

Developing a Devotional Lifestyle

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Developing Devotional Reflexes

Read Matthew 4:1-11

When Jesus was tempted, he responded with a reflex action – he spoke the Scripture. Now note that it wasn't just a matter of Jesus quoting Bible verses at Satan. He responded with the living Word of God. As you spend regular time with the Lord each day, the Holy Spirit will help you develop the same kind of reflex action. When you face temptation or trouble or trial, your response will be the Word of God – both spoken and lived. But there is a basic principle that is important to understand: Devotional reflexes come from devotional discipline. As you develop a regular habit of spending time with the Lord, you will find that your response to life will automatically come out of your devotional storehouse.

Read Isaiah 30:15

The time you spend with the Lord in the morning sets the pace for the rest of the day. And the focus of your morning appointment with the Lord should particularly focus on a quietness of soul before the Lord. This is why some Christians call their morning devotions their “quiet time.”

We live in a world of high stress. Many voices demand your attention. And so it is vital to have a time where you shut out the world's noise and just focus on your relationship with the Lord.

As Francis of Sales put it:

“Half an hour's listening is essential except when you are very busy. Then a full hour is needed.”

Putting it into Practice

In your devotions this morning, read **Psalms 130-131**. As you read, talk to the Lord about their content. When you have finished, go back and find one or two verses and meditate prayerfully on them.

MEMORY VERSE

...Man does not live on bread alone,
but on every word that comes from
the mouth of God.

Matthew 4:4

Here are a few suggestions that may help you to memorize your memory verses:

- ➡ Ask the Lord to help you remember his Word (see [John 14:26](#)).
- ➡ Use the version of the Bible you are most familiar with. What you normally read in your Bible is what you need to be memorizing.
- ➡ Don't just memorize the contents of the verse; memorize its "address" (the verse reference) as well. You can do this by following this pattern: Step 1: **reference**; Step 2: **verse content**; Step 3: **reference**. Then repeat steps 1-3. Note that you are quoting the reference twice as many times as you quote the actual verse content. This gives the verse a clear "reference tag."
- ➡ After you have read your memory verse out aloud several times, try going through your memory verse *without* reading your computer screen.
- ➡ Look up your memory verse in your Bible. Look at its immediate context and read the verses that come before and after your memory verse.
- ➡ Print out your memory verse or jot it down on a piece of paper. Take this paper with you when you go to work or do other daily activities. Meditate on the meaning of the verse throughout the day.
- ➡ During your noon appointment with the Lord, take out your memory verse and go over it again. Talk to the Lord about what this verse means to you personally.
- ➡ In the evening (at either your evening study or your evening devotions), see if you can quote your memory verse from memory. Then, without looking at the memory verse itself, see if you can find it in your Bible.
- ➡ The next day, before you begin committing a new verse to memory, rehearse your previous day's memory verse and see if you can remember it (without cheating!).
- ➡ Finally, at the end of the week (possibly on the Sunday), collect all your week's memory verses, rehearse them and see if you can recall them without reading them. Spend a little extra time on any verses you have difficulty recalling.
- ➡ Remember: Don't just memorize a verse. Put it into practice ([James 1:22](#)). It is not being able to quote a verse from memory that counts. It is His Word *abiding* in your heart that counts ([John 15:7](#)). When you actually apply a verse consistently to your daily life, that is when you *truly* know that verse!