

10 Things to Record for Better Bible Study

As you read any Bible passage, be an observer. The observation tips below are not exhaustive, but they are a solid place to start. You won't spot everything in every passage. But in every passage your observation will help you do better Bible study.

1. **Truths about God**– The Bible is first and foremost a book about God. He is everywhere – in every passage, on every page. It may be blatant or subtle, but He will be there. Looks for truths about His nature, His character, His ways, and His purposes.
2. **Key Words & Phrases**– Repetition in God's Word is not accidental. If you see words and phrases repeated, take note. God is trying to point to something important.
3. **Important facts** – Mark any facts you see in the passage that will help you understand what's happening. Things like people, places, numbers can be key to comprehension.
4. **Connecting or Transition Words** – You may have heard the saying, “when you see a ‘therefore,’ ask what it's there for.” Words like “now, because, therefore, so, since, but” show a relationship, an explanation, or a cause and effect. When you see a connecting word, determine its purpose for being there.
5. **Questions and answers** – We find this powerful teaching tool throughout the Bible. Jesus often asked questions and then fleshed out His answer (see Matthew 6:25-34). The apostle Paul also used questions and answers in His letters (see Romans 6:1-14). When you see a question in Scripture, be sure to look for the answer.
6. **Commands** – The Bible is full of commands. Some are one-time commands for specific individuals at a specific time. Others are for all God's people for all time. For instance, “love one another” is applicable to us today!
7. **Lists** – Watch for lists and groups that will help you understand a spiritual truth or topic. Mark things like characteristics, qualities, and reasons.
8. **Spiritual principles**– These may be explicit or implicit in the text.
9. **Contrasts and comparisons** – The Bible often compares and contrasts to show how people or things are alike or different. These literary tools can more clearly show the reader the way that pleases God.
10. **Word pictures** – Similes and metaphors paints pictures that help us better understand spiritual truths. For instance, Jesus' description of Himself as “the true vine” in John 15 helps us understand what it means to constantly abide in Him.