

THOUGHT DIAGRAMS

INTRODUCTION

The best way to follow a Bible writer’s or participant’s thoughts in a text is to prepare a **Thought Diagram** that traces its line of thinking *thought for thought* rather than *word for word*. Contrary to popular opinion, “***holy men of God spoke as they were moved [not, used] by the Holy Ghost*** [as if God were some kind of divine ventriloquist or puppeteer] (2Pet. 1:21).” So, instead of dictating scripture and using them like pens or keys on a typewriter, the LORD entrusted the men who wrote the Bible to capture in human language—what He showed or told them—based on their experiences, education, and willingness to serve Him. In other words, the LORD influenced the writers’ thoughts and supervised their selection of words, expressions, and images to reproduce His mind for their audiences.

Under the Spirit’s supervision, inspiration is a trustworthy phenomenon in the mind of the writer as opposed to transcribing direct transmissions from God. Thus, his Gospel and Acts reflect Luke’s medical training, Ezekiel peppers his prophecies with priestly language, and Paul’s writings ooze with rabbinic methodology.

GUIDELINES

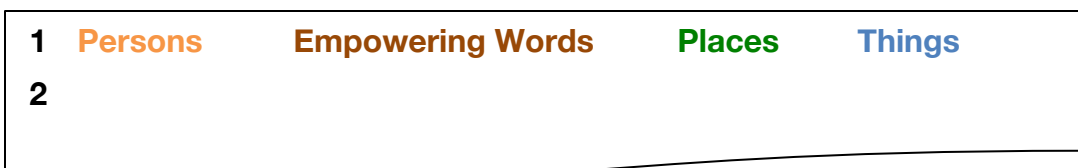
Just as we have simplified analysis, replacing scary parts of speech with five basic parts of writing: links, people, places, things, and empowering words, so we want to make it easier for you to see what’s really happening in the text with Thought rather than Structure Diagrams. Unlike **Structure Diagrams** that call for a working knowledge of linguistics—especially familiarity with grammar and syntax, **Thought Diagrams** require one simple skill: the ability to recognize similarity.

Follow these few simple steps to pry the secrets from any passage:

1. Number the verses at the left of the page



2. Place persons next to verse numbers, followed by empowering words, places, and things. Line up similar ones under one another.



3. Place linking words between what they link, immediately under the first. Then line up the second with its mate.

| | | | | |
|----------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1 | Persons | Empowering Words | Places | Things |
| | Linking Word | | | |
| | Person | | | |

Sometimes, this will place the second to the right of the linking word, especially when one of the links is a phrase.

| | | | | |
|----------|----------------|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| 1 | Persons | Empowering Words | Places | Things |
| | | Linking Word | Place | |
| | Person | | | |

BENEFITS

With every person, place, thing and empowering word lined up with its mates, you should find it easier to see the first time the writer mentions a person, place, or thing, and to grasp the way repetitions explain, define, interpret, or make it easier to understand what the writer already said.