psalm 119:11: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

Colossians 3:1-2: If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. ² Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

David Mathis: When we learn the Scriptures by heart, we're not just memorizing ancient, enduringly relevant texts, but we're listening to & learning the voice of our Creator & Redeemer himself. When we memorize lines from the Bible, we are shaping our minds in the moment to mimic the structure and mindset of the mind of God . . . the apostle has two answers to the question, Who has known the mind of the Lord? The first is implied in the rhetorical question of Romans 11:34: "Who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?" Answer: No one. His mind is infinitely beyond ours. "How unsearchable are his judgments & how inscrutable are his ways!" (Rom 11:33). No human may fully know the mind of God. & yet Paul gives this second answer in 1 Cor 2:16: "we have the mind of Christ." As we not only read & study the Scriptures, but understand them, & then meditate on & memorize them, we increasingly "have the mind of Christ" as we are conformed to his image. We cannot know the mind of God exhaustively, but we can make real progress in degrees. & few ways, if any, imprint the mind of God on our minds like memorization, with meditation, of what he has so plainly said in the Scriptures.

Phil. 3:8: Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

Memorizing God's Word forces you to think about God & know God better, & thinking about God and knowing Him better will keep you from sinning against Him.

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5. Memorizing God's Word Reminds You Of God's Commandments So That You May Trust And Obey

Psalm 119:11: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

- **Psalm 119:7-11:** I will praise you with an upright heart, when I learn your righteous rules. I will keep your statutes; do not utterly forsake me! How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word. With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

- **John 8:31-32:** If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, & you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

- **John 15:7:** my words abide in you (This is more than mere memorization!)
- **Matthew 28:20:** teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.
- **Romans 10:17:** So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Memorizing God's Word reminds you of God's commandments so that you may trust & obey God, & when you trust and obey God, you are kept from sinning against Him.

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GOSPEL!

6. Memorizing God's Word Brings You Joy In God

Psalm 119:11: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

- **Psalm 119:20:** My soul is consumed with longing for your rules at all times.
- **Psalm 119:14:** In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches.
- **Psalm 119:72:** The law of your mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver pieces.
- **Psalm 119:103:** How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!
- **Psalm 119:24:** Your testimonies are my delight; they are my counselors.
- **Psalm 119:131:** I open my mouth and pant, because I long for your commandments.

Memorizing God's Word brings you joy in God, & joy in God will keep you from sinning against God.

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7. Memorizing God's Word Helps You Share God's Truth With Others

Psalm 119:11: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

- 1) The Gospel: **1 Cor. 15:3-4:** For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures . . . (evangelism and defending the faith; God's Word: a fire, a hammer, will not return void!)
- 2) Discipleship: The Great Commission
- 3) Encouragement: **Romans 15:4:** For 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.
1 Thess. 4:15-18: For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, & with the sound of the trumpet of God. & the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, & so we will always be with the Lord. Therefore encourage one another with these words.
- 4) Warning: **1 Thessalonians 5:14:** And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.

Memorizing God's Word helps you share God's truth with others, & sharing God's truth with others keeps you from sinning against God. (You are obeying God in Evangelism & Discipleship; You're busy about God's work)

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8. We Are Commanded/Encouraged To Memorize God's Word

Psalm 119:11: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

- **Deuteronomy 6:4-9:** Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart & with all your soul & with all your might. & these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, & shall talk of them when you sit in your house, & when you walk by the way, & when you lie down, & when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, & they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house & on your gates.

- **Colossians 3:16:** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.

You are commanded to memorize God's Word & obeying God's commands keeps you from sinning against God. Memorize God's Word that your hearts may be stirred to turn from sin absurd for Christ is always preferred.

9. Memorizing God's Word Renews Your Mind And Makes You Wise

Psalm 119:11: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

- **Romans 12:2:** Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

- **Philippians 4:8:** Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

- **Psalm 119:97-100:** Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day. Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts.

David Mathis: Bible memory not only prepares us for the someday-maybes when we use a memorized verse in counseling or witnessing or fighting sin, but it contributes powerfully in the present to making us the kind of person who walks in the Spirit today. It contributes right now to your being "renewed in the spirit of your minds" (Ephesians 4:23), and being "transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect" (Romans 12:2). Not only is it then accessible to us for future decision-making and temptation-battling in varying contexts, but the very act of memorizing Scripture, as we understand and engage with the meaning of the text, changes our minds in the present to make us the kind of people who "discern what is the will of God."

Memorizing God's Word renews your mind & makes you wise, & renewing your mind and pursuing wisdom keeps you from sinning against God.

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10. Memorize God's Word To Fight Like Jesus, To Be Like Jesus, And To See Jesus

Psalm 119:11: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

Jesus Christ stored, treasured, hid God's Word in His heart like no other man who ever lived! And He is the only man who ever lived who never sinned against God! "It is written!" "Have you not read?!"

Kevin Halloran: He quoted twenty-four books of the Old Testament almost 180 times in the New Testament. It's clear that he thought of the Scriptures as the ultimate authority in life and a way to understand the heart and desires of God. Why would we not follow the example of Jesus in knowing the Scriptures by heart?

a. Jesus Christ fought temptations using Scripture: Matthew 4:1-11: Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. & after fasting forty days & forty nights, he was hungry. & the tempter came & said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." But he answered, "It is written, "'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Then the devil took him to the holy city & set him on the pinnacle of the temple & said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written, "'He will command his angels concerning you,' & "'On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain & showed him all the kingdoms of the world & their glory. & he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down & worship me." Then Jesus said to him, "Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "'You shall worship the Lord your God &

him only shall you serve." Then the devil left him, & behold, angels came and were ministering to him.

- **Ephesians 6:17:** the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God
- **Matthew 5:8:** Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
- **Psalm 42:5:** Hope in God
- **Psalm 56:3:** When I am afraid, I put my trust in you.

b. You see Jesus when you store God's Word up in your heart: Galatians 3:1: O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.

Simon Gathercole: Paul believes that his proclamation of the Gospel was so vivid in the Galatians' presence that it was as if they had been eyewitnesses of the crucifixion.

Moses And The Prophets' Main Message Is Jesus Christ Himself:

- **Luke 24:27:** And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.
- **John 1:45:** We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote - Jesus of Nazareth
- **John 5:39:** You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me
- **John 5:46:** For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.
- **Acts 10:43:** To Him all the prophets witness

The Father's Main Message Is Jesus Christ Himself:

- **John 3:16:** For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.
- **John 5:37:** And the Father who sent me has himself borne witness about me.
- **John 8:18:** I am the one who bears witness about myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness about me.
- **1 John 4:14:** And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.
- **1 John 5:9-12:** If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son. Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.

Jesus' Main Message Is Jesus Christ Himself:

- **John 6:35:** I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, & he who believes in Me shall never thirst.
- **John 8:12:** I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.
- **John 10:9:** I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved
- **John 10:11:** I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.
- **John 11:25:** I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.
- **John 14:6:** I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.
- **John 15:5:** I am the vine, you are the branches for without Me you can do nothing.

The Holy Spirit's Main Message Is Jesus Christ Himself:

- **John 15:26:** But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.
- **John 16:14:** He [the Spirit of truth] will glorify Me [Jesus], for he will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.
- **1 Corinthians 12:3:** Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.

The Apostles' Main Message Is Jesus Christ Himself:

- **Acts 1:8:** you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me
- **Acts 5:42:** daily in the temple, & in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.
- **Acts 8:5:** Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria & preached Christ to them.
- **Acts 9:20:** he [Paul] preached the Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God.
- **1 Corinthians 2:2:** For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Memorize God's Word to fight like Jesus, to be like Jesus, & to see Jesus because fighting like Jesus, being like Jesus, and seeing Jesus keeps you from sinning against God.

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Psalm 119:11: I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you.

1 John 2:1: My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

Jesus Christ was crucified. He died on that cross & rose from the dead so that we might be saved & desire Him & His Word! He died on that cross & rose from the dead so that we might be saved from our sins & live out the purpose for which we were created – to glorify God & not sin against Him!

Christ Jesus' Heart Is A Treasure Chest
Filled With God And God's Word Best
He's God And Man Forever Blessed
Who Is The Word Who Came With Zest
He Spoke God's Word And All Addressed
And Memorized So When He's Pressed
He Quoted Scripture Passed The Test
Then Died And Rose To Give Us Rest
So In His Righteousness We're Dressed
He Saves All Nations East To West
Now With His Word We Are Obsessed
And Hide It In Our Hearts Possessed
So More And More Our Sins Detest
For Christ Is All Our Treasure Chest
In Him We Find Our Every Best!

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