
Wilbert Webster White and His Influence on Joseph Wesley Mathews: compiled by

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Overview: The Inductive Method, Charting, and a Legacy Extended: Joseph Wesley Mathews and the Pedagogical Influence of Wilbert Webster White

The intellectual and spiritual formation of Joseph Wesley Mathews cannot be fully understood without reference to the influence of Wilbert Webster White, whose approach to biblical study helped reshape Protestant theological education in the early twentieth century. While, long associated with Yale Divinity School, Dr. White was best known for developing Inductive Biblical Study, a charting method which was an inductive approach that trained students to engage scripture historically, structurally, and contextually before moving toward interpretation or application

White's method represented a deliberate departure from both proof-texting and purely devotional reading. Scripture, he believed must be approached with disciplined attention to its literary form, historical setting, and internal movement. Only then could it function as a living witness capable of shaping faith and practice. This approach demanded patience, humility, and intellectual rigor, virtues White saw as essential to authentic Christian leadership.

Joe Mathews encountered White's work during a formative period in his own development and absorbed more than a technique. What he embraced was a way of inhabiting scripture. Under White's influence, Mathews came to regard biblical study as a formative discipline, one that shared judgment, character and vocation. Scripture was not merely a source of doctrinal assertions but a textured narrative into which the reader must enter attentively and responsibly.

As Joe Mathews moved into leadership roles within Methodist education, this posture toward Scripture became part of his pedagogical DNA. He emphasized contextual understanding, disciplined inquiry, and the integration of study with lived faith. In doing so, Mathews resisted both theological abstraction and emotional immediacy divorced from thoughtful engagement. His work helped cultivate leaders capable of holding together intellectual seriousness and spiritual vitality

The influence of White, mediated through Mathews, contributed to an environment in which Scripture was approached neither as a weapon nor a relic, but as a dynamic encounter shaping both belief and action.

I. Introduction

In *A Global Odyssey*, James K. Mathews, Joe Mathews' younger brother recalls the formative training he and his brother, Joseph Wesley Mathews, received at the Biblical Seminary in New York—training steeped in the inductive method of Bible study and its distinctive practice of **charting**. He notes that they “could chart anything,” a habit of mind that became central to Joe's later career and ultimately foundational to the Ecumenical Institute's corporate methods. This paper traces the intellectual line running from **Wilbert Webster White (WWW)**—founder of the Biblical Seminary and architect of the inductive approach—to **Joseph W. Mathews**, whose expansion of White's method produced the charting system that undergirded the educational, organizational, and spiritual methodology of the Ecumenical Institute and Institute of Cultural Affairs.

II. Wilbert Webster White: A Brief Biography and Educational Vision

Wilbert Webster White (1863–1944) emerged as one of the most significant innovators in American theological education. Born in Nankin, Ohio, to John May and Martha Campbell White, he grew up in a family deeply engaged in Christian leadership and global mission, with siblings who would later serve in ministry, in the YMCA movement, and in international missionary work.

White was shaped by rigorous academic training at Wooster College, Xenia Theological Seminary, and Yale University, where he encountered the pioneering Hebrew scholar **William Rainey Harper**. Harper's influence awakened White's lifelong commitment to **method**, especially the disciplined analysis of structure, observation, and textual coherence.

In August 1900, White founded the **Bible Teachers' College**, later renamed the **Bible Teachers' Training School**, the **Winona Bible School**, and eventually the **Biblical Seminary in New York**. His revolutionary aim was to center the entire curriculum on **direct, inductive study of the Bible in the vernacular**.

White believed that theological education had become dangerously deductive and excessively dependent on commentaries rather than Scripture itself. He insisted that preachers must “know the Bible rather than know about the Bible,” and he envisioned a curriculum rooted in:

1. **A biblio-centric focus,**
2. **A commitment to direct observation and discovery,**
3. **Devotional formation and prayer,**
4. **A cosmopolitan global outlook, and**
5. **A deep conviction regarding the authority of Scripture.**

The Mathews brothers entered seminary at the very point when White’s educational philosophy had matured into a coherent system. As JKM later wrote, “there could scarcely have been better training for Joe,” whose extraordinary memory and zeal made him “a kind of walking concordance.”

III. The Inductive Bible Study Method: The Logic of Discovery

White’s inductive Bible study method—later foundational for the IBS movement—rests on the principle that **interpretation must begin with observation**. “Induction is the logic of discovery,” White taught, because it begins with particulars and only then moves to general conclusions.

Induction protects readers from:

- Imposing personal assumptions onto the text,
- Relying on secondhand summaries,
- Extracting verses from their context,
- Ignoring the structure and flow of thought, and
- Reducing Scripture to pre-formed theological systems.⁸

White insisted that students **train the eye to be an honest servant of the mind**, disciplining themselves to attend closely to textual details before making interpretive claims. He warned against premature interpretation and argued that commentaries, however helpful, “tell us what the world has said about the Bible,” while the task of theology is to hear “what the Bible says about the world.”

To help students learn to see, White required them to study the classic Agassiz teaching narrative, “*The Student, the Fish, and Agassiz*.” The story dramatizes how extended attention—without tools, shortcuts, or preconceived theories—reveals the deeper structure of reality. For White, careful observation was not simply an academic skill but a **spiritual discipline**.

IV. Charting as White Taught It: Seeing the Structure of Thought

Charting emerged naturally from White’s inductive commitments. He believed that the most important step in studying Scripture—or any text—is grasping the **patterns and internal structure** of the material. Charting helped students:

- See the whole before analyzing the parts,

- Identify divisions, transitions, and repeated themes,
- Organize thoughts visually from **left to right**,
- Discover topical headings before content,
- Summarize paragraphs in their own words, and
- Retitle sections and books to express the author's central intention.

Charting was not simply a note-taking technique but a way of learning to see relationships. White believed the universe exhibited “magnificent coherence,” that “things hook and eye together,” and that disciplined observation reveals this underlying unity.

V. Joseph W. Mathews: Receiving and Deepening the Method

Joseph W. Mathews absorbed White's inductive and charting methods with unusual zeal. As JKM recounts, Joe's disciplined study made him “a kind of walking concordance,” able to locate biblical references instantly. Charting became the native structure of Joe's thinking.

He quickly recognized the spiritual power of White's method. White's insistence on careful observation and disciplined humility—embodied in the Agassiz story—provided Joe with a lifelong template for engaging Scripture, theology, and later, social systems. For Joe, learning to observe was learning to **listen**, and learning to listen was learning to **be changed**.

VI. Joe Mathews' Expansion of Charting: The Existential and Corporate Turn

Although Joe faithfully inherited White's inductive commitments, he expanded charting into a broader spiritual and existential method. In a 1968 reflection, Joe wrote:

“You are not interested in ideas, but in the human being over against you...
Charting is changing your posture and your being in history.”

Joe transformed charting into a **trialogue** among:

1. The text,
2. The Other (writer, community, or interlocutor), and
3. The Mystery—God Himself.

He insisted that charting begins with a **decision to love** the Other, even before one understands them. Without that posture, there can be no real study. Joe saw charting as a **spiritual exercise**, a way of encountering:

- The depths of the text,
- The depths of the neighbor, and
- The depths of one's own being.

Thus, while White emphasized structure, Joe emphasized **transformation**. Charting was no longer only a way to understand Scripture; it became a way to engage the world with disciplined attention and openness to the Mystery.

VII. Institutionalization: Charting in the Ecumenical Institute and ICA

Under Joe's leadership, the Ecumenical Institute (EI) and later the Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA) developed charting into a powerful **corporate learning method**. It became foundational to:

- Group study and pedagogical design,
- The Social Process analysis tools,
- The Global Academy curriculum,
- Decision-making processes,
- Timelining and the Wall of Wonder,
- The ToP® facilitation methods now used worldwide.

The EI/ICA charting steps ("Initial Process" and "Depth Dialogue") operationalized Joe's approach, enabling groups to handle vast quantities of complex material quickly and collaboratively. What began as a method of biblical interpretation emerged as a global framework for organizational analysis and community development.

VIII. The Value for IBS Scholars: A Wider View of White's Legacy

Inductive Bible Study scholars often trace the academic development of White's method within seminaries influenced by Harper and Kuist. But White's method has a **second history**—a history far less documented.

The EI/ICA's adaptation shows that the logic of induction, combined with White's emphasis on structure and disciplined observation, is **highly transferable**. It has proven effective in:

- Systems analysis,
- Organizational leadership,
- Community development,

- Global facilitation training,
- Participatory decision-making.

Charting's expansion into these fields reveals that White's method was not simply a tool for exegesis but an educational paradigm with extraordinary reach. Recognizing this broader legacy enriches both the history of IBS and the history of global civil society training.

IX. Conclusion

The lineage from **Wilbert Webster White** to **Joseph Wesley Mathews** is unmistakable:

- White pioneered the inductive method as a corrective to superficial biblical knowledge.
- Joe Mathews adopted, deepened, and existentialized this method.
- Charting became both a spiritual discipline and an analytical tool.
- Through the Ecumenical Institute and ICA, White's method influenced thousands around the world.

What unites both men is their uncompromising commitment to teaching others **how to see**—how to discern structure, coherence, and meaning—and to be changed by what comes into view.

NOTES that fed into the paper above....

Introduction to Inductive Bible Study: Wilbert Webster

White and his influence on JWM and on “Charting”

JKM writes about Joe and WWW

Nick came across this passage in his grandfather’s autobiography (*A Global Odyssey*) about the training he and his brother Joe Mathews received in the inductive method of Biblical study, a method that **employed extensive charting**. (pg. 79, *Global Odyssey*)

I attended Biblical Seminary, later New York Theological Seminary, in New York City. As the schools’ name implies there was strong emphasis on English bible, which was studied systematically book by book.

We were taught an inductive method of Bible study and employed extensive charting. We could chart anything. Charting facilitated getting a grasp on any particular subject as a whole. Typically, we would draw a chart from left to right. We could say that since we read left to right, we think left to right. I have used this method and approach throughout my ministry. **In the case of my brother Joe, he developed the method of charting to a fine art, for he was a superb teacher.** The induction model was used by Joe for virtually everything that they did – may partially explain the odd words etc....

Joe and I had the privilege of sitting under a great teacher, skilled in inductive biblical study, Wilbert Webster White, the founder of the school. White had studied under William Rainey Harper, founder of the University of Chicago and a master teacher, particularly of Hebrew. White was a product of Yale with a sound foundation in the theological disciplines. He became profoundly convinced that the

greatest failing of preachers was that they did not really know the Bible. It became White's mission in life to try to correct this, and he went far toward this goal

There could scarcely have been better training for Joe, in the Bible, especially the New Testament. Joe became a kind of walking concordance, for if someone cited a verse of scripture, he could have called out its chapter and book in the New Testament. It was assumed that with such raw exposure to Scripture one would at the same time gain a working biblical theology. To a certain degree this was true and also liberating. Joe brought his particular brand of zeal to Biblical seminary and soon made a place for himself.

These comments about Joe's training in the inductive method of biblical study suggest that it was foundational to the extensive 'charting' used by Joe in his ministry..... Charting and the corporate approach became the basis of every Ecumenical Institute program and was one of the 'secrets' of its power.

Dr. White was the President of the Biblical Seminary, and when Joe attended, had recently shifted its focus to make the study of the Bible the organizing principle of its preparation of students for Christian service and leadership. The seminary reflected White's emphases: a biblio-centric curriculum in the vernacular; concern for effective educational principles and practices to facilitate the student's own learning; commitment to the devotional life of prayer toward spiritual maturity; a cosmopolitan global perspective; and a commitment to evangelical Christianity with an emphasis on the authority of scripture.

White was thoroughly convinced that a preacher's greatest liability was the absence of a deep knowledge and understanding of the Bible. Dr. White believed that seminary education must not only center the study of the Bible but must also facilitate authentic spiritual formation. In his opinion many seminaries relied on secondary sources, that is, commentaries on the Bible. This limited the firsthand encounter between theology students and the Biblical narrative. Commentaries, White stated, tell us what the world has said about the Bible, but to him the essence of theological study was to find out what the Bible says about the world. White was deeply concerned with the danger posed by failing to take the Bible seriously and pointed out the risk of taking a verse out of context because the reader does not understand it or the message it was intended to transmit. The Inductive Biblical Method's rigor and sophistication, according to White have allowed it to meet the needs of both scholarship and the academy.

What is the Inductive Bible Study method?

Inductive Biblical Study is essentially *the comprehensive, holistic study of the Bible that considers every aspect of the existence of the Biblical text and is intentional in allowing the Bible, in its final canonical shape, to speak on its own terms, thus leading to accurate, original, compelling, and profound interpretation and contemporary appropriation.*

Supporters of this method find that it protects the reader of scripture from the tendency to read his or her own ideas into the text, a practice made more insidious because we are typically unaware that we are doing so. Thus, a corollary of the authority of the Bible is an “inductive attitude,” i.e., a commitment to identifying our presuppositions and submitting them to the evidence in and surrounding the biblical text, so that the message of the text itself, construed according to relevant evidence, becomes the final determination of our thinking, and especially of our theology. Induction is the logic of discovery.

In induction the mind first observes particular instances and then draws its inference. In deduction the mind first draws a particular conclusion from a general principle with which it starts and then observes whether its conclusion is true. In induction, first observe, then conclude, in deduction, first conclude then observe. Induction leads to the formulation of principles, which deduction leads to the explication of principles. Induction defines; deduction illustrates. Induction moves from a part to the whole of a system, class or group whereas deduction moves from the whole to the part. Induction is from the particular to the general deduction from the general to the particular. Induction through observation of and experiment upon new instances is the method by which knowledge is advanced. Induction is the logic of discovery,

The Charting Method used in the IBS, was designed and developed by WWW

The most important thing about studying the bible, or a book is to get a hold of the patterns and structure that the author uses. This allows the reader to move beyond the content and grasp what was actually in the author’s mind.

1. Concentrate on the whole of the paper much as you would a picture. This produces a *gestalt*.
 - a. Scan through the Biblical book. Look for the author’s major breaks and subdivisions.
 - b. Run your fingers through the paragraph and see what words jump out at you.
 - c. Go through and number the paragraphs. Lay out a chart horizontally on a piece of paper.
 - d. Read the conclusion and the paragraph before and after the divisions.
 - e. Circle the important words.
 - f. Find key paragraphs where the structure and the thesis are laid out.

- g. As yet, you are not yet interested in content but only the topical headings.
2. Relate the paragraphs and topics.
3. Read and sum up the paragraphs. You needn't necessarily start with the first paragraph, but those that set the topics up and the structure out. Then complete all paragraphs.
4. Further relate the paragraphs and the topics to refine your structure until a final gestalt comes.
5. In your own words, write a brief proposition stating what is in each paragraph, each section of your structure, and finally for the whole paper.
6. Retitle the paper and topics in your own words.
7. Relate the final topics to other Biblical writers and your own self-understanding

Charting should be done from left to right in order that your eye may help your mind grasp the structure. The method may look laborious but can actually save time.

Charting reveals the structure of an article or book and permits dialogue with the whole rather than concentration on any part.

White insisted on a biblio centric curriculum. A biblio centric curriculum involves a center, an area. The area is all that field to which we are led by the Bible itself and it is good to recognize that this field is limitless and that we are free to go from this center in every direction, and that can return to this center howsoever far we may be stimulated to go from it. The Bible contains all the educational material for the nurture of the Christian life, and to know the Bible in itself and in its wider relationships, involves all departments of human life and activity.

WWW insisted that the first duty of the Teacher was to train the students' eye to be an honest servant of the mind. Following this method, White would tolerate no Biblical interpretation until every detail of the passage of Scripture under consideration had been scrutinized and weighed. He would ask the student not only to take off his imagination but to table all presuppositions and questions while he searched the material at hand, Let him wait for answers until they "come home like doves to the windows." WWW knew that it was a strategic mistake in dealing with the mind to fit all narratives into a preconceived theory pro or con. WWW wanted his students to be able to go anywhere with a Bible and makes themselves ready for the pulpit.

Charles Richard Eberhardt, the author of *The Bible in the Making of Ministers* writes, "The conviction that Wilbert Webster White's work had crucial significance for the evangelical

church first came to me as a student at the Biblical Seminary in NYC. He writes the following about his professor.

White found it difficult to force his ideas through the point of pen. He consistently avoided the writing of textbooks, which so often become a substitute for right thinking on the part of the student. His speaking manner was almost vehement and his works strode about the classroom as living incarnation of the truth which gripped him.

White worried that the Bible has become some extraneous or vestigial organ and was not long the center of things. He believed that the minister must be a bibliocracy – He must know his bible better than any other book and White believed that seminaries must have a new system of teaching the Bible, and Pastors needed focal training about the Bible.

White had found theological education almost entirely deductive and the inductive method offered a significant remedy. Freedom to think is fundamental. To thinking there should be set no horizon. To them who are in Christ belong all things. There should be no hostility to the freedom of investigation.

When Joe enrolled at The biblical Seminary in NYC, he was immediately introduced to White's method of study by reading the story of "The Student The Fish and Agassiz". It is a story of Louis Agassiz's teaching and is one of the very best records of the correct way to learn new material in a systematic and ultimately useful manner. Dr. White insisted that it was relevant to Bible study and Joe would have soon understood the reason for its inclusion.

The Student, The Fish, and Agassiz

By the Student

Dr. Louis Agassiz
(1807 - 1873)

It was more than fifteen years ago that I entered the laboratory of Professor Agassiz, and told him I had enrolled my name in the scientific school as a student of natural history. He asked me a few questions about my object in coming, my antecedents generally, the mode in which I afterwards proposed to use the knowledge I might acquire, and finally, whether I wished to study any special branch. To the latter I replied that while I wished to be well grounded in all departments of zoology, I purposed to devote myself specially to insects.

"When do you wish to begin?" he asked.

"Now," I replied.

This seemed to please him, and with an energetic shelf a huge jar of specimens in yellow alcohol.

"Very well," he reached from a

"Take this fish," said he, "and look at it; we call it a Haemulon [pronounced Hem-yú-lon]; by and by I will ask what you have seen."

With that he left me, but in a moment returned with explicit instructions as to the care of the object entrusted to me.

"No man is fit to be a naturalist," said he, "who does not know how to take care of specimens."

I was to keep the fish before me in a tin tray, and occasionally moisten the surface

with alcohol from the jar, always taking care to replace the stopper tightly. Those were not the days of ground glass stoppers, and elegantly shaped exhibition jars; all the old students will recall the huge, neckless glass bottles with their leaky, wax-besmeared corks half eaten by insects and begrimed with cellar dust. Entomology was a cleaner science than ichthyology, but the example of the professor, who had unhesitatingly plunged to the bottom of the jar to produce the fish, was infectious. and though this alcohol had "a very ancient and fishlike smell," I really dared not show any aversion within these sacred precincts, and treated the alcohol as though it were pure water. Still, I was conscious of a passing feeling of disappointment, for gazing at a fish did not commend itself to an ardent entomologist. My friends at home, too, were annoyed, when they discovered that no amount of eau de cologne would drown the perfume which haunted me like a shadow.

In ten minutes, I had seen all that could be seen in that fish, and started in search of the professor, who had, however, left the museum; and when I returned, after lingering over some of the odd animals stored in the upper apartment, my specimen was dry all over. I dashed the fluid over the fish as if to resuscitate it from a fainting-fit, and looked with anxiety for a return of the normal, sloppy The Student, The Fish, and Agassiz appearance. This little excitement over, nothing was to be done but return to a steadfast gaze at my mute companion. Half an hour passed, an hour, another hour. the fish began to look loathsome. I turned it over and around; looked it in the face—ghastly; from behind, beneath, above, sideways, at a three-quarters' view—just as ghastly. I was in despair; at an early hour I concluded that lunch was necessary; so, with infinite relief, the fish was carefully replaced in the jar, and for an hour I was free.

On my return, I learned that Professor Agassiz had been at the museum, but had gone and would not return for several hours. My fellow students were too busy to be disturbed by continued conversation. Slowly I drew forth that hideous fish, and with a feeling of desperation again looked at it. I might not use a magnifying glass. instruments of all kinds were interdicted. My two hands, my two eyes, and the fish. it seemed a most limited field. I pushed my finger down its throat to feel how sharp its teeth were. I began to count the scales in the different rows until I was convinced that that was nonsense. At last, a happy thought struck me—I would draw the fish; and now with surprise I began to discover new features in the creature. Just then the professor returned.

"That is right," said he; "a pencil is one of the best of eyes. I am glad to notice, too, that you keep your specimen wet and your bottle corked."

With these encouraging words he added,—

"Well, what was it like?"

He listened attentively to my brief rehearsal of the structure of parts whose names were still unknown to me: the fringed gill—arches and movable operculum; the pores of the head, fleshy lips, and lidless eyes; the lateral line, the spinous fin, and forked tail, the compressed and arched body. When I had finished, he waited as if expecting more, and then, with an air of disappointment,—

"You have not looked very carefully; why," he continued, more earnestly, "you haven't seen one of the most conspicuous features of the animal, which is as plainly before your eyes as the fish itself, look again, look again!" and he left me to my misery.

I was piqued; I was mortified. Still more of that wretched fish! But now I set myself to my task with a will, and discovered one new thing after another, until I saw how just the professor's criticism had been. The afternoon passed quickly, and when, towards its close, the professor inquired,—

"Do you see it yet?"

"No," I replied, "I am certain I do not, but I see how little I saw before."

"That is next best," said he earnestly, "but I won't hear you now; put away your fish and go home; perhaps you will be ready with a better answer in the morning. I will examine you before you look at the fish."

This was disconcerting; not only must I think of my fish all night, studying, without the object before me, what this unknown but most visible feature might be; but also, without reviewing my new discoveries, I must give an exact account of them the next day. I had a bad memory; so, I walked home by Charles River in a

distracted state, with my two perplexities.

The cordial greeting from the professor the next morning was reassuring; here was a man who seemed to be quite as anxious as I that I should see for myself what he saw.

"Do you perhaps mean," I asked, "that the fish has symmetrical side with paired organs?"

His thoroughly pleased, "Of course, of course!" repaid the wakeful hours of the previous night. After he had discoursed most happily and enthusiastically—as he always did—upon the importance of this point, I ventured to ask what I should do next.

"Oh, look at your fish!" he said, and left me again to my own devices. In a little more than an hour he returned and heard my new catalogue.

"That is good, that is good!" he repeated, "but that is not all; go on." And so, for three long days, he placed that fish before my eyes, forbidding me to look at anything else, or to use any artificial aid. "Look, look, look," was his repeated injunction.

This was the best entomological lesson I ever had—a lesson whose influence has extended to the details of every subsequent study; a legacy the professor has left to me, as he has left it to many others, of inestimable value, which we could not buy, with which we cannot part.

A year afterward, some of us were amusing ourselves with chalking outlandish beasts upon the museum blackboard. We drew prancing starfishes, frogs in mortal combat; hydra-headed worms; stately crawfishes, standing on their tails, bearing aloft umbrellas; and grotesque fishes, with gaping mouths and staring eyes. The professor came in shortly after, and was amused as any, at our experiments. He looked at the fishes.

"Haemulons, every one of them," he said. "Mr. ----- drew them."

True; and to this day, if I attempt a fish, I can draw nothing but Haemulons.

The fourth day, a second fish of the same group was placed beside the first, and I was bidden to point out the resemblances and differences between the two.

another and another followed, until the entire family lay before me, and a whole legion of jars covered the table and surrounding shelves; the odor had become a pleasant perfume; and even now, the sight of an old, six-inch, worm-eaten cork brings fragrant memories!

The whole group of Haemulons was thus brought in review; and, whether engaged upon the dissection of the internal organs, the preparation and examination of the bony framework, or the description of the various parts, Agassiz's training in the method of observing facts and their orderly arrangement was ever accompanied by the urgent exhortation not to be content with them.

"Facts are stupid things," he would say, "until brought into connection with some general law."

At the end of eight months, it was almost with reluctance that I left these friends and turned to insects; but what I had gained by this outside experience has been of greater value than years of later investigation in my favorite groups.

From *American Poems* (3d ed.; Boston: Houghton, Osgood and Co., 1879), pp. 450-54. This essay first appeared in *Every Saturday*, XVI (Apr. 4, 1874), 369-70, under the title "In the Laboratory With Agassiz, By a former pupil."

Blue-Striped Grunt

(*Haemulon Species*)

French Grunt

(*Haemulon Species*)

White Grunt

(*Haemulon Species*)

Agassiz gave his students a fish, for what is what was they asked of him and White the bread of life, for that was what they asked of him. Neither offered them, knowledge lumps like stones or devious teaching methods, like serpents.

WWW also believed that there is a magnificent coherence in the universe. Things hang together. God's vast creation was one majestic composition. Things hook and eye together and to exist is to stand in relation.

Because of things hooking and eyeing together, the study of nature, of science, of art, of bible and so on, requires that we keenly observe to notice the hooking and eyeing of things together so as to clearly understand relationship and thereby through the law of continuity. We tie things together so that we will not forget but remember! The efforts of the ministry of the Ecumenical Institute took seriously the understanding and fostering connection and relationships, the hooking and eyeing of things. Charting, as used by WWW and later his student Joe Mathews, is a note-taking method for creating a visual, structured, and rational representation of written material. It organizes information into a grid of columns and rows, allowing for easy condensation and comparison of complex data, books, articles, or even paragraphs and sentences.

Charting and the corporate approach became the basis of every Ecumenical Institute innovation, approach, product and initiative.

Put the WWW chart here and one from Joe Mathews next to it....

CHARTING overview by Joe Mathews

November 29, 1968

You are not interested in ideas, but in the human being that is over against you in this; you are interested in the self. You have not charted unless you are other than what you were when you began. You may have gone through some intellectual rational process, but you have not charted. Charting is changing your posture and your being in history. Or to put it another way, it is the gimmick whereby you alter your existence through the genuine encounter with another human being. That is why this is not simply a dialogue, but a trialogue... Charting is a way in which you are related to the Mystery through your dealing with the Other in his relationship with the Mystery.

This is why you have to say at the beginning of any charting you make a decision to Love. Without this you can't get to first base. What does it mean at the beginning to Love this Other. You don't know him yet.

This paper before you is a great big hunk of Mystery. It is like looking in the eyes of the one you meet, before you know him. Here you make a decision, a kind of intensified relaxation, that is just crucial. There is a decision within yourself that man is to be honored, that he is a person of integrity.

You may very well disagree with him, punch him here or pat him there, but you are open to him you believe he is dealing authentically with what is there. You probably noticed that there are three paragraphs within this paper itself in which the basic operating methodology of his approach is discussed.

And mind you he charted, for charting is the way you write and the way you have listened. If you do not love...

Too often in study you have learned to hate, rather than love; and when you learn to hate you do not really study or learn. I shall never forgive some of my seminary professors who taught me to listen to what was wrong. Can you imagine that, rather than to teach me to love the institutes and let come what may. When I was looking for something that was wrong I could not study because I could not change, for I had all the answers before I looked at that document.

Therefore, I despised God.

Studying is a relationship to God, and the charting method is a means by which that can become a reality. This is why it is Art. To love that Other is to love the Self. This decision has to be made at the beginning --that I am willing to be changed.

Now mark you, I am not deciding to be a pushover. My heels are not run down. I decide to stand, but I am open to come out of it other than what I went into it. If that decision has not been made, you still do not know what changing is. It is a kind of abstraction. It is NOT rationalizing, it is dramatic; it is artform; it is humanness; it is the relationship to God; it is the Love of the neighbor.

You approach this effort to understand Scripture or what other words command your attention, like you do a piece of art. First you must see it as a whole, not in pieces. You haven't got the slightest chance of being any different than you were before, save you understand that you first look at the whole. You read the poem

as a whole, a unity. It has many parts in it, but it is a totality. Even as you begin to deal with the whole, in order to begin to get ahold of what the whole really is. That's what charting is.

The external relations of the unit within the whole, in which you have to look at the internal relations of the unit that you decide to operate with. Concern with that paragraph's relation to every other paragraph; but then you have to deal with that paragraph as an entity within itself, which is broken down into units, so when you reach the bottom you reach infinity itself, and find there are no units in it. Only when you get to the bottom of infinity itself does this external relations you find no end to the external relations. If you lived 1,000 years studying this paper you would never get to the end of it. You are dealing with the Mystery of the Other.

You are not dealing with a picture on the wall - you are dealing with your neighbor in this, and the bottomless Mystery of your own Self. That is what you see up on that board. When the Mystery of myself, before the Mystery of the other, becomes a reality there, we are before the Mystery beyond the Mystery beyond the Mystery beyond the Mystery, of God. This is spiritual exercise. That's charting. Nothing rational about it.

On the other side of that, this is the rationality that out-rationalizes rationality itself. When you put it that way you see that the rationality that outrationalizes rationality that outrationalizes rationality is spelled MYSTRY GOD. Any kind of study is a practical living relationship with the depth of life, to the depth of the neighbor, the depths of the self, the depth of God Himself. This, it seems to me is just crucial. Our chart have got to reflect that.

November 29, 1968

Joseph Mathews

CHARTING overview by Joe Mathews

November 29, 1968

You are not interested in ideas, but in the human being that is over against you in this; you are interested in the self. You have not charted unless you are other than what you were when you began. You may have gone through some intellectual

rational process, but you have not charted. Charting is changing your posture and your being in history. Or to put it another way, it is the gimmick whereby you alter your existence through the genuine encounter with another human being. That is why this is not simply a dialogue, but a triologue... Charting is a way in which you are related to the Mystery through your dealing with the Other in his relationship with the Mystery. This is why you have to say at the beginning of any charting you make a decision to Love. Without this you can't get to first base. What does it mean at the beginning to Love this Other. You don't know him yet.

This paper before you is a great big hunk of Mystery. It is like looking in the eyes of the one you meet, before you know him.

Here you make a decision, a kind of intensified relaxation, that is just crucial. There is a decision within yourself that man is to be honored, that he is a person of integrity. You may very well disagree with him, punch him here or pat him there, but you are open to him you believe he is dealing authentically with what is there. You probably noticed that there are three paragraphs within this paper itself in which the basic operating methodology of his approach is discussed. And mind you he charted, for charting is the way you write and the way you have listened. If you do not love...

Too often in study you have learned to hate, rather than love; and when you learn to hate you do not really study or learn. I shall never forgive some of my seminary professors who taught me to listen to what was wrong. Can you imagine that, rather than to teach me to love the institutes and let come what may. When I was looking for something that was wrong I could not study because I could not change, for I had all the answers before I looked at that document. Therefore, I despised God.

Studying is a relationship to God, and the charting method is a means by which that can become a reality. This is why it is

Art. To love that Other is to love the Self. This decision has to be made at the beginning -- that I am willing to be changed.

Now mark you, I am not deciding to be a pushover. My heels are not run down. I decide to stand, but I am open to come out of it other than what I went into it. If that decision has not been made, you still do not know what changing is. It is a kind of abstraction. It is NOT rationalizing, it is dramatic; it is artform; it is humanness; it is the relationship to God; it is the Love of the neighbor.

You approach this like you do a piece of art. First you must see it as a whole, not in pieces. You haven't got the slightest chance of being any different than you were before save you understand that you first look at the whole. You read the poem as a whole, a unity. It has many parts in it, but it is a totality. Even as you begin to deal with the whole, in order to begin to get ahold of what the whole really is. That's what charting is.

The external relations of the unit within the whole, in which you have to look at the internal relations of the unit that you decide to operate with. Concern with that paragraph's relation to every other paragraph; but then you have to deal with that paragraph as an entity within itself, which is broken down into units, so when you reach the bottom you reach infinity itself, and find there are no units in it. Only when you get to the bottom of infinity itself does this external relations you find no end to the external relations. If you lived 1,000 years studying this paper you would never get to the end of it. You are dealing with the Mystery of the Other. You are not dealing with a picture on the wall - you are dealing with your neighbor in this, and the bottomless Mystery of your own Self. That is what you see up on that board. When the Mystery of myself, before the Mystery of the other, becomes a reality there, we are before the Mystery beyond the Mystery beyond the Mystery beyond the Mystery, of God. This is spiritual exercise. That's charting. Nothing rational about it. On the other side of that, this is the rationality that out-rationalizes rationality itself. When you put it that way you see that the rationality that outrationalizes rationality that outrationalizes rationality is spelled MYSTERY GOD. Any kind of study is

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Himself. This, it seems to me is just crucial. Our chart have got to reflect that. November 29, 1968

Joseph Mathews

Global Movement Academy	
THE CHARTING Method •	
PART ONE: INITIAL PROCESS	
Step 1	<u>Hov to get a quick grasp of the Whole Paper.</u>
Step 2	<u>Decide to love the paper</u> – feel of it, ritualize affection, prmonce the author s name
Step 3	<u>Explore the entire contents</u> – look at enunciations, titles, opening and closing paragraphs, words that jump out ae you, and guess what the whole paper is about.
Step 4	<u>Number paragraphs</u> In the paper.
Step 5	<u>Lay out the chart</u> horizontally on a piece of paper, 1/3 of the way down from the top and number spaces to correspond with paragraphs. Do this very quickly. This is a work chart, not a museum piece.
Step V	<u>Scan for structure</u> – don't read, but look quickly for transitional clues , numerals, italics, transitional words. Read, at the the first 4 words of each paragraph. Record findings on work-chare below the line.
	<u>Scan for content</u> – topical headings – read, at the most, first and last sentence of each paragraph scribble findings the line. Do not necessarily start with the first paragraph, but start where topics easily. mien coQleCe all paragraphs.
PART TWO: THE DEPTH DIALOGUE	

	How to ask the paper good questions and hear answers.
Step 1	<u>What meanings</u> and questions are raised by the scan data? Record conclusions above the line. What are the <u>sections</u> emerging in your chart? What functions do they play (introduction, conclusion, transition, etc.)? Give each section an impressionistic title. Record above the line.
Step 2	You still have not read the paper. Where do you <u>need more data</u> ? Ask your questions, read in appropriate places, and record findings above the line.
Step 3	What are <u>questions you are now raising</u> about : a. The structure of the paper b. The content of the paper.
Step 4	Read to complete picture of the paper answer your questions. Don't read just to be reading. Keep your side of the dialogue engaged .
Step 5	<u>Organize</u> your findings into a total picture above the line. Give paragraphs a title. Title all sections in a consistent way. Give a good title to the whole paper,
Step 6	where the key questions and of the paper are further explanation into the heart of the paper.

How Charting Works

1. Visual Representation:

The primary goal of Charting is to create a visual picture of the study material, making it easier to understand and digest.

2. Structure and Rationality:

By using a grid format, the method emphasizes the underlying structure and logical flow of the information being studied.

3. Condensing and Organizing:

Instead of taking linear notes, Charting condenses complex information into summaries placed in different cells of the grid.

4. Easy Comparison:

The column-and-row format makes it simple to compare different topics, ideas, and data points within the material.

Applications

- **Studying Written Material:**

Charting can be used to make sense of entire books, complex datasets, articles, and even short passages of text.

- **Facilitating Understanding:**

It is a powerful tool for quickly grasping large amounts of data, a technique effectively used by trainers for complex study materials, notes the [University of York](#).

The Charting Method

Self-Consciously Ordering Life Experiences



Book Charting, [Timelining & The Wall of Wonder](#)

The Charting Method was developed by the Ecumenical Institute/Institute of Cultural Affairs around 1968. It provides a visual picture of study material emphasizing structure and rationality. It is used to make sense of written material such as a book, a complex set of data, an article, or even a paragraph or sentence. See Timeline & The Wall of Wonder for additional applications. It has been shared and used extensively across the globe and has been effectively used by the ToP Trainers Network in book studies held at each annual conference. It is taught in the ToP Approaches to Environmental Scanning [course](#) as a way to quickly get on top of an enormous amount of data.

Historical Information

Charting, Joseph W. Mathews, November 29, 1968

Charting, *Charting As a Decision Making Process*, Methods Paper, Joseph Pierce, 1969 The Institute of Cultural Affairs. Date unknown (late 60's)

Charting as a Life Method, Robert Shropshire, Chicago Centrums Methods Paper, Spring, 1971.

The Ecumenical Institute, Chicago The Institute of Cultural Affairs, Collegium C, July 26, 1970

Additional Background on Wilbert Webster White

Biography

Wilbert Webster White (WWW) was born to Martha Campbell White and John May White on January 16, 1863, in Nankin, Ohio. Wilbert's younger siblings were Elizabeth Belle (born 1864) who married Presbyterian minister Charles Compton; Leila Ada (1866) who married John R. Mott,

International YMCA leader and organizer of the World Missionary Conference in 1910; Anna May (1868) who married William Stewart and served with him as a missionary in the Far East. John Campbell (1870) who married Kate Pollock and was also involved in the YMCA and the missionary movement: and David George (1872) who married Mary Shaw and worked with his brothers for some time.

WWW earned his A.B. in 1881 and A.M. degree in 1883 from Wooster College. In 1885, he graduated from Xenia Theological Seminary. That year, he married Ella Jane Henderson. Their children were Helen Henderson, Wilbert Wallace, Robert Campbell and Donald Murray. Robert died young and Wilbert Junior died in World War One. After Wilbert Junior died, WWW developed a special relationship with Wilbert Junior's daughter, Elizabeth Worthington White, who was deaf from birth.

White left the pastorate after only sixteen months. His subsequent graduate work at Yale, where he was awarded a Ph.D. in 1891, prepared him to return to Xenia Theological Seminary as a professor. He was awarded honorary D.D degrees from Muskingum College in 1896 and New York University in 1913. He left Xenia Seminary in 1894 to become Associate Director of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago. Two years later, he was invited by the YMCA to work with college students in Calcutta. He spent time with missionaries there and, as at Yale, saw a great need for Bible education. On the way home in 1898, White was asked to conduct Bible studies in Britain. This work lasted for two years.

White identified his “Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse,” the individuals who had most influenced him. The first was Lord Overtoun, a Scot, who supported White in Britain. The second was Andrew Murray, whose book on prayer deeply influenced White in 1893. The third was Dwight Moody. The fourth was William Rainey Harper, the founder of the University of Chicago. White met Harper in 1883 while studying Hebrew in summer school. He continued the acquaintance during his graduate work at Yale, where Harper was on the faculty. At Yale, White became concerned with method, although all his previous training had been traditional. In August 1900,

White returned from Britain to found Bible Teacher’s College in Montclair, NJ, which opened on January 8, 1901. Before the next school year, President White moved that institution to New York City, because of his belief that theological education should be cosmopolitan. The school changed its name to Bible Teachers’ Training School. After using various churches’ facilities, the School took up residence at 541 Lexington Avenue in 1904. From 1905 to 1907, the School was allied with Sol Dickey and the Winona Lake Indiana movement: during that period, it was called The Winona Bible School. After gaining approval to grant graduate degrees in 1920, the School’s name became Biblical Seminary in New York the following year. BSNY moved to 235 East 49th Street in 1927.

The foundation of White’s educational policy was systematic Bible study in students’ native languages. He stressed knowledge of the Bible rather than knowledge about the Bible. He also emphasized home missions, as exemplified by the Italian department, and community service. White also offered study through the School’s publications: pamphlets, books, correspondence courses, and guest lectures and sermons. Beginning in 1924, White conducted intensive Bible studies for Christian leaders at Columbiana, near Silver Bay, New York, an extension school of BSNY.

Much of White’s work was directed at establishing and expanding his school. The depression years were particularly difficult for the seminary. In October 1938, Wilbert was advised by his physician to take an extended rest. His brother, John Campbell White, became acting president of the seminary. Lacking support for his plan for the future of the school, Wilbert resigned his presidency in April 1939 and his place on the Board of Trustees in July of that year. Wilbert spent most of his last four years at Silver Bay in personal Bible study, focusing especially on the Minor Prophets and Revelation. He died on August 2, 1944, at age 81.

The Wilbert Webster White Papers contain his personal papers from 1878-1945, which primarily focus on Bible Study and The Biblical Seminary in New York. These papers include White’s own

Bible study and his suggestions to direct others’ studies, essays on biblical topics, sermons, speeches, memoirs and correspondence. Relatively few documents relate to his personal or family life with the exception of those concerning the death of his son Wilbert Junior in the First World War.

Notes and the many charts White used to discern the structure of the books of the Bible are in

the Bible Study series, while more developed studies in the form of essays were scattered and have been gathered in the Literary Productions series.

Much of the correspondence, including that to his family, is on the subject of Bible study.

- **Series 1: Biography, 1910 - 1944 (1 Box, 0.25 lin. ft.)**

This series contains materials relating to White's family, himself and his relationship to the seminary which he founded. The series also includes two folders of minutes collected by White.

- **Series 2: Correspondence, 1878 - 1944 (2 Boxes, 1.0 lin. ft)**

Series 2 includes correspondence related to theological education, travels in India and Great Britain, the founding of the school in New York, seminary faculty, Christian colleagues and the associates of the Columbian movement. Correspondents include W.R. Harper, Howard T. Kuist, John R. Mott and his wife Leila, Lord Overton, George Pentecost, R. A. Torrey, and family members. Drafts of correspondence to Mahatma Gandhi are to be found here and also correspondence related to the death of Lt. Wilbert White Jr. in the First World War.

The arrangement is alphabetical by correspondent. Correspondence with individuals is followed by a sequence of student's testimonials. Many of these students report on their work in the mission field.

(Check here for possible Joe W. Mathews and James K Mathews info.)

- **Series 3: Subject Files:**

This series includes the following subseries:

- **Series 3A: Bible Studies, 1880 - 1944 (7 Boxes , 3.5 lin. ft)**

Addresses, articles, classroom materials, correspondence, **charts**, drafts, maps, notes, and prayers are arranged primarily in Biblical order. This series includes extensive notes as well as published items. There are many articles on archeological and scientific insights into, or contractions with, the Bible. **White sketched out many elaborate charts of the biblical books.**

- **Series 3B: Correspondence Courses, 1891 - 1937 (2 Boxes, 0.75 lin. ft)**

Arranged alphabetically by topic

- **Series 3C: Method, 1890 - 1942 (2 Boxes 1.0 lin. ft)**

Articles, booklets, clippings, correspondence, drafts, lesson plans, notes, photographs, and transcripts are arranged alphabetically by topic, followed by general reference material.

- **Series 3D: Organizations, 1900 - 1936 (1 Box, 0.5 lin. ft.)**

The subseries is arranged alphabetically by name of organization.

- **Series 3E: Student Addresses, 1898 - 1935, (1 Box, 0.25 lin. ft.)**

The subseries contains related notes, articles and correspondence. It is arranged alphabetically.

- **Series 3F: Topical, 1886 - 1945, (7 Boxes, 3.5 lin. ft.)**

Arranged alphabetically by topic are to be found articles, booklets, **charts**, correspondence, drafts, lesson plans, maps, memorabilia, minutes, notes, pamphlets, photographs, questionnaires, sermons and transcripts.

One folder of Prayer Hour Reports from 1904 to 1907 are included.

- **Series 4: Writings, 1882 - 1944, (10 Boxes, 5 lin. ft.)**

This series is arranged by the format of material—Articles, Books, Charts, Manuscripts, Memoirs, Notes, Poetry, Reminiscences, Sermons and Speeches. Within this arrangement by type, the organization is alphabetical by title, except for speeches, which are arranged chronologically.

- **Series 5: Scrapbook Materials, 1885 - 1941, (2 Boxes, 1 lin. ft)**

This series is arranged alphabetically and includes memorabilia collected by White or materials that others collected about him, including materials related to the death of his son in the First World War. This series concludes with two folders containing a special booklist compiled by White and a map of London indicating where Bible study was held by him in England.

- **Series 6: Collected Publications, 1881 - 1945, (4 Boxes, 2 lin. ft)**

This series contains written materials collected by White which had been written by faculty members or other people of interest to him. The series is arranged alphabetically by type of printed material: articles, booklets, books, charts, periodicals, sermons, and speeches. The series ends with clippings, both on White and more general.

- **Series 7: Elizabeth Worthington White Papers, 1890 - 1970, (2 Boxes, 1 lin. ft)**

This series contains the varied materials which were preserved in family archives by WWW's granddaughter, including a book of praises of WWW compiled for his 75th birthday, newspaper clippings, photographs, letters to relatives, and other materials that were of special value to the White family.

- **Series 8: Sermons, circa 1900 - 1944, (14 Boxes)**

This series contains sermons.

- **Series 9: Unprocessed material, 1900 - 1944, (3 Boxes)**

This series contains unprocessed photographs, maps, and other materials.

Columbia University Libraries at Union Theological Seminary, New York

Creator: Wilbert Webster White, 1863 - 1944

Title: Wilbert Webster White Papers, 1878 -1970

Inclusive dates: 1878 - 1970

Abstract: In 1900, Dr. White founded Bible Teachers' College later known as Bible Teachers Training School, Winona Bible School, and Biblical Seminary of New York. He was the institution's president from 1900 to 1939. Biblical Seminary became the New York Theological Seminary in 1966. White developed an inductive system of Bible Study, emphasizing knowledge of the Bible rather than knowledge about the Bible. The collection contains essays, research notes, correspondence, clippings, scrapbook materials, books, booklets, leaflets, and photographs.

Repository: The Burke Library

Union Theological Seminary

3041 Broadway

New York, NY 10027

Phone: 212-851-5612

Fax: 212-851-5613

Email: archives@uts.columbia.edu

Administrative Information

Provenance: The Wilbert W. White papers were deposited at Asbury Theological Seminary Special Collections Department in 1983 through the cooperation of William A. Weisenbach, Vice President of New York Theological Seminary.

In December 2007, a Deed of Gift was agreed between Dale Irvine (NYTS President) and James G. Neal (Columbia University Vice President for Information Services and University Librarian). This Collection was transferred to The Burke Library Archives (Columbia University Libraries) and accessioned in November 2008.

The Elizabeth Worthington White Series, named for Wilbert's granddaughter who preserved the materials, was donated on September 15, 2009 by David White and Connie Frasche, Wilbert Webster White's great-grandchildren.

The Theology of Charting Methodology, Gene Marshall, The Global Academy, Imaginal Methods course (IM-A) October 16, 1971, Checking archive files

Charting as a Life Method in the *Transformational Methodologies* document p. 13
Classroom Dynamics – Gene Marshall, Research Centrum, ICA Chicago, November 1973

The Charting Method, Global Academy, Gene Marshall, November 1973

A paper with instructions on how to chart – The Global Academy Curriculum.

Methodologies and Insights of Timelining *Collegium C*, July 26, 1970

- The Charting Song video below is sung to the tune of a traditional Christmas song, this item summarizes the main steps of the “charting method” developed by the Ecumenical Institute as an aid to rapid and effective study. Adapted to music by Doug Druckenmiller sung by Jim Wiegel.

Book Charting

BOOK CHARTING PROCEDURES

Detailed procedures and an explanation of book charting from the ICA Associates training course manual: Art and Science of Participation, contributed

by Jo Nelson. It includes a sample chart by Brian Stanfield of the paper *Facilitation from the Inside Out* by John Epps.

The Art and Science of Participation ©The Canadian Institute of Cultural Affairs
2012

The most important thing about studying a paper or book is to get hold of the patterns and structure that the author uses. This is to move beyond the content to what actually is in the author's mind. (this quote comes directly from WWW)