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Priority: Community

March 29, 2020

Daily Devotions

SOAP Introduction

As an individual or as a family, use this SOAP study to connect with Jesus each day this week. SOAP stands for Scripture, Observation, Application, and Prayer. When we do a SOAP study, we want to root ourselves in the Scriptures, observing what they have for us, applying them to our lives, and then communing with God in prayer both before and after our time in the Bible.

Each day there will be multiple Scriptures for you to ask questions about, sit with, hear from God, and be invited to respond in action to.

If you're doing this individually, be sure to prayerfully consider each day's truth, each day's passages, and each of the questions. If you are doing this as a family, don't be afraid to have each person in your family read one of the verses or to "popcorn read" if it's a longer passage (meaning, don't be afraid to have one person read a verse or two and then another read a couple verses and then another a couple verses).

Parents, if you are going through this with your children, be sure to ask questions that will help your children engage with the daily Scriptures by asking good, concrete questions.

Day One // God exists in community.

Scripture: **Genesis 1:26-27; Matthew 28:19; John 14:5-11**

Observation: *What do I see in this passage?*

- Last week we began in Genesis 1:26-27. Whether you read these verses last week, or if you're reading them for the first time, what do you think these verses reveal about the nature of God?
- As you sit with these verses, are there any important themes that are important for you to realize?
- How similar or dissimilar is this view of God compared to how you viewed God previously?
- Why is it important to know that God is a community? What does God being a community tell you about his nature?
- What truth does God want you to know?

Application: *What do I do with what I've read?*

- How can you live "in community" with God while practicing "social distancing?" How can you grow in community with family and friends during this time?
- In what ways does the truth that God exists in community change how you think about the importance of community in your own life?

Prayer:

- Spend some time in prayer communing either as a family or as an individual communing with the God who is three yet one, one yet three – the God who is a loving community.
- Set a reminder on your phone or mark it on a calendar to join us at 3:17pm everyday. Today, let's pray for those affected by the Global Pandemic

Day Two // If you're a Christian, you've got a new family (whether you like it or not!).

Scripture: **Mark 3:31-35; Acts 2:44-47; 1 John 3:1, 10, 24**

Observation: *What do I see in this passage?*

- In what ways did the church live like a family?
- What do these verses say about your new family in Christ?
- In what ways has God's family helped you? How has that shaped how you feel about the church?
- Has God's family ever hurt you? In what ways? How has that shaped how you view the church?
- How does it feel to know you have a new family in Jesus?
- How is viewing the church as a new family in Jesus change how you think about the people in your life group, the people you typically see on Sundays, or Christians you meet throughout the normal course of your day?
- What truth does God want you to know?

Application: *What do I do with what I've read?*

- In this season when we are apart from our church family, how will you stay connected? How can you help serve those in the church family like they did in Acts 2?
- How would actually living as a family with other believers change how you live (i.e. how you greet them, how you share with them, etc.)?
- What is God inviting you or your family into as a result of these Scriptures?

Prayer/Practice:

- As an individual or as a family, write a prayer to God thanking him for today's truth that you've got a new family in Jesus.
- Set a reminder on your phone or mark it on a calendar to join us at 3:17pm everyday. Today, let's pray for the families, including those with special needs.
- Make a list of ways you can express gratitude to the church as a whole or to members of your church family. Put those ideas into action this week.

Day Three // You've got a role to play in your new family.

Scripture: **1 Peter 4:8-11; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27.**

Observation: *What do I see in this passage?*

- Read these passages slowly one more time. How do these verses deepen your faith? What is God inviting you into from these verses?
- How does it feel to know you have value not just in God's eyes, but that you also have value as a part of his church as well?
- Where would you say you are most gifted? How are you stewarding the gifts God has given you?
- If you had to gauge your importance to God's new family on a scale of 1-10, what number would you choose? Why? Take a few moments to write out your response to that "why" question.
- What truth does God want you to rest in?

Application: *What do I do with what I've read?*

- If you could live fully into how God has gifted you, what would change in your life?
- In what ways could you help your community amidst the current pandemic?

Prayer:

- As an individual or as a family, write a prayer to God about what thoughts and feelings come to mind when thinking about the truth that you have a purpose in God's family.
- Set a reminder on your phone or mark it on a calendar to join us at 3:17pm every day. Today, let's pray for the elderly and high-risk communities.

Day Four // Where the Christian community is, Jesus is there too.

Scripture: **Matthew 18:20; 1 Corinthians 3:9-17; 1 Corinthians 12:27**

Observation: *What do I see in this passage?*

- How much do you feel like you prioritize Christian community?
- Why do you think one should prioritize community?
- How does the realization that the church is the *body* of Christ resonate with you? How does this inform how you experience the presence of Jesus?
- Describe how it feels to know that when you gather with other believers you are, in a way, experiencing the presence of Jesus in your life.
- How does this truth change how you view any time you gather with other followers of Jesus?
- How have you seen Jesus through actions of the church?
- When in community, what gets in the way of you seeing and experiencing Jesus?
- What truth does God want you to know?

Application: *What do I do with what I've read?*

- Based on these verses, what is God inviting you or your family into as a result of these Scriptures?

Prayer:

- As an individual or as a family, write a prayer to God about how you want to live in awareness of Christ's presence whenever you gather with other believers (be that physically or virtually!).
- Set a reminder on your phone or mark it on a calendar to join us at 3:17pm everyday. Today, let's pray for local, state, and national officials.

Day Five // Becoming like Jesus (a.k.a. a more loving person) is the goal of Christian community.

Scripture: **Colossians 1:28-29; John 13:34-35; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13**

Observation: *What do I see in this passage?*

- Think of the different communities you typically find yourself in. What is their purpose? Does your purpose for gathering in community with other believers match what is described in these verses?
- Why is gathering on the basis of a shared and common desire important for your community to function healthily?
- Why is it important that Christian communities gather based on helping one another become more like Jesus? How would this tangibly change your time together?
- Take a few moments to list out the characteristics that come to mind when you think of Jesus (How did he act, react, think, and feel?). How do you normally operate, comparing and contrasting your life to Jesus?
- Where is God inviting you to grow in Christlikeness?
- What does loving your community well look like for you? How has your Christian community loved you well?
- What truth does God want you to know?

Application: *What do I do with what I've read?*

- What is one tangible way you can love your community amidst this time of social distancing?
- How can your community focus in on helping one another become more like Jesus?

Prayer:

- As an individual or as a family, write a prayer to God asking him to help you become a person of love.
- Set a reminder on your phone or mark it on a calendar to join us at 3:17pm everyday. Today, let's pray for healthcare workers and first responders.

For further practice:

We're created for having a rhythm in our lives. We see it in creation, and we feel it in our own souls -- especially when that rhythm is missing. And these days, it's easy for it to be missing. There is a practice that Christians have used for centuries that's called a "rule of life." That is basically fancy language to describe a kind of game-plan for your relationship with God that you can make during this crazy season. Try it either as an individual or with your whole family!

Visit [THIS LINK](#) to find out more or visit www.thecreek.org/devotionals for more spiritual practices.