

Ways to Engage with God's Breathed Words in the Bible

From Andrew Fabich and Jordan Taylor, "The Bible Is a Textbook," September 12, 2023, <https://answersingenesis.org/bible-study/bible-is-a-textbook/>.

Idea #1

Learn something about the languages of the Bible. For example, write the letters of the Hebrew alphabet over and over until committed to memory. It won't make you a Hebrew scholar, but you can progress toward understanding the language better. Writing things out by hand is one way learning happens (think: neuroscience in practice).

Idea #2

Instead of going to church services and sitting there passively, **take notes**. Some pastors distribute their notes, some with fill-in-the-blanks, some with just Roman numerals, etc. These practices are commendable because at least they are trying to get you engaged. Similarly, when I (Andrew) sit down in my office with my boss, I take a pad of paper with me and write everything down. Neuroscience very clearly supports the idea that handwriting notes the old-fashioned way causes synapses to form that are indicative of deep neural processing (or simply stated: learning). This also shows respect for my boss—how much more respect should we show the Creator of the universe?

Idea #3

Memorize Scripture. To do this, **write out the verses by hand over and over**. The idea of sitting kids down to repeat as many verses as possible in a short period of time during a midweek service gets something inside their heads, but the neuroscience does not recommend that practice because it does not become deeply engrained in our memory banks. Maybe try writing down a verse (or part of a verse) where you emphasize a different word each time in all caps. Consider the pattern below and emphasize it many times for each line. It's a challenge that will really highlight every word in Scripture.

The Lord is my shepherd.
THE Lord is my shepherd.
The LORD is my shepherd.
The Lord IS my shepherd.
The Lord is MY shepherd.
The Lord is my SHEPHERD.

Idea #4

Get rid of all distractions from whatever task you use to engage Scripture. The field of cognitive psychology is overwhelmingly clear that we cannot multitask. At best, we do something else called task-switching, and it takes longer to switch between tasks than to do one task at a time. The issue is about focus—we only have so much of it. When distracted, we perform worse. There's no need to be trying to read something and expect to understand it really

well if there are sounds happening in the background. Don't put your cell phone on silent during a church service, put it away entirely so you (or the person you're sitting next to) cannot see it when notifications pop up. Focus is a precious commodity that is undervalued in today's culture.