

“I have hidden Your Word in my heart that I might not sin against You.” Psalm 119:11

Like many of us, I grew up in a dysfunctional home. It was an environment from which I wanted to escape. I hated the taste of alcohol and couldn't swallow pills. Needles terrified me. I chose to escape into a dream world. When life was tough, I ran to my imagination where I was loved and accepted. A world where I had value and significance. I was the heroine, a woman of character and the center stage of my own life.

In real life I was none of those things. I was an out-of-control teenager, angry, selfish, and lonely. At fifteen and a half I came to the end of myself. I didn't want to keep living. I remembered conversations with a girl at school about Jesus. I reached out. “God, if you're really there, I need you.” On May 12, 1971, my life totally changed! I was loved and accepted. I wasn't alone. But when tough moments came, I still ran back to my dream world over, and over again.

One day a friend and I decided to memorize James 1. We spoke it to each other on the way home from school every day. I discovered that the process of memorizing scripture helped me take control of my thoughts. It gave me new thoughts to ponder and rehearse in my mind. I began to change.

I have been memorizing scripture since those early days—on the bus, walking, with friends, during creative art time. I don't remember all the verses I've memorized word for word, but the principles, God's thoughts, are in my heart. The Holy Spirit pulls them to the forefront whenever I need them. The process of meditating on His words as I commit them to memory is so rich and life-giving!

As I've aged, memorizing has become more challenging, but it is a challenge worth taking.

<sup>8</sup>But what does it say?

“The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,”  
that is, the message concerning faith that we proclaim:

Romans 10:8

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