Bible Charting for the #NoPlaceLeft Army Network By Jim McKnight

As disciples mature in their obedience to the scriptures, they will need forms of bible study that challenge them to mine for more subtle truths. This guide teaches a method to facilitate this mining. While less reproducing than the Commands of Christ, this approach promises to be transforming over a lifetime. It is long-term discipleship. The end goal of this method of bible study is that disciples 1) can study and master any passage of the bible they choose, and 2) teach it to others in a simple way. Disciples should not approach this method of study unless they habitually live the foundational practices of the Christian life, have memorized dozens of verses, and have read the entire bible at least once. Furthermore, disciples will glean the most from these kinds of studies when they practice them with their churches in community.

The format for the study holds to the basic Head, Heart, Hands outline, but expands each step into three sub steps, for a total of nine steps:¹¹

Margin Room

Head:

- 1. <u>Ph</u>rase the Passage
- 2. <u>F</u>ormat the Passage
- 3. <u>F</u>ind the Key Center

Heart:

- 4. Passage Atmosphere
- 5. Players Feelings
- 6. Personal Reaction

Hands:

- 7. <u>S</u>ay
- 8. <u>O</u>bey
- 9. <u>S</u>hare

Head:

Step 1: Phrase the Passage

Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ for the faith of God's elect and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness—a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time, and at his appointed season he brought his word to light through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of God our Savior. To Titus, my true son in our common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. An elder must be blameless, the husband of but one wife a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of being wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless--not overbearing, not quicktempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain. Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined. He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers at especially those of the circumcision group. They must be silenced because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach--and that for the sake of dishonest qain. Even one of their own prophets has said. "Cretans are always liars, evil brutes, lazy gluttons." This testimony is true. Therefore, rebuke them sharply, so that they will be sound in the faith and will pay no attention to Jewish myths or to the commands of those who reject the truth. To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted. They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny

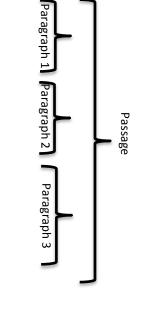
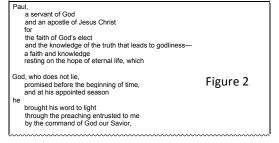


Figure 1

him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything

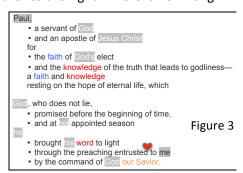
Begin by writing the passage of scripture inside a rectangular box down the middle of your page. You may do this entire study with a computer or freehand. Choose a passage that is about 15-30 verses long. It does not have to correspond to a chapter. Subdivide the passage further into paragraphs where you see fit. Passages should have about 5-10 verses in them. Try to break the passage where you believe the Holy Spirit shifts His thinking. Leave room in each margin and at the top and bottom to record information later. See the example from Titus 1 in Figure 1.



Next begin <u>Ph</u>rasing the passage by either using your computer to enter spaces or re-writing the passage by phrase. Break the sentences where the thought changes most significantly. The most significant thoughts should be aligned further to the left and the supporting ideas aligned further to the right. There is no wrong

way to do this step. Trust the Holy Spirit and break it using your judgment. In the example below the phrasing draws out the two main actors in the passage: Paul and God. For illustration the first four verses of Titus 1 are above in Figure 2.

 $^{^{1}}$ The majority of the content of this study guide is adapted from Jensen, Irving L. *Independent Bible Study.* Moody Press: Chicago, 1992.



Head:

Step 2: Format the Passage:

Now comes the fun part. Begin to mark the passage using different colors, font sizes and types, arrows, and symbols. The sky is the limit. Try to mark like thoughts to show how the passage is connected. In Figure 3 the disciple highlighted to show the interconnected work between the Apostle Paul and God. He used a heart to emphasize "entrusted," and highlighted the repeated words faith and knowledge. The only rule here is that you cannot change the words of the text. The text should stands alone. Anyone who reads your text should immediately see the main things you observed and how you interpreted the passage.

God

Entrust to

Which

Silences the

Rebellious

Head:

Step 3: Find the Key Center.

This is the most challenging and rewarding part of the study. Once you have phrased and formatted the rest of the text you should be getting very familiar with it. Now choose a key center, or the main phrase that ties the whole passage together. Draw a box around it. If it is truly a key center, it should relate to every other section in the passage in some way. Draw an arrow from the key center to the other phrase to which it relates. This step should take some time, meditation, and massaging. It should force you to really figure out the Holy Spirit's main point.

Once you have found the key center, write a title that is the same or very similar to the key center. Then write a subtitle for each section showing how it relates to the Key Center. The subtitle should go in the left margin next to the section it subtitles. In the example in Figure 4, "Hold to the

| Hold to the Message | God Entrusted to Me |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| | We Now Share |
| | You Must Entrust to Elders |
| | Which Silences the Rebellious |

Message" is the title, and each subtitle is written as if it could be a continuation of the titling, demonstrating the connection.

Finally, record any supplementary material you find in the right margin. Put cross-references, word studies, or other questions about the passage. Keep the ideas focused so they fit in the margin, but be creative with your supplementary material.

The disciple in Figure 4 found some additional information about the use of the word "entrust" and the consequences of not entrusting overseers correctly.

Who a servant of Go and an apostle of Je • the faith of God's elect Why and the knowledge of the truth that leads to godliness-What resting on the hope of eternal life, which who does not lie promised before the beginning of time, When and at his appointed season brought his word to light How through the preaching entrusted to me by the command of Paul demonstrates my true son in our common faith: appointment Acts Grace and peace from od the Father and Christ Jesus our S 14.23 Warning v. lack of The reason I left you in Crete was overseeing Acts that you might straighten out what was left unfinished 20.28 and appoint elders in every town, as I directed yo Contrast with 1 Tim 3 blameless the husband of but one 2 Tim 2.2 "Entrust' a man whose children believe and are not open to the charge of <u>being</u> wild and disobedient. Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he <u>must be</u> BE blamelessnot overbearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenr Figure 4 not violent, not pursuing dishonest gai Rather he must be one who loves what is good who is self-contro upright holy and KNOW He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can: DO encourage others by sound do and refute those who opp For there are many mere talkers and dec especially those of the circumcision group They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach—

Passage: Exhortative Instruction

Players: Titus: Overwhelmed, Paul: Concerned

Personal: Resolute

Hold to the Message

Heart:

Step 4: Passage Feeling.

How does the entire passage feel? What is its atmosphere, or tone? Read the text one more time slowly with your phrasing and formatting, and write the feeling of the passage as a whole.

Heart:

Step 5: Players Feelings.

The people involved in the passage are experiencing feelings. They are real people who really lived. Put yourself in their shoes for a minute. If the passage is a story, imagine that the story is happening to you. If it is a letter or poetry, imagine you were writing it, or receiving it. Steps 4 and 5 are essential to correctly interpreting the passage.

Heart:

Step 6: Personal Feelings. Stop and pray and ask the Holy Spirit to begin sifting your heart. You have been interacting with this passage a lot by now. How have you felt as you have studied? As you imagine being in the player's shoes, how did you feel? Step 6 is essential to correctly applying the passage. As the Holy Spirit begins to make you feel about the passage He is speaking to you. Summarize the feelings associated with the passage at the bottom of the chart. See Figure 4.

Hands:

Step 7: <u>S</u>ay

Write a short paragraph on God's message to you. In the past you have written a sentence or two. Develop what God is saying to you. Resist the temptation to summarize the passage. Write the words the Holy Spirit is communicating to you.

Hands:

Step 8: Obey

Now it's time to get specific. Write a measureable way in which you will respond and obey the Holy Spirit. This is the time when you translate how you are feeling into what you will practically do to serve Jesus Christ, in response to what His Spirit has said. Be a doer of the word, and not a hearer (or studier) only (Jas 1.22).

Hands:

Step 9: Share

It's time to grow in your ability to share. In the past you noted something that you would share loosely. This time, write Head, Heart, and Hands questions as if you were going to teach this passage to a new disciple. The questions should help him see some of the deep truths you found as you were studying the passage. Ask questions that drive him to see and experience what you experienced. Write 2-3 questions for Head; write 2-3 for Heart; and write 2-3 for Hands. This gives you a total of 6-9 questions. If done well, the questions should be simple enough that he can ask someone the same questions and lead them through the passage; however, the questions will also be challenging and insightful causing growth in Christ.

Here is an example from Titus 1:

Head:

- What is Titus's main problem in overseeing the ministry on Crete?
- What is the solution that Paul directs?
- What are the requirements for leaders?

Heart:

- How does Titus feel when he receives this letter?
- How does Paul feel when he writes this letter?
- How does this passage make you feel?

Hands:

- Are you holding firmly to the trustworthy message?
- Have you established overseers as necessary in the ministry God has given you?
- Have you correctly organized the elders underneath you?