



The Atkins Family

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Nathaniel, and Miriam

Serving in Guinea-Bissau,
West Africa

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We're taking advantage of
the lovely summer in the
U.S.!

New Twist on a Life-Long Practice *by Emily*

Growing up in church, scripture memory has always been part of my life. I love the way the Spirit is able to bring different verses and truths from my memory to the front of my mind when I am talking, praying, and preaching. When I started preaching regularly in Portuguese Creole, about 12 years ago, I realized that not having a wealth of scripture memorized in the language that I was preaching in was causing me to have to translate thoughts from English on the fly, which often made me lose my train of thought in Creole.

So, I made a list of about 50 foundational verses that I knew in English, and wanted to know in Creole, and got to work memorizing them. The effect on my conversations, prayers, and preaching was significant—praise God! Since then I have continued to memorize verses in Creole, taking the lead in teaching the 2 or 3 verses a month that we have the kids memorize in Sunday school.

Two years ago, I felt led to memorize the Sermon on the Mount in English, but I didn't really know where to start. Up until this point all of my memorizing had been a verse or two at a time, and memorizing an entire sermon (Matthew chapters 5, 6, and 7) felt daunting. I read it a few times a week for almost a year and while the chapters became richer and richer to me, I wasn't really making

any progress memorizing them. Then last summer I happened on an interview on YouTube about Bible memorization, which led to a podcast (Bible Memory Goal) that I started listening to in every free moment.



I made several new friends at the Scripture Sync conference in Dallas.

Long story short, in six weeks I had the entire Sermon on the Mount memorized, and using the techniques I learned from the podcast, the process of doing it was really fun for me. It was then that I noticed something unexpected. I am used to having Bible verses pop into my mind throughout the day; however, once I had such a large sequential chunk memorized, when a verse would pop into my head, instead of being a nice thought that faded pretty quickly, it would bring up the next verse, and the next one. I would even find myself going back and thinking through different parts of the passage. As someone who has always struggled to meditate on scripture during the daily business of life, it was so wonderful to me to be able to pull it up and have it playing in my mind throughout the day.

It has been a year since I found that podcast, and, even though I haven't been able to devote nearly as much time to it as I would like, by the grace of God, in addition to the 3 chapters in Matthew, I have been able to memorize 8 different Psalms, 2 chapters in Isaiah, and 2nd Peter chapter 1 in English, and then 2 different Psalms and 1st Corinthians 13 in Portuguese Creole. (cont'd)



When we said goodbye to our church in Canchungo in May I recited 1st Corinthians chapter 13 in Portuguese Creole and thanked them for the beautiful way they have always loved our family.

New Twist on a Life-Long Practice (cont'd) *by Emily*

This past month, I attended a two-day conference put on by Bible Memory Goal called Scripture Sync in Dallas, and I learned so much more about different ways of memorizing, meditating on, and using scripture. I share all of this to say, if you've never tried memorizing chapters or longer passages because it seemed impossible, a few techniques to get you started can make a world of difference. And for me, it has been a beautiful, life giving practice. If you have any questions or want some encouragement, let me know.

Sharp Tools Make Good Cuts *by Jason*

After so many years in a place where certain resources are often scarce, I'm always excited when local capability (including ours) is able to solve a difficult problem. This is especially true when, in the past, that problem would have been unsolvable. The massive ironworker that we sent in the last container has been waiting for my attention on several of its stations since it arrived. The machine is old, and being a multifunctional machine, a few of its functions just needed adjustment, a couple needed replacement parts, and one needs a whole new setup to be machined in order to work correctly (and safely).

One of the coolest capabilities the ironworker has (or had, when it was younger) is the ability to shear heavy steel bar and plate. However, when I first tested it soon after the machine arrived and was wired up, the plate shear stalled the machine when I tried to use it. Before we left Cancungo in May, the shop roof truss project required us to make several such cuts so I spent half a day getting this functionality working. In the end what was required was some cleaning and adjusting, along with the job of sharpening the hardened tool steel shear blades. Fortunately, although we don't use the surface grinder every day, it's the right tool for this job! After sharpening the blades and reinstalling/gapping them, it was able to shear this ½" steel plate in 2 seconds with barely any effort. Incredible!

Several other stations of the ironworker still need work, but each one I fix is likely to serve us with little more maintenance for decades, so that's pretty exciting!



This old, dusty surface grinder isn't used daily but nothing else can do what it does when we need it!



The surface grinder cleans up an old blade pretty well.



Half-inch-thick steel plate sheared in seconds without breaking a sweat!



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