

Bible Highlighting to Enhance Your Bible Study (694 words)

Years ago, out of respect for God's Word, I hesitated to mark or write in my Bible. But as Bible journaling began growing in popularity I realized a couple of things that upped my Bible study game. First, the paper and ink not inspired. And, second, writing, marking, and even adding color to my Bible greatly enhanced my reading and study of God's Word. So, I got a wide-margin journaling Bible and haven't looked back!

Want to get more out of your time in the Bible? There are lots of Bible study helps out there. For one, take a look at the ["4 R Bible Study Method for Everyday Use."](#) But I also find Bible highlighting helpful no matter what specific type of study I'm doing. I certainly didn't create the method. But after seeing others doing it for a while, I came up with a color coding system that made sense to me.

What is Bible Highlighting and why do it?

Bible highlighting is a system of marking or color-coding a Bible passage in order to dissect it for more effective study. I've found it beneficial in at least 3 ways:

1. **Focus** – Because I'm thinking about what parts of the passage I should highlight in the different colors, I find pay more attention to what I'm reading.
2. **Understanding** – Because I'm focusing and reading the passage more than once, I get better clarity on the passage.
3. **Application** – The process itself helps me see how God would have me apply these truths to my life.

A Few "How To" Tips:

This is not a scientific method. When we are prayerfully in God's Word, we are communicating with Him. So, be sensitive to His leading. Allow the Holy Spirit to be your teacher. However, here are a few tips, thoughts, and suggestions to help the study process:

1. **Start with prayer** – If you are a believer, the Holy Spirit lives within you. He is your teacher. Ask Him to give you understanding.
2. **Keep the context in mind** – Every Bible passage is part of a larger passage, a chapter, a book. It's easy to misunderstand a passage when we don't know the context. For more about context see ["4 Things to Consider for Biblical Context."](#)
3. **Read without highlighting** – Read the passage at least once before you begin marking it. Get the feel for the whole thing before you begin to break it down.
4. **Start with the obvious** – On the second reading, I begin highlighting portions of the text that are the clearest. For instance, sometimes it may be a direct command. Others it may be a glorious truth about God. I start with what the Holy Spirit makes obvious first.

5. **Make connections** – With the obvious pieces marked, another reading will often help bring the other portions into focus. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you understand the relationship between the pieces.
6. **Application** – Don't leave the passage without asking God to show you how He wants you to apply what He's taught you!

My Bible Highlighting Color Code

I've seen different color codes. Really, this is so personal. I came up with one that made sense to me so I would remember it! Use mine, use someone else's or develop your own!

- PURPLE – Truths about God, His character, His ways
- ORANGE – Key words and phrases (watch for things repeated over and over!)
- YELLOW – Important facts, spiritual truths
- BLUE – Commands to obey
- GREEN – Spiritual insight for application
- PINK – Things I don't understand or need to study further

A few more suggestions for success

1. **Get a journaling Bible** – mine is large print, heavier paper, and wide margin! The wide margins are perfect for making study notes and doing a little "Bible art." The heavier paper cuts down on the bleed through. Here's the Bible I've been using. (Here's the [Bible](#) I use!)
2. **Be prepared** – Keep all your supplies together in one. Ideally, it should be where you spend your daily time with God.
3. **Have a plan** – Haphazard Bible reading and study will always be haphazard. Find and use a Bible reading plan. I have several on my [resources page](#).

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A former "cultural Christian," Kathy Howard now has a passion for God's Word that's contagious. With more than 30 years of experience, Kathy has taught in dozens of states, internationally, and in a wide range of venues including multi-church conferences and large

online events. She has a Masters of Christian Education from the Canadian Southern Baptist Seminary. Kathy is the author of 10 books, including the new “meaty” devotional *Deep-Rooted: Growing through the Gospel of Mark*. She writes for multiple online magazines and devotional sites. Kathy and her husband live in the Dallas/Ft Worth area near family. They have three married children, five grandchildren, and two accidental dogs. Kathy provides free discipleship resources and blogs regularly at www.KathyHoward.org. She also connects with women at [Facebook](#), [Pinterest](#), and [Instagram](#).