

Some Tips for Using Your Scripture Journal:

- 1. Keep everything in one place.** Whether you're studying a book, a word, a character, or a topic, taking notes on a sermon, or keeping up with prayer requests – keep everything together. One notebook (which may, over time, expand to several) will be easier to keep track of than having separate notebooks for each thing.
- 2. Index it!** Leave a few blank pages at the end of a bound journal, or a section at the end of a binder, for noting topics and listing page numbers. Which brings us to...
- 3. Number the pages.** If you don't number them, you'll have trouble finding things later. I found that numbering either the even or the odd pages is sufficient. Then *something* is numbered on every 2-page spread, but it's significantly faster than numbering every page. (You can either number them as you go, or number them all at once.)
- 4. Use the margins.** Jotting a topical “tag” or similar notation in the margin will allow you to easily skim for something you want to find later.¹
- 5. Put your name on it.** In case it gets misplaced.
- 6. Come up with your own personal “system” for differentiating things.** For instance, you might copy a verse or part of a verse in a particular lettering style or ink color, then add your own thoughts in a *different* style or color.

A few options: indent (only the first line), indent (the whole paragraph), or don't indent; print in mixed-case, print in all caps, or write in script; use a pencil, black pen, blue pen, red pen, calligraphy pen; use bullets or numbers or don't...

- 7. Use an analog version of “hyperlinks” to track a thread through a bound journal.** If you are using a binder you can reorder pages. But if you're using a bound book, or if you just prefer to keep your notes in chronological order, you can track a theme through the book by making a notation where your page numbers are. To the left of the page number, write the number of the *last* page where the topic was addressed, inside a left arrow/angle bracket. (Like this: <12) To the right of the page number, you can note the *next* page where the topic is addressed, in the same way. (57 >)²

¹ Thank you to Ann Voskamp of *A Holy Experience* for this idea.

² Thank you to “Jillie” at [Craftster](#) for this idea.

Consider including the following elements in your journal:

- Favorite verses
- Favorite quotes that relate to spiritual things
- Your own thoughts on what God is teaching you
- Book/chapter/verse studies
- Character studies
- Word studies
- Topical studies
- Comparisons (diligence/sloth, old man/new man, etc.)
- Timelines
- Illustrations/"visual notes"
- Brainstorms/mind maps
- Sermon notes
- Your own personal "topical concordance"
- Your own charts and diagrams
- A list of verses you'd like to memorize
- A list of topics you'd like to study further