



Winter 2019

We are excited to provide this new resource to our Life Groups. We want to start with a couple reasons why we're offering this type of study. First, we value community; a place where you can be known, be encouraged, and be challenged. We believe everyone needs someone and some place to have biblical conversation and spiritual community. This will never happen accidentally. It takes intentionality. Therefore, be purposeful in your time together with others.

The second reason is to help people engage Scripture in a more meaningful way. Unfortunately, very few people read their Bibles on a daily basis and those who do may feel like, "Now what?" A series-based curriculum will not only provide sermon-based questions so that you all can interact with what was taught during the weekend, but it will also challenge us to do our own personal Bible study using the S.O.A.P. method.

This acronym is really nothing more than a simple way of teaching individuals to do their own inductive Bible study. In other words, it's an easy system that slows people down so that they can engage God's Word through a very simple process. The S.O.A.P. process is explained on the next page. We encourage your group to spend some time allowing people to share what they learned from God's Word in their own personal time. Enjoy your time with your group and enjoy your time with Jesus.

Pastor Jay W. Haugh

Why S.O.A.P.?

It's one thing to simply read scripture, but **when you interact with it, when you learn to slow down to REALLY read it, suddenly words start popping off the page.** By "SOAPing" your verses, you are able to dig deeper into scripture and "see" more than if you simply read the verses and then went on your merry way. Let us encourage you to take the time to S.O.A.P. the daily verses and see for yourself how much more you get out of your daily reading.

What does S.O.A.P. mean?

S – The S stands for **Scripture**. You physically write out the scripture. This allows you to slow down as you pause to see what God has revealed to us in His Word. This will also greatly help you memorize the verse should you choose to do so.

O – The O stands for **Observation**. What do you see in the verses that you're reading? Who is the audience? Is there a repetition of words? What words stand out to you? One of the helpful things you can observe during your S.O.A.P. is whether God is communicating: (1) A Truth to Believe (2) A Promise to Claim (3) Command to Obey or (4) An Example to Follow.

A – The A stands for **Application**. This is when God's Word becomes personal. What is God saying to me today? How can I apply what I just read to my own personal life? What is God calling me to repent of (i.e. a change of mindset, Mark 1:15)? What is God calling me to believe or trust Him to do?

P – And finally P stands for **Prayer**. Pray God's Word back to Him. If He has revealed something to you during this time in His Word, pray about it. Confess if He has revealed some sin that is in your life. Praise and thank God for what He has done and will do in your life.

S.O.A.P. Example: Colossians 1:5-8

S – *The faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel that has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.*

O – Many times I just bullet my observations... what I'm seeing at first glance when looking at the verses.

- I see "A Truth to Believe" in this passage. In a world that seems to be falling apart the gospel continues to "bear fruit and grow."
- When you combine faith and love, you get hope.
- We have to remember that our hope is in heaven; it is yet to come.
- The gospel is the word of truth.
- It takes one person to change a whole community...Epaphras.

A – Something that stood out to me today was how God used one man, Epaphras, to change a whole town! I was reminded that we are simply called to tell others about Christ. It's God's job to spread the gospel, to grow it and have it bear fruit. I felt today's verses were almost directly spoken to me...*all over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth.* Isn't it fun when God's Word becomes so alive and speaks directly where we are at?!!

P – Dear Lord, please help me to be an "Epaphras." First, I want to continue to experience the life-transforming hope you can bring. Second, help me to tell others about you and then leave the results in your loving hands. Help me to live a life that bears the "fruit" of faith and love...anchoring my hope in heaven, not here on earth. Help me to remember that the BEST is yet to come!

Message 1: January 6, 2019

S.O.A.P. Verses: Ephesians 1:3-4

SCRIPTURE

OBSERVATIONS

APPLICATIONS

PRAYER

Message 1: Ephesians 1:1-5

Reflect and Discuss

1. How are grace and peace related? Why are they central in the Christian message?

2. What does it mean to be “in Christ”? How might we live out this truth daily?

3. How does Paul describe the church in the book of Ephesians? How is that different from the way people describe the church today?

4. Where is God calling you to **change your mind** or the way you’re thinking (**repent**)? What are the promises you need to **believe**?

5. In light of these truths, what is God asking you to **do**? (James 1:22)



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