

UNDERLINING IN MY BIBLE

Why (and how) I mark lots of things in my Bible that I want to remember.

I start every day with my Bible.

And I pick up a fine point pen expecting the Lord will bring some new insight every day. Most days it happens. I read about 8 chapters, one from each of the 8 sections of the Bible (4 OT / 4 NT).

There are a couple dozen reasons why and how I make notes in my Bible.

1. I want to remember how the Holy Spirit drew my attention to verses, words, or phrases in the past. He is my personal illuminator. He and I read together each morning. He helps with the application.
2. I've encouraged hundreds of people to circle the word **believe** in the Gospel of John. It appears 98 X.
3. I draw very light lines connecting similar words, thoughts, or themes together throughout a paragraph. Hundreds of lists occur in the NT. This helps me find central thoughts in each paragraph.
4. Underlining reminds me of major thoughts God has drawn my attention to. As though the Holy Spirit tapped me on the shoulder and whispered, "Go back and read that again!"
5. Green pencil in the Gospels and Acts identifies hundreds of physical places: cities, farms, rivers, houses, various counties & countries, prisons and jails, market places, synagogues, the Temple, wells, tombs, Golgotha, upstairs, deserts, mountains, barracks, islands and bodies of water.
 - * Where events took place - I visited 50+ places in Israel on a 3-week tour with a personal tour guide.
 - * Why God bothered to tell us that it is important to remember these were all literal events in the lives of people who are important to God.
 - * I've learned to draw a simple map with 4 bodies of water plus Jerusalem.
 - * I've identified 319 geographical and physical places (with green pencil) in the Gospels and another 263 places in the book of Acts.
see www.PhilMyersBlog.com **30 Events in the OT**
6. A Cross in the margin of Acts reminds me of the 30+ times people or groups trusted in Jesus as the Savior. www.PhilMyersBlog.com **Saved in Gospel of John, 17X**
Acts, 12 individuals, 20+ groups saved
7. A half dozen little soap bubbles drawn in the margin in Ecclesiastes reminds me that "vanity" is mentioned 38X.
8. Tiny pict of scrolls identifies the 47X Ezekiel says, "The Word of the Lord came. . ."
9. "Imprecatory Psalm" identifies the 14 Psalms with the harshest language.
10. Music notes in the margin mark verses I know I can sing. 
11. Orange marker over a verse number reminds me that this was a verse I could repeat word perfect at some time in the past.
12. Stars in the margin identify miracles.
13. A series of circles around the first letter of several words indicates that this is a list of some sort.

This is a sample of how it looks, but not actually a good example of a "list."



14. Smiley faces next to “rejoice” in Philippians.
15. 181 tiny drawings in the margins of The Revelation identify: dragons, angels, beasts, fire, horses, candlesticks, rainbows, churches, trumpets, lambs, mtns, robes, Satan, lamps, crowns, sickles, etc.
16. I also underline adjectives, repeated words, crucial words, sometimes just a letter, or an unusual tense of a word, or noting a plural when a singular might be expected, or an interesting Greek Word (I'm not fluent in Greek). I've also circled many things for no specific reason, or drawn a box around a word, or put exclamation points in the margin.
I have a Strong's concordance within reach as I read in my big brown chair.
17. I read through Proverbs inserting my own name as often as I can in each verse. Good self-advice for the day.
18. I use arrows up and arrows down to Mark in Genesis good decisions and bad decisions which people made.
19. Matthew Henry's dad encouraged each of his 13 children to read one verse from Psalm 119 each day. It is a habit I've kept up for 45 years.
20. I try to take special note of who is speaking in the book of Job. Job speaks twice as much as he listens. I ask myself, “Which friend says the most unbiblical statements.”
21. There are plenty of outlines of my pastors' sermons in the margins as well as “quotable quotes.”
22. My wife taught me to write the names of my students, 150 pastor-friends, missionaries, ministry co-workers, and others on the corners of each page. There are many hundreds.
I've also asked students & friends to tell me their favorite verses then I put their names on that page.
23. I encourage many to read the NT 4 times and then the OT once. We need the “Church epistles” far more in our daily lives than the repetitive warnings about idolatry in the prophets.
24. One of the most time consuming but profitable treks I took was to give a title to each of the 4,535 paragraphs in the whole Bible.
see www.PhilMyersBlog.com **90 Days Thru the Bible, 4,535 paragraphs**
It took me a whole year to do it.
This blog is my challenge to you to read through the Bible in 90 days.
It takes about 12 chapters a day. Thousands have done it.
I'm sure you can re-write many of my titles better.
Sometimes I had to read a paragraph 2 or 3 times before I nailed it.
25. I get through most of the Bible about twice a year. Several favorite books 5 times a year (Acts & Romans). Kay and I binge the prophets in August (350 pp) in 3 weeks. Don't tell anybody but since the prophets shout all of their sermons and contain a tremendous amount of repetition they are my least favorite part of God's holy Word. We read them aloud together at about 12 chapters a day. Often we listen to them in an audio format.
Minor prophets are almost completely poetic. Major prophets are mostly poetic. Most of the newer translations use the typical poetry form including the New King James Version.
see www.PhilMyersBlog.com **12 Ways to Read Through the Bible**
26. I also look up some of the tens of thousands of cross references already found in the margins of my Bible. I circle the ones that are pertinent.

How I see myself as a Bible reader

1. Always looking for the BIG IDEA in every paragraph
 2. Visual learner, aware of word pictures
 - Love descriptive adjectives and verbs
 3. Heavy on practical application
 - Put my name in the verses whenever possible
 4. Orthodox
 5. Logical thinker
 6. Love lists
 7. Try to guard against forgetting, looking forward to having God embed
 - the whole Scripture in our brains by the time we enter heaven (my opinion)
 8. Read for self-improvement
 9. Minimalist
 10. Keep interpretation as simple as possible
 11. Don't forget the obvious
 12. Read with intent of teaching to the common man or child
 - Cookies on bottom shelf
 13. Aware of Holy Spirit's illuminating ministry
 14. I can sketch tiny icons fairly well, memory hooks
 15. Read as a love letter from my best friend to me
 16. Reread many phrases several times each day, letting it sink in
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1. Weak on outlining
 2. Weak on Greek vocabulary
 3. Soft on criticism

Two of my teenaged sons came to me separately and said, "Father, you hate to be wrong." They were right, but I noticed they did not say, "You hate to admit it when you're wrong," or you never admit it when you are wrong. I tried to teach them to be diligent in research and be like their grandfather who was the guy who could take good advice or correction from anybody.

n.b. Many Bibles as you know are printed with tens of thousands of cross references printed in the margins. In several translations refs which indicate an identical account are written in ***italics***. But all of the refs are intended to send you and me to passages which are similar. Many times they seem to focus on a word which is the same, sometimes in English, sometimes in Greek or Hebrew. While it is true that I hardly ever look them up, still I have at least 1,000 circles around some which have proved quite enlightening.