

INSTRUCTIONS AND  
TEMPLATE FOR

# *Verse Mapping*



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# WHAT IS VERSE MAPPING...AND HOW DO I DO IT?

Just as a map takes us on a journey, verse mapping carries us on a journey to knowing God more intimately and deeply. Verse mapping is a way to study God's Word and to hide it in your heart. We often "surface read" the Bible, but unless we have a method or have been taught how to dig into the Scriptures, we seldom stop to truly understand what we are reading or how to apply it to our lives. There are many methods to help you study the Bible and Verse Mapping is just one of those ways. The important thing is to find a method that works for you. Additionally, different people will "map" different things when verse mapping. I have included the most common things used to unpack a verse. I have also designed this to go hand in hand with our One Year Bible Reading Plan, as well as our Daily Revival Bible verses. Verse mapping is not designed to replace your daily Bible reading, but to enhance what you are reading. So let's talk about how to use verse mapping to study God's Word.

## HOW DO I PICK A VERSE?

Verse mapping is designed to be a deep study of a verse of scripture. Start by asking the Holy Spirit to lead you to a verse that He is wanting to speak to you through. That means, begin with prayer before you ever open your Bible. Then, as you are reading God's Word and the Holy Spirit causes a verse to stand out or touch your heart in some way, that would be a good verse to map. Or maybe it's a verse that you've read and don't quite understand. Perhaps it is a verse your pastor preached on and you want to know more.

## I HAVE MY VERSE, NOW WHAT?

Great! You've chosen your first verse. Now take a few moments to pray and ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you and show you what He wants you to discover and apply to your life. Then spend a few moments meditating over the verse. Circle key words in the verse—and don't neglect the little words, such as "if," "but," or "and." Then on your verse mapping page, write the verse in the verse box.

## EXPLORE THE LANGUAGE

To truly understand God's Word, we need to understand the Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic languages it was written in. But you do not need a seminary degree! There are many online Bible study helps that can help you understand God's Word. Biblegateway.com is what I often use. YouVersion is also a reliable tool and they have an app you can download or you can use their website at my.bible.com. You will want to use Strong's Exhaustive Concordance to help you with this step. [The Strongest Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, Larger-Print Edition](#) can also be purchased, if you prefer a book at your fingertips.

## ASK THE WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, AND WHY QUESTIONS

**Who:** Who is speaking? Who are the Bible characters involved? Who is obeying/disobeying God? Is there a nationality or group of people involved? Who is making/receiving promises? List all the people that are part of this verse

**What:** What is the message? What is happening? What miracles are being done? What promises are being made? What sins are revealed? What are the consequences? What praise is being offered? What words do you need to define to understand in a Biblical context? Answer all the what questions that pertain to the verse.

**When:** When in history did this take place? If you have a Bible that has an introduction to each book, you'll find the time frame for when the book was written. You can also read the introduction to get a feel for that period of history. If you find anything of significance that helps you better understand the verse, write that down. You can also note when the verse occurs to other "big events" in the Bible—such as "before the fall of man" or "before/after Jesus'

resurrection” or “when Israel was in Egypt.” The “when” can help tie concepts together and provide a clearer understanding when the verse is tied to the “when.”

**Where:** Where did this take place? The Garden of Eden? The Promise Land? Egypt? Mt. Sinai? The Garden of Gethsemane? At a well? Write as many details as you can about the “where”. Then, in your mind, place yourself there in the scene. Imagine what it looks like, smells like, sounds like, tastes like, feels like.

**Why:** Why did these events occur? Why would God include this in His letter to us today? Why would God do or say what is written? Why would the people in the verse do or say what they did? Why did the people/person obey or disobey? Be like the 2 year old who never stops asking “Why?”

These prompts are not meant to be complete, but to get you thinking about what to write in this area of the mapping page. You also might come to a verse that you can’t answer all of these questions or you might have to place the verse into its context (including verses before and after it) in order to get the answers to these questions. Context is important if you truly want to understand God’s Word, but we will get to context on page 2 of the mapping document.

## WHAT IS THE CONTEXT, CULTURE, AND HISTORY?

**Context** cannot be ignored. If you ignore the context, you risk misunderstanding the verse. When we take verses out of their context, we draw conclusions that lead to wrong assumptions. Context changes everything we learn about a verse. A verse should *never* be studied without considering the verses that come before it and after it. We need to know what the author is talking about in the surrounding verses. Not only are the surrounding verses important, but those verses are connected to the chapter, which is connected to the book which makes up a part of the Bible. We need a clear understanding of the big picture of the Bible and the specific book within the Bible before we can dig deep into a specific verse.

**Culture** also gives us clues and helps us understand a verse. For example, in the story of Jesus talking with the Samaritan woman at the well, when we understand culture of that era, we know that men didn’t speak to women that were not part of their family without one of her male family members present. Also, typically, the Jews did not speak to Samaritans. Additionally, this woman comes to the well alone. It was customary for the women to all go to the well together at a time of day when it was cooler outside, but this woman comes when she knows no one else will be there. That gives us a clue about her that should make us ask, “why does she come alone?” As we read the passage, we learn that she has had many husbands and the man she lives with now, she’s not married to. Living together outside of marriage today is accepted (by man—not God), but in her day, it was not.

**History** also gives us clues. For example, if we look at Israel’s history of turning their backs on God and following after false idols, we learn that God judged them and sent the Assyrians and Babylonians in to conquer them and carry them off into captivity. We should then ask, “have we seen this in history with other nations since then?” Which should then lead us to ask, “Is our nation in danger of God’s judgement?” As we understand the history, we can then see the need for a revival in our nation.

## USING OTHER TRANSLATIONS

Other translations can help us better understand a verse. The King James Version and the New King James are probably the two most accepted. If you believe the King James is the only acceptable translation, that’s fine. Use the King James as your primary Bible. But it can be helpful to read the verse you are studying in several translations as a means to better understand the verse. I like the Holman Christian Standard, and the English Standard Version. I also enjoy reading The Message Bible. The Message is not a translation. It is a paraphrase. What’s the difference? A Translation takes the original text from the original language and translates it into English (or the language you speak). A paraphrase uses the text and paraphrases it into how we speak today.

As you read the verse you are studying in different translations, pick one or two translations or paraphrases that helps you better understand the verse and write it on your mapping sheet in the “Other Translations” box.

## **RELATED VERSES**

Are there other verses in the Bible that relate to the one you are studying. If your Bible has footnotes or cross-references, be sure to read those verses and notes. If they shed understanding on the verse you are studying, jot those references in this area of your mapping sheet. You can also do a search in one of the online Bible programs to get a list of verses on a certain subject. So let’s say you are studying Paul’s verse that says, “you are saved by faith through grace.” What other verses tell you more about salvation, faith, and grace that will help you better understand the Biblical meanings of these words?

## **BIBLICAL PEOPLE WHO MODELED THIS VERSE?**

Let’s say your reading a verse about obeying God. Who are people in the Bible that obeyed completely, without hesitation? Abraham might be the first to come to mind. Noah, could be another. Moses obeyed, but only after giving some excuses to God. Who are people who did not obey and what were the consequences of that? Consider Jonah. Then meditate on what the Bible tells us about these people and how can they be a role model or mentor to us today to follow in their footsteps—or what can we learn from their mistakes so we do not follow in their footsteps?

## **HOW DOES GOD WANT ME TO APPLY THIS VERSE TO MY LIFE**

Have a head knowledge of the Bible is one thing. But if you don’t apply it to your life, it will not make you any closer to God. So, before answering this question, spend some quiet moments before the Lord. Ask Him to show you how you need to apply this verse and what you have learned about it to your life. Then, just sit in the quietness of His presence. As He brings the thoughts to your mind, write them down.

## **LAST RECOMMENDATIONS**

Verse mapping takes time. It is not something you can do in 15 minutes or less. But it will take you deeper into God’s Word and begin to mold you into becoming more like Christ, if you apply what you learn. If you earnestly want to go deep into God’s Word, then consider one verse per week and complete one section of the mapping each day. You can print as many copies of the mapping diagram as you like and keep them in a binder. You can also follow the same steps in the mapping process and just write in a journal or composition book, if you don’t want to print the 2-page mapping diagram. One other resource I will share with you to help you in your journey is [www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org). This site is great for when you need more insight into a verse or meaning about something in the Bible.

I also recommend that you memorize the verse you are mapping and you can do so a little each day. As you begin your mapping journey, my prayer for you is to grow in Christ and that God will transform you more and more into His image and, as a result, you will be salt and light to the world.

There is nothing more exciting than discovering the treasures of God’s Word and hearing Him speak to you through the scriptures. We invite you to share with us in our social media pages what God is saying to you through verse mapping. You’ll find us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Just follow the links through any of our posts on our website: [www.wellspringchristianministries.org](http://www.wellspringchristianministries.org).

May God bless you as you begin an exciting and new way of digging into God’s Word!

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# VERSE MAPPING



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## LANGUAGE EXPLORATION

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WHAT ARE THE FACTS ABOUT THIS VERSE?

WHO \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT \_\_\_\_\_

WHEN \_\_\_\_\_

WHERE \_\_\_\_\_

WHY \_\_\_\_\_

