

Day 1 – Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer (“SOAP”)

Conversation Starter

When you hear the word “satisfying,” what comes to mind?

Scripture Observation (5 minutes)

Scripture:

God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied. **Matthew 5:6 NLT**

O God, you are my God; I earnestly search for you. My soul thirsts for you; my whole body longs for you in this parched and weary land where there is no water. I have seen you in your sanctuary and gazed upon your power and glory. Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise you! I will praise you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer.

You satisfy me more than the richest feast. I will praise you with songs of joy. I lie awake thinking of you, meditating on you through the night. Because you are my helper, I sing for joy in the shadow of your wings. I cling to you; your strong right hand holds me securely. But those plotting to destroy me will come to ruin. They will go down into the depths of the earth. They will die by the sword and become the food of jackals. But the king will rejoice in God. All who swear to tell the truth will praise him, while liars will be silenced. **Psalms 63:1-11 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

Loss of appetite is a sign of illness. We know something is wrong if we have no desire to eat. The same is true spiritually. When we no longer hunger or thirst for God, when we no longer desire connection with him, through worship, reading our Bibles, and praying; when we no longer have mercy for lost or broken people, there is a spiritual problem. Many people look for satisfaction in all the wrong places and are spiritually malnourished.

Application Suggestions (5 minutes)

How would you describe the goals of healthy ambition?

Do you believe God has the power to satisfy your deepest needs?

Do you “hunger and thirst” to be right with God? Is there something in your life interrupting this desire?

Once you’ve been satisfied by God, his goodness and his personal care for you, do you find yourself wanting others to experience the same satisfaction?

What example are you showing for others?

Prayer Suggestions (5 minutes)

Lord, there are times when I’m simply not hungry for you. Sometimes I’m distracted. Other times I have trouble trusting that you are going to really satisfy me. Thank you for your patience; help me learn to trust you and love others out of the satisfaction you truly give.

Day 2 – Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer (“SOAP”)

Conversation Starter

What is the most amazing thing you ever received that was free?

Scripture Observation (5 minutes)**Scripture:**

God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied. **Matthew 5:6 NLT**

“Is anyone thirsty? Come and drink— even if you have no money! Come, take your choice of wine or milk— it’s all free! Why spend your money on food that does not give you strength? Why pay for food that does you no good? Listen to me, and you will eat what is good. You will enjoy the finest food.

“Come to me with your ears wide open. Listen, and you will find life. I will make an everlasting covenant with you. I will give you all the unfailing love I promised to David. See how I used him to display my power among the peoples. I made him a leader among the nations. You also will command nations you do not know, and peoples unknown to you will come running to obey, because I, the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, have made you glorious.”

Seek the Lord while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near. Let the wicked change their ways and banish the very thought of doing wrong. Let them turn to the Lord that he may have mercy on them. Yes, turn to our God, for he will forgive generously.

“My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,” says the Lord. “And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.

“The rain and snow come down from the heavens and stay on the ground to water the earth. They cause the grain to grow, producing seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry. It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it. You will live in joy and peace. The mountains and hills will burst into song, and the trees of the field will clap their hands! Where once there were thorns, cypress trees will grow. Where nettles grew, myrtles will sprout up. These events will bring great honor to the Lord’s name; they will be an everlasting sign of his power and love.” **Isaiah 55:1-13 NLT**

Godliness makes a nation great, but sin is a disgrace to any people. **Proverbs 14:34 NLT**

Application Suggestions (5 minutes)

God’s greatest gifts are free—and accessible to anyone who is willing to receive them. *Anyone!* If the issue is not access but desire, how will you increase your desire (“hunger” and “thirst”) for God?

God’s thoughts and ways are “beyond anything you can imagine.” Have you ever been negative or bitter towards God? What is your reaction to that?

“Seek the Lord while you can find him” – there is a time limit on reconciling with God, who “forgives generously.”

Have you received this reconciliation?

Are you helping others be reconciled to God?

Prayer Suggestions (5 minutes)

Lord, thank you for showing incredible patience with us and the world. Thank you for sending rain on the righteous and the wicked. Your grace is both amazing and attractive. Thanks for loving me!

Day 3 – Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer (“SOAP”)

Conversation Starter

Who has been the best example of mercy in your life?

Scripture Observation (5 minutes)

Scripture:

God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy. **Matthew 5:7 NLT**

Then Jesus told this story to some who had great confidence in their own righteousness and scorned everyone else: “Two men went to the Temple to pray. One was a Pharisee, and the other was a despised tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed this prayer: ‘I thank you, God, that I am not like other people—cheaters, sinners, adulterers. I’m certainly not like that tax collector! I fast twice a week, and I give you a tenth of my income.’

“But the tax collector stood at a distance and dared not even lift his eyes to heaven as he prayed. Instead, he beat his chest in sorrow, saying, ‘O God, be merciful to me, for I am a sinner.’ I tell you, this sinner, not the Pharisee, returned home justified before God. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

One day some parents brought their little children to Jesus so he could touch and bless them. But when the disciples saw this, they scolded the parents for bothering him. Then Jesus called for the children and said to the disciples, “Let the children come to me. Don’t stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn’t receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it.” **Luke 18:9-17 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

Mercy is compassion and kindness in both attitude and action.

Application Suggestions (5 minutes)

What is the purpose of mercy?

Do you deserve mercy?

God’s gift of righteousness should cause us to look up humbly to God, not pridefully down on others. We serve a God of abundance, not scarcity. How should this impact how we view each other?

Describe what Jesus means when he says we must receive the Kingdom of God like a child.

Prayer Suggestions (5 minutes)

Lord, thank you for inviting me to trust you and receive the kingdom of God like a child. Thank you for your incredible, undeserved mercy to me. Thank you for making me righteous through Jesus. Help me to be humble towards you and merciful towards others.

Day 4 – Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer (“SOAP”)

Conversation Starter

What motivates you?

Scripture Observation (5 minutes)

Scripture:

God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God. **Matthew 5:8 NLT**

But there was a certain man named Ananias who, with his wife, Sapphira, sold some property. He brought part of the money to the apostles, claiming it was the full amount. With his wife’s consent, he kept the rest.

Then Peter said, “Ananias, why have you let Satan fill your heart? You lied to the Holy Spirit, and you kept some of the money for yourself. The property was yours to sell or not sell, as you wished. And after selling it, the money was also yours to give away. How could you do a thing like this? You weren’t lying to us but to God!”

As soon as Ananias heard these words, he fell to the floor and died. Everyone who heard about it was terrified. Then some young men got up, wrapped him in a sheet, and took him out and buried him.

About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. Peter asked her, “Was this the price you and your husband received for your land?”

“Yes,” she replied, “that was the price.”

And Peter said, “How could the two of you even think of conspiring to test the Spirit of the Lord like this? The young men who buried your husband are just outside the door, and they will carry you out, too.”

Instantly, she fell to the floor and died. When the young men came in and saw that she was dead, they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. Great fear gripped the entire church and everyone else who heard what had happened.

Acts 5:1-11 NLT

Sermon Insights:

It is important to know that Ananias and Sapphira did not have to give at all. Or they could have given any amount they chose. But here is the issue: they claimed they were giving the whole amount. They LIED to God.

The driving force for Ananias and Sapphira was recognition and pride, not purity of heart.

Do not mistake this: we cannot work for, earn, or buy God’s favor. But our lives reflect what we value and who we are!

Application Suggestions (5 minutes)

What is the driving motivation in your life? Purity? Integrity? Righteousness?

If your “driving motivation” isn’t what you believe it should be, what should it be?

Look at your words, actions, and attitudes over the last days, weeks, months...what would others believe is your driving motivation based on the patterns they see?

Do you need to humble yourself and ask forgiveness in any way? Talk to God, and then talk to someone you trust. Let them encourage you!

Prayer Suggestions (5 minutes)

Lord, your ways are higher than our ways, and your thoughts are higher than our thoughts. Thank you for showing us forgiveness and mercy when we humble ourselves.

Day 5 – Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer (“SOAP”)

Conversation Starter

What is your opinion about “confidence”—is it good or bad?

Scripture Observation (5 minutes)**Scripture:**

God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God. **Matthew 5:8 NLT**

And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

Don't let anyone capture you with empty philosophies and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the spiritual powers of this world, rather than from Christ. For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body.

So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority. When you came to Christ, you were “circumcised,” but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of your sinful nature. For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead.

You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for he forgave all our sins. He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. In this way, he disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross. **Colossians 2:6-15 NLT**

Application Suggestions (5 minutes)

“For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body.” If you want to know what God is like, look at—and listen to—Jesus! “And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him.”

Who in your life provides you the best example of how to follow Jesus?

Who is looking to you to provide that example for them?

What are the VAST differences between the false Christianity that says, “Be a better person” and the real Christianity that says, “You were buried with Christ...and raised to new life”?

Where do you place your confidence?

Who gives you the strength?

Who takes your guilt when you fail?

Who receives the praise when you succeed?

Prayer Suggestions (5 minutes)

Lord, thank you for loving me so much that you did not put me on a self-improvement plan, but instead you allowed my sinful nature to be “crucified with Christ” so you could put your Holy Spirit in me and empower me to live a new life! Please increase my strength and confidence as I continue to follow.