

# flourishing FAITH

verse<sup>3</sup> mapping

Alright, girls! Today we're combining word studies and S.O.A.P. studies and learning about verse mapping! If you're a doodler, this is your chance to get creative! If you're a researcher, this is your chance to dive deep into all the Bible information you can dream. And if you're a doodling researcher like me, you'll practically be in Heaven!

I first discovered verse mapping on Instagram when an account called The James Method popped up in my feed. Lauren, the "author" of the James Method, taught the middle schoolers in her church (ahem... so no excuses!) how to verse map and now she has an online business selling verse mapping journals, stickers, pens, post-it's... you name it! Her Instagram feed is wonderful, if you want to check it out. She gives a lot of insights into verses she's studied, how to verse map, how to look things up, what resources to use, etc. So, she is a great resource.

One of the things that drew me to her post was the color and art she adds to her verse maps. Here is an example:



But what is verse mapping?

Well, just like the word study method we looked at two posts ago, verse mapping requires you to look up key words and their definitions. Then, similar to the S.O.A.P study method, you'll research the context of the verse, take notes on what you learned through the study, and apply it to your life.

By combining these two study techniques, you will have such a rich experience studying the Bible. Keep in mind, this is meant to be a slow process. You may not finish in one sitting. Almost every post I've read online about verse mapping says it might take you a week or more to finish a map – depending on how deep you go and how much time you have. What matters is your consistent time with God, so don't rush it. Enjoy it!

Let's go through each step.

**Step 1** | Find your verse and write it out. In the last post we discussed how to find a section of scripture to study. You can use your Bible's table of content, study the verses used in the messages you hear at church, you can follow a reading plan, etc.

**Step 2** | Look up the same verse in another translation to better understand the verse, but also to see how writers may have translated words differently. Here are a few translations I would recommend:

- \* **NIV** | The New International Version is a solid translation that is easy to understand. It is a "thought-for-thought" translation, which means translators looked at a whole sentence and translated it as a group so it would be easier to understand. Their goal was to capture the meaning of each verse, not necessarily the exact words. I would recommend this as your primary Bible translation.
- \* **ESV** | The English Standard Version has gained a lot of popularity lately. It is a "word-for-word" translation, meaning that the translators worked to translate each individual word into English, keeping a similar sentence structure. Sometimes word-for-word translations are hard to understand, but the ESV is pretty simple.
- \* **NKJV** | The New King James Version is a bit more difficult to understand, but it is a solid "word-for-word" translation as well. This would be a good option to use for step 2 because you'd find a lot of different translated words.
- \* **NLT** | The New Living Translation is like reading a story book. It is a "thought-for-thought" translation, but is on the edge of being a "paraphrase," meaning the translation is looser to make the verses easier to understand. I wouldn't recommend this as your primary study source, but the NLT is still a good option for step 2 because it is so easy to understand.

**Step 3** | Find the key words in the verse and highlight each of them in a different color. You'll recognize key words by asking these questions:

- \* *Are there any words in the passage that are repeated?*
- \* *Are there any verbs?*
- \* *Are there any adjectives?*
- \* *Feelings or emotions?*
- \* *Commands?*
- \* *Another way to find key words is to look at your different translations and see which words were translated differently than your original translation. Those are probably words you'll want to study a little deeper.*

Once you've found your key words, write one in each square and highlight it the same color. Then look up the definition using Webster's 1828 dictionary and Strong's Concordance. You can find more instructions on this section in the Word Studies post. Same concept, just with a verse map instead of on its own.

**Step 4** | Now it's time to study the context of the verse. This is very similar to what we discussed in the S.O.A.P. Studies post. Put on your investigator hat in this section and really do some digging. Ask yourself these questions and then look up the answers in the surrounding verses, in the book's introduction page in your Bible, on Biblical websites, etc.

- \* *Write about the people in this passage. Who is speaking/writing? Who are they with? Who are they writing to? What are they speaking about? Why?*



- \* What were the customs of the time period that relate to this passage of Scripture? Was anything important going on at this time in history?
- \* Summarize what the passage around this verse is about.
- \* What themes or topics are discussed?

I love how Kristy Cambron describes this section on [versemapping.com](http://versemapping.com):

*“Research the context and customs of what life would have been like for the [people] in your verse(s). Look up maps. Open history books. Read about what happened, why, and how it’s relevant to your life today. This is where you find the story connects to YOUR story with God. Research it, and write it down. What’s happening in the verse? To whom? Who are the characters in what you’re reading? How does their story relate to other stories/verses/persons in other areas of Scripture? What are the topics, themes, dates of significant events and/or theological elements of the verse(s) you’re researching? Let the Spirit loose in your heart in this section — God will give you some #WOW #facepalm #mindblown #jawdrop #IlovetheBible #intheWord moments if you let Him!”*

The Cultural Backgrounds Study Bible is another good resource, if you have one of those around. Blue Letter Bible has some great resources on their website under the “Study” tab, as well.

**Step 5** | Now it’s time to dig beyond just this one passage. Did you know that scripture is linked to other scripture? Sometimes a Bible verse will literally reference another verse, like when Jesus quoted the Old Testament, for example. Other times, verses will be linked because they use similar root words or discuss similar themes or Biblical concepts. These verses are called “cross-references” and they’re like a chain throughout the Bible. If you go to one cross-reference verse and find another cross-reference, follow the bunny trail! Who knows what gold you’ll find! Here are several ways you can find cross-references:

- \* The first way is to look and see if your Bible marks any little letters or numbers next to certain words in your verse. Usually, the cross-references are listed in the middle of the page, between the two columns of verses or at the bottom of the same page.
- \* Cross-references may also be listed in the study notes of your study Bible, also at the bottom of the same page.
- \* You can also dig into the verses listed in Strong’s Concordance that use the same Hebrew or Greek words from your word study.

Once you have found your cross-references, don’t stop there! Write them all out and explain how they link to the main verse you are studying. Bible commentaries such as the notes in your study Bible will help here. You can also use the commentaries found on Blue Letter Bible. And if you’re longing to expand your home library, I also recommend Believer’s Bible Commentary by William MacDonald.

**Step 6** | The Reflection + Application section is all about summarizing what the Holy Spirit taught you through the verse map you just completed. What did you learn about God? What did you learn about yourself or about mankind? How does this apply to the season you’re walking through right now? Journal it out. Be as honest and descriptive as possible so you can look back on this verse map and see how you’ve grown over time.

**Step 7** | And last but certainly not least, we have the prayer section. This is similar to step 6, but a space for you to write a prayer thanking the Lord for everything He’s taught you and for your time together. Use what you learned from your verse study as inspiration for your prayer. It’s a powerful tool to learn to pray scripture back to God. It reminds us of Biblical truths and when we pray it [www.girlswithflourishingfaith.com](http://www.girlswithflourishingfaith.com)



because we truly believe it, it shows God we trust Him.

If you'd like a visual to verse mapping, Lauren does such a great job of walking through the James Method on her YouTube channel.

I cannot stress enough, girls. *Please* do not rush this. Savor it like your favorite dessert. Maybe do one or two sections a day until you're done. Really dig in and let the Lord help you uncover some treasure. If we were on an archeology dig or if we were digging for gold, we wouldn't give up in 10 minutes! We'd keep going until we found what we were looking for! And the treasure you'll uncover by studying God's word is so much more valuable than that!



## DIG A LITTLE DEEPER:

Alright, friends! Let's do this!

There are lots of free templates online, and you could always just write this out in your journal, but below is a button to download the template I'm using in this tutorial. Print that out first and then let's get started.

- \* **Step 1** | Let's use Hebrews 11:1, since we're familiar with it from the Cloud of Witnesses series. Write Hebrews 11:1 in the first box, listing the translation you used in parenthesis. For this map, I used the New International Version (NIV).

*verse* Write out the verse that stood out most to you from today's study.

"NOW FAITH IS CONFIDENCE IN WHAT WE HOPE FOR AND ASSURANCE ABOUT WHAT WE DO NOT SEE." (NIV)

- \* **Step 2** | Now find two more translations of Hebrews 11:1 and write those in the next two boxes. For this map, I used the New Living Translation (NLT) and the New King James Version (NKJV). This gave me a good variety of translated words.

*translations* Now write out the same verse in (2) different translations.

"FAITH SHOWS THE REALITY OF WHAT WE HOPE FOR; IT IS THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS WE CANNOT SEE." (NLT)

"NOW FAITH IS THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS HOPED FOR, THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN." (NKJV)

- \* **Step 3** | Now look for the key words and highlight each one a different color. For this study, I selected faith, confidence, hope, assurance, and the phrase “not seen,” but I’m just going to study the word ‘seen’. In the boxes under “key words,” write one word in each box, highlighting it in the same color as you did in the verse. Then, look up each word using Strong’s Concordance and Vine’s Expository Dictionary. For step-by-step instructions on using Blue Letter Bible for this section, see “Dig a Little Deeper” in the Word Study post.

### key words

Find the key words in the verse and highlight each of them in a different color. Are any words repeated in the passage you read? Are there any verbs? Adjectives? Feelings/emotions?

<p><b>FAITH</b> 64102 PISTIS</p> <p>A BELIEF IN GOD, INCLUDING THE IDEA OF TRUST; ACCEPTING WHAT ONE SAYS AS TRUTH, RESTING ON HIS AUTHORITY AND TRUTHFULNESS, WITHOUT OTHER EVIDENCE.</p>	<p><b>CONFIDENCE</b> 65287 HYPOSTASIS</p> <p>ALSO USED TO DESCRIBE SOMETHING THAT HAS FOUNDATION, IS FIRM; STEADINESS OF MIND, FIRM TRUST, COURAGE RESOLUTION; THE QUALITY OF CONFIDENCE WHICH LEADS ONE TO STAND UNDER [SOMEONE], ENDURE, OR UNDERTAKE ANYTHING.</p>	<p><b>HOPE</b> 61679 ELPIZŌ</p> <p>CONFIDENT EXPECTATION; TO TRUST IN [GOD]; IT EXPRESSES ITSELF IN ENDURANCE UNDER TRAIL; IT IS AN ANCHOR OF THE SOUL AMIDST THE STORMS OF THIS LIFE.</p>
<p><b>ASSURANCE</b> 61650 ELEGCHOS</p> <p>TO EXPOSE, PROVEN AS BY A TEST, EVIDENCE; CONVICTION. (THESE ARE WORDS USED IN COURT. WHEN SOMEONE IS CONVICTED, THERE IS IRREFUTABLE PROOF THAT THE PERSON HAS COMMITTED A CRIME.)</p>	<p><b>NOT SEEN</b> 6991 BLEPŌ</p> <p>TO BEHOLD; TO SEE; IS USED AS ONE WHO LOOKS AT A THING WITH INTEREST AND FOR A PURPOSE, USUALLY INDICATING THE CAREFUL OBSERVATION OF DETAILS; DENOTES 'THE ACTION OF THE MIND IN APPREHENDING CERTAIN FACTS ABOUT A THING.'</p>	

- \* **Step 4** | For this section, you can use the introduction to Hebrews in your Bible. It would be the first page before Hebrews starts. If you don’t have introductions in your Bible, head on over to Blue Letter Bible and go to the Study tab up at the top. That will pull up the “Study Resources” page. Scroll down to where it says “Bible Reference” and find the link to “Introductions to the Bible.” Now a page called “Bible Book Introductions & Outlines” will pop up. Scroll down until you find Hebrews and use any of the introductions listed there. John MacArthur’s introduction had a lot of good info inside.

You can write whatever you find interesting, but here are a few questions to guide you if you want:

- Who is the author of Hebrews?
  - Who was the author writing to?
  - What was going on at the time this letter was written? How were the Hebrews feeling?
  - What are some key themes of the letter?
  - Is there anything else in the introduction that might help explain Hebrews 11:1 or inspire you with Hebrews 11:1 in mind?
- \* **Step 5** | Now find the cross references listed in your bible for Hebrews 11:1. If those verses have cross references, follow those too. In addition to the cross-references listed in your Bible, Blue Letter Bible lists cross references. If you search for Hebrews 11:1, then click on the bold “Hebrews 11:1” link, there is a purple tab called “cross-refs.”



Write 3-4 verses down then explain how they connect with Hebrews 11:1. I have written down a few cross-references so you can see an example, but you do not have to use these verses. Follow your own trail.

## cross references

*What are other verses that link to this verse? Write them out and explain how they expand your knowledge of the main verse you are studying.*

HEBREWS 3:6 - "BUT CHRIST IS FAITHFUL AS A SON OVER GOD'S HOUSE, AND WE ARE HIS HOUSE, IF WE HOLD ON TO OUR COURAGE AND THE HOPE OF WHICH WE BOAST." THE SAME WORD "HOPE" USED IN HEBREWS 11:1. THE HALLMARK OF A CHRISTIAN IS PERSEVERANCE THROUGH FAITH. IF WE HOLD ONTO OUR COURAGE AND THE HOPE WE HAVE THAT WE HAVE FULL ACCESS TO GOD, WE ARE "HIS HOUSE" / HIS CHILDREN. "FAILURE TO PERSEVERE REVEALS THAT A PERSON IS ACTUALLY NOT A CHILD OF GOD." (NIV STUDY BIBLE)

HEBREWS 6:19 - "WE HAVE THIS HOPE AS AN ANCHOR FOR THE SOUL, FIRM AND SECURE. IT ENTERS THE INNER SANCTUARY BEHIND THE CURTAIN..." THE HOPE WE HAVE IN CHRIST (THAT WE HAVE FULL ACCESS TO GOD AND THE HOLY SPIRIT LIVES IN US AND WE HAVE ETERNAL LIFE) IS LIKE AN ANCHOR FOR OUR SOUL. IT KEEPS US SECURE AND UNSWERVING WHEN THE STORMS OF LIFE COME. THE SECOND HALF OF THIS VERSE IS REFERRING TO THE OLD TESTAMENT COVENANT WHERE ONLY THE HIGH PRIEST COULD GO INTO THE INNER SANCTUARY AND BE IN THE PRESENCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. BUT NOW CHRIST IS OUR HIGH PRIEST AND THE HOLY SPIRIT LIVES IN US.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:16-18 - "THEREFORE WE DO NOT LOSE HEART. THOUGH OUTWARDLY WE ARE WASTING AWAY, YET INWARDLY WE ARE BEING RENEWED DAY BY DAY. FOR OUR LIGHT AND MOMENTARY TROUBLES ARE ACHIEVING FOR US AN ETERNAL GLORY THAT FAR OUTWEIGHS THEM ALL. SO WE FIX OUR EYES NOT ON WHAT IS SEEN, BUT ON WHAT IS UNSEEN. FOR WHAT IS SEEN IS TEMPORARY, BUT WHAT IS UNSEEN IS ETERNAL." --> AN ENCOURAGING TRUTH ABOUT OUR FAITH. EACH DAY WE FACE TROUBLE, BUT EACH DAY THE HOLY SPIRIT RENEWS US SPIRITUALLY. WE STAY STRONG IN HIM, AND WHEN WE CHOOSE TO TRUST HIM, OUR FAITH GROWS. WHEN WE FIX OUR EYES ON JESUS (GO TO HIM WITH OUR TROUBLES, SPEND TIME WITH HIM) THE LORD WILL HELP US CONSIDER THE TRIALS WE FACE ON EARTH, AS DIFFICULT AS THEY MAY BE, TO BE "LIGHT AND MOMENTARY" IN COMPARISON TO THE "GLORY" WE SEE IN GOD WORKING IN OUR LIVES AND OVERCOMING THE IMPOSSIBLE FOR US! AND IN COMPARISON TO THE ETERNAL JOY AND PEACE WE WILL EXPERIENCE IN HEAVEN. PAUL WAS SPECIFICALLY TALKING ABOUT THE PERSECUTION CHRISTIANS FACE FOR THEIR FAITH, BUT THIS ALSO COULD APPLY TO ANY TRIAL. THE POINT IS THAT CLINGING TO THE LORD IN THOSE MOMENTS BRINGS US CLOSER TO GOD, STRENGTHENS OUR FAITH, AND THEREFORE PRODUCES A TREASURE FOR US TO CARRY WITH US.

- \* **Step 6** | Write what the Holy Spirit has taught you about faith by studying the details of this verse. My answer is below, just so you can see an example, but this part is seriously up to you and about what the Lord taught you. There is no cookie-cutter answer here.

## reflection + application

*What is the Holy Spirit teaching you through this verse/passage? How does it apply to your life? What have you learned about God? What have you learned about humankind or yourself?*

THE VERY FACT THAT I HAVE FAITH IN GOD SHOWS THAT I TRUST HIM, BUT ALSO THAT HE IS TRUSTWORTHY AND FIRM... IT PUTS LEGS TO SOMETHING I CAN'T SEE WITH MY OWN EYES, SOMETHING I CAN'T OBSERVE BY LOOKING AT IT, SOMETHING I MAY NOT EVEN FULLY UNDERSTAND. IT IS A CONFIDENT EXPECTATION OF GOD, BASED ON HIS PAST WORKS AND HIS CHARACTER. THIS CONFIDENCE IN GOD LEADS ME TO ENDURE THROUGH THE DARKEST OF STORMS AND IS AN ANCHOR FOR MY SOUL. IT LITERALLY KEEPS ME GOING AND LEADS ME TO TAKE THE NEXT RIGHT STEP AND TO PRAY ABOUT WHAT THAT STEP WOULD BE. AND BECAUSE I HAVE FAITH, I TRUST THAT GOD WILL ANSWER MY PRAYER AND GUIDE ME, AND HE DOES.

- \* **Step 7** | Write a prayer inspired by Hebrews 11:1 and what you learned. Same for this step. I have included an example below, but write your own, inspired by what the Lord taught you through your study.

**prayer** *Write out a prayer using what you learned as inspiration.*

DEAR LORD GOD,

THANK YOU FOR THE ABILITY TO COME TO YOUR THRONE WITH BOLDNESS. THANK YOU FOR YOUR LOVE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR STEADFASTNESS AND TRUSTWORTHINESS. I TRUST IN YOU. HELP ME TO HAVE FAITH THAT WILL WEATHER THE STORM AND HELP ME PUSH THROUGH. I WANT TO PERSEVERE KNOWING THAT YOU CAN DO ANYTHING AND YOU WORK IN ALL THINGS FOR THE GOOD OF THOSE WHO LOVE YOU.

IN JESUS' NAME I PRAY,  
AMEN.

- \* Now it's time to try one on your own! Since we've been looking at Matthew 5 & 6 for this series, read Matthew 6 and find a verse that sticks out to you. Happy mapping!