
DEFINING SCRIPTURE MASTERY

“Scripture mastery” means finding scripture verses, understanding their meanings, and applying them in our lives. There are 100 scripture mastery references (25 in each scripture course). As the teacher you should help students master these scriptures by reviewing them in class and encouraging students to learn them on their own or even memorizing them.

Success in meeting this objective will depend largely upon your attitude as the teacher. For example, you can master the scriptures, devote some time in class to help your students feast upon them, and apply them to life's situations and problems. Also, expecting your students to learn the scripture mastery passages can be a key to successfully motivating them to do so.

Be mindful, however, that scripture mastery only supplements, not overshadows, daily sequential study of the scriptures. Be wise in the time you allot to scripture mastery, giving the regular curriculum priority. Home-study teachers must be particularly careful that the weekly class does not turn into a weekly scripture chase. Some ideas on when to do scripture mastery include:

- Plan time to effectively introduce scripture mastery verses as you come to them in the sequence of scripture.
- Take some time one day each week to work on scripture mastery.

- Take a little time each day for scripture mastery review.
- Work on scripture mastery when a lesson is shorter than planned.
- For the first part of the year, assign students to organize devotionals around scripture mastery verses.
- Have bulletin board themes based upon teachings from scripture mastery references.

President Howard W. Hunter, then President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, said, “We would hope none of your students would leave your classroom fearful or embarrassed or ashamed that they cannot find the help they need because they do not know the scriptures well enough to locate the proper passages” (*Eternal Investments* [An Evening with President Howard W. Hunter, Feb. 10, 1989], 2).

Ideas for Helping Students Find Scripture Mastery Verses

- Show students where to find the contents page at the front of the Bible, Book of Mormon, and Pearl of Great Price. Then have them find several of the mastery verses by using the contents pages.
- Help students learn the references of the scripture mastery verses and any important words or phrases that will help them remember those references.
- Practice finding scripture mastery verses. For example, you could read

part of a mastery reference aloud to your students and let them find or tell where the verse is located. You could also show an object or a picture and then ask questions about a reference.

Ideas for Helping Students Understand Scripture Mastery Verses

- Read the scripture mastery verses with your students to help them understand difficult words or phrases (see “During Reading” in the corresponding student study guide on page 3 or 4).
- Use the teacher resource manual’s teaching idea and the student study guide’s activity for the mastery verses to assist in understanding the doctrine taught.
- Teach students how to use the scripture study helps, such as the footnotes and Topical Guide (or *The Guide to the Scriptures*), and how to find other verses of scripture that help explain the doctrines and principles associated with the mastery verses. Students could write cross-references in the margins of their scriptures (see “Cross-References” under “Study Helps in the Latter-day Saint Editions of the Scriptures” in the corresponding student study guide, p. 2).
- Show students possible ways to mark their scriptures (see “During Reading” in the student study guide).
- Ask questions about the verses to help students understand them. For example, ask students who was speaking in the verse, whom he was speaking to, what the main idea is, and what the writer might have been feeling.
- Discuss the historical setting (the people, place, or time) of the verses; discover what is happening in the

verses or chapters before and after the mastery verses and how those verses or chapters help explain the setting.

- Have students write the verses in their own words, write questions about the verses, or draw a picture about something in the verses.
- Encourage students to memorize scripture mastery verses and then write or say them from memory.

Ideas for Helping Students Apply Scripture Mastery Verses

- Have students write what they think the mastery verses mean. Discuss how the verses can help students find answers to their questions and problems (see “After Reading” in the corresponding student study guide, p. 5).
- Help students look for any cause and effect relationships.
- Have students give short talks in class or in Church meetings using the scripture mastery verses they have learned.
- Have students tell how they could use a mastery verse to teach another person about the gospel.
- Have students tell how scripture mastery verses have been used in talks they heard in Church meetings or in general conferences.
- Encourage students to teach mastery scriptures in family home evening.
- Have students make posters for their homes or for the classroom using mastery verses that have special meaning to them.
- Divide the class into two groups. Have each group write down real-life situations, problems, or questions that can be answered by using scripture

mastery verses. Have the groups exchange papers and try to find the appropriate scriptures that answer the questions or problems posed.

- Review the scriptures your students have learned in previous years so that fourth-year students are conversant with the entire list of 100 scriptures when they graduate.

Conclusion

“Few things sponsor spiritual growth more than studying from the scriptures.

The Savior said, 'He that hath the scriptures, let him search them, and see . . .' (3 Nephi 10:14). The Lord has promised that if you will search, you shall see marvelous spiritual truths that will persuade you to turn to Christ as your great exemplar. You will be strengthened in your desire to make covenants with the Lord, to receive the ordinances, and to serve” (A. Theodore Tuttle, in Conference Report, Apr. 1984, 32; or *Ensign*, May 1984, 24).