

## **How to learn Scripture with the right motives**

*I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you. -  
Psalm 119:11*

A story is told of a village church in Kalonovka, Russia, where attendance at Sunday school picked up after the priest started handing out candy to the peasant children. One of the most faithful was a pug-nosed, pugnacious lad who recited his Scriptures with proper piety, pocketed his reward, then fled into the fields to munch on it.

The priest took a liking to the boy and persuaded him to attend church school by offering other incentives. There, the priest managed to teach the boy the four Gospels. In fact, this little boy won a special prize for learning all four by heart and reciting them nonstop in church!

Fast forward 60 years, and the boy still loved to recite Scriptures, but in a context that would horrify the old priest. For the prized pupil who memorized so much of the Bible is Nikita Khrushchev, the former Communist czar. The same little lad who nimbly mouthed God's Word as a child later declared God to be nonexistent.

Khrushchev memorized the Scripture for the rewards rather than for the meaning it had for his life. Artificial motivation will produce artificial results. So as you learn the Word of God, keep your motives pure and make it an exercise of both your heart and your mind!

### **Prayer Challenge**

Ask God to keep your motives pure when it comes to learning His Word. Pray that He would help you absorb it into your heart as well as your mind!

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