

## SOAP Journaling

SOAP stands for...

**S**cripture

**O**bservation

**A**pplication

**P**rayer

It is a simple way to help you get more out of your Bible reading and apply it to your life.

Here's how to do it...

When you read your Bible, stop when something hits you; a verse, an idea, a theme, a principle.

Write down the **SCRIPTURE** or idea that stands out to you.

Write down any **OBSERVATIONS** about that verse or idea. What did it mean to the original audience? How does the surrounding context help us understand what the author is trying to say?

Write down an **APPLICATION** of that verse or idea for your own life. What would it look like if you lived it out today?

Finally, write down a simple **PRAYER**. Ask God to help you live it out.

That's all! It's simple.

What to make the most out of it? Do it with a group. (web – if this would be best as a new page, let's do that)

Here's how to use your SOAP as a group...

### **1. Timeframe**

Set a timeframe for how long the group will commit to their Bible reading plan together. Maybe you want to do it for the whole year? More likely, you'll want to do it for 4-6 weeks. That's enough time for people to get into Bible reading as a habit. Hopefully when you move on to the next study for your group, some people will continue their reading plan on their own.

### **2. No Pressure**

You don't want people worried about what they are going to share with the group when they are reading their Bible. You want them connecting to God! So... make sure they know that there is **no pressure** to read anything directly from their SOAP to the group. That is their personal journal.

### **3. Share**

For the timeframe you set, come together and share what you are learning from the Bible. Open in prayer, then let people share from their SOAPs. Let them know they can either read it aloud, or if they prefer, give the group a summary of what they are learning. Make sure as the facilitator to share vulnerably. Your sharing will set the tone for the group.

### **4. Me too!**

As the group shares, the beauty of the reading plan is that everyone will have read the same chapters of the Bible. That means a lot of people will have a lot of thoughts about what is being shared. Allow for some discussions to start, questions to be raised, and tangents to happen. Just remember, some tangents are helpful, some are not. Pull the group back on track when needed.

### **5. Real Life**

As people share and questions come up, it is easy to stay in the world of theology or theory. Make sure to regularly ask the question, "what does that mean for your life?" The Bible always convicts and inspires, but some people will use off-topic questions as a way to avoid what God might really want to do in their life! Help the group focus on what the Bible means for real life and avoid getting pulled in other directions.

### **6. Follow-Up**

God will be speaking to your group as they encounter Him in His word. Keep track of some of the things God is doing in people and make sure to follow-up with them. Ask them how they are doing in that area. Not only will people feel loved, but they will be reminded of important things God is saying to them.