

CBQZ: Christian Bible Quizzing

Deuteronomy 6:5-7

⁵Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. ⁶These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. ⁷Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

What is CBQZ?

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CBQZ, or Christian Bible Quizzing, is a friendly competition between teams of 3 to 5 players (or “quizzers”) of any age and any background, which is sponsored and administrated by volunteers from the Church of God, Anderson. These teams compete by answering questions based on pre-determined sections of the Bible. The program promotes Bible memorization, Christian fellowship, and honorable sportsmanship.

Teams are formed when any 3 to 5 quizzers decide to unify and compete together. Teams compete in “quiz meets,” which are competitions that include answer judges and other support staff. Meets are grouped into seasons that run from September through May each year. A single meet consists of “quizzes,” which are sessions where 3 teams compete to answer a number of questions. Quizzers buzz in as the question is being read, using a hand-activated device. The first quizzer to buzz in must answer the question. Points are awarded based on the accuracy of the answers.

Questions are based directly from the material memorized. For example, consider the following verse:

Acts 2:2

Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Given this verse, several possible questions (and required answers) could be formed. For example:

Question: *Suddenly a sound like what?*

Answer: *The blowing of a violent wind.*

Question: *A violent wind came from heaven and what?*

Answer: *Filled the whole house where they were sitting.*

Question: *Filled the whole what?*

Answer: *House where they were sitting.*

2 CBQZ is only one of a large number of Bible Quizzing programs. In most Bible Quizzing organizations, quizzers will often memorize entire books or sets of books, depending on the material given for the year. Those who compete at higher levels often will have the entire material memorized, recallable by any given reference or key word. They can quote from start to finish in one setting.

CBQZ is unique among Bible Quizzing programs in that it is:

- Open to any team consisting of any quizzers, regardless of church affiliation
- Employs rules that encourage teamwork over individual success
- Designed to be self-governed through a decentralized framework of volunteers

Ministry Impact

At the heart of CBQZ is a belief in the power of Holy Scripture. The Bible can and does change lives in profound and miraculous ways. As powerful as simply reading Scripture can be, it is many orders of magnitude more life-changing when memorized. Through Bible Quizzing, people of all ages and backgrounds write God's Word on their hearts. All those involved in the program see visible evidence of the application of God's Word in the lifestyle of each participant.

Here are some testimonials from people involved in Bible Quizzing:

“Bible Quizzing provided me with the perfect motivation to spend time memorizing God's Word. There are times today when a verse or chapter will flash to mind in a time of need. Bible Quizzing provided me with many of my closest friends - and many wonderful memories!”

“One of the major benefits that I found when I was in Bible Quizzing was that, as I read and memorized Scripture, it replaced a lot of the negativity inside me. The best way to rid the body of sin is to replace it with the Word of God. That sounds a little simplistic, but it is truth. Ooh, and memorizing anything is really easy now, because of the habits I learned in quizzing. I am so grateful that I have the Word of God in my head and heart, even when I don't realize it's there.”

3 *“I personally knew one child who was in junior high who, when I first met her, was contemplating suicide. We were able to convince her to join our Bible Quizzing team, and as a direct result of her memorizing Scripture, she recommitted her life to Christ. Now, many years later, she is a happily married wife and mother who is a strong disciple of Christ.”*

“In times of crisis or personal need, the verses internalized during my long hours of Bible Quizzing study have provided comfort and assurance in ways I never expected as a teen. What's more, this early scriptural study has given me invaluable knowledge for fruitful theological reflection as an adult. That the skill of memorization itself has also benefited me in professional and academic spheres is additional proof that Bible Quizzing has wide-reaching, life-altering influences upon its participants.”

This Isn't Crazy

In a typical year, quizzers in CBQZ will memorize perhaps as many as 20 or more chapters of the Bible consisting of about 8,000 verses on average. Those who compete at higher levels often will have the entire material memorized perfectly, word-for-word. Most quizzers do not memorize to this level but instead memorize a few verses, perhaps 10 to 20, per chapter.

This may seem crazy. It may seem impossible that quizzers of all ages, especially children as young as junior high and adults in their 40s, 50s, and 60s would be able to memorize this much of Scripture and recall it so accurately.

It's not crazy. I can personally testify that this is normal and common.

We too often underestimate our own mental capacities. Like the physical muscles in our bodies, our minds become stronger with use and atrophy with neglect. We will say to ourselves, "I have a terrible memory," when in fact we have a good memory that is simply not exercised.

We too often underestimate the power of the Holy Spirit.

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Matthew 19:26

With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.

All that is necessary for Bible Quizzing to be a success is faith that it is possible and a willingness to try.

Pilot Plan

To build a vibrant CBQZ program in the Pacific Northwest, we're going to initiate a CBQZ pilot program for the 2014-2015 quizzing season. We are seeking 9 teams from the greater Puget Sound area. Given that CBQZ and Bible Quizzing is generally unknown in the Pacific Northwest Association of Church of God, Anderson, we are looking for pastors who will help us spread the word and encourage a few within our congregations to participate in this pilot year.

For the pilot year, we will be memorizing Acts, chapters 1 through 20, from the NIV 2011. The quizzing season will run from September, 2014 through May, 2015. The exact quiz

meet schedule will be determined through discussion between the teams that decide to participate, but we anticipate a light schedule. We would like to try for Saturdays about once every 2 to 3 months.

The exact and final CBQZ rulebook for the 2014-2015 season is being worked on now, and it is expected to be completed and published soon. However, this should not prevent anyone interested in participating from memorizing the first chapter or two of Acts now in preparation for September.

Call to Action

All that is necessary for Bible Quizzing to be a success is faith that it is possible and a willingness to try. We need pastors who will help spread the word about CBQZ and the pilot plan.

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Please speak with between 5 and 10 people from your congregation about Bible Quizzing. Ask them to prayerfully consider participating. If you are willing to do this, please send an email to me at gryphon@cbqz.org letting me know you will be spreading the word.