

# **Campbell – Memory Work Suggestions**

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## **A school-wide memory work plan**

Memory work should flow out of passages and books being studied. By the end of middle school I recommend that students know the following:

- a. The Books of the Old and New Testaments
- b. The Cultural Mandate: Genesis 1:27, 28
- c. The Ten Commandments: Exodus 20:1-17
- d. The Great Commandment: Mark 12:30
- e. The Great Commission: Matthew 28:18-20
- f. Living in the Great Community: 1 Corinthians 13
- g. Luke 2:1-20 and Isaiah 53
- h. The Lord's Prayer: Matthew 6:9-13
- i. Psalms 1, 8, 23, 139 and 150 (at the very least)
- j. Parts of the resurrection passage: 1 Corinthians 15
- k. The Apostles' Creed—to connect with the church throughout the ages.

Each of these passages should be learned in community and individually. There could be lots of choral speaking involved. Bible memory should not become a drudgery or a chore just so that teachers can obtain a mark. If passages are learned in community and related to the Bible books being taught, they will become much more relevant and integrated into students' lives.

Other passages could be added as various books are being studied (e.g. Jonah 2 when the book of Jonah is being studied). If choral reading is called for, such as in Psalms 24 or 136, students should learn these periscopes in community. If singing is called for, communal praises sung to the glory of God will enhance the learning process. I also recommend *Bible reading out loud*, especially during 'devotion' time at the beginning, middle or end of the day: lots of Bible reading, with great expression! This could be done by the students themselves, so that every day they have a section to read out loud to the class; it need not be a long session. Communal prayer during these times of day allows the Word and the Spirit to work together. At the end of grade 12, students should know the outline of many Bible books (as well as more memory work passages that flow out of books being studied) so that each student will be thoroughly equipped for every good work, serving God and neighbor in all areas of life. I *strongly recommend* that every high school graduate leaves with a thorough knowledge of the five wisdom books so that they will know how to live with skill in all areas of life (see Appendix D).

These frameworks are pieces that could be kept in mind as teachers and students search the Scriptures together. Studying the Bible in this way would minimize the danger of over emphasizing one testament over the other or one book or set of books over the other (e.g. the Pentateuch studied in more depth than the New Testament letters) or presenting the Bible in too piece-meal a fashion. The object should be to study the Bible, not study only *about* the Bible. Much curriculum I examined did just that: there were so many

exercises/activities that took the students' attention away from God's Word itself, exercises that involved only moralistic deductions about stories or characters taught, or exercises that simply enhanced and reinforced language arts skills. Each time we come to the Bible, students and teachers would do well to remember that it is God's Word, both human and divine, and that by the Holy Spirit, working through the Word, students will understand what they are reading and studying (Acts 8:26-40). Teachers also need the freedom to discuss each Bible book in peace, not be loaded down by heavy curriculum demands that force them to 'cover' too much material. If the primary grades are to study the Pentateuch and the gospels during their four years (K-3), I would recommend storytelling (see pp.69-75) for each teacher and student with *only sparing use* of exercises from other prepared Bible curriculum materials. Exercises and activities to reinforce learning should flow out of the stories being studied. You as teacher are the prophet, priest and king, as discussed on page 3; you know what is suitable for your students; you decide before God how much time to spend on each Bible story or book so that the freedom we have in the Holy Spirit is not quenched.

This does not mean that we should do away with all Bible curriculum that has already been prepared for each (denominational) school. However, I would only use exercises/discussion suggestions/activities from these books that would *enhance the study of the Bible itself* so that faith and learning can be integrated.

Teachers should also be encouraged to integrate their study of the Bible in other subject areas. When studying a story in the style/framework of a Hebrew

narrative such as Jonah or Ruth, this format could be incorporated into the English program; when studying the history of Nineveh, geography and social studies could come into play. Throughout the day, art, language arts and music/drama activities could be incorporated into the Bible lessons and conducted because of the Bible lessons. As long as the broad frameworks listed above are kept in view, teachers may have freedom to teach and camp around a book. When they feel interest is waning and the topics have been exhausted, it will be time to move on.

Using these frameworks of understanding as they formulate their Bible curriculum, teachers in all Christian schools would be better equipped to meet their goals for teaching Bible and to integrate the teaching of Bible with the entire school curriculum, thus improving the integration of faith and learning. In this way, *our students will profit from the Word* and see their own story as part of God's unfolding plan of history.