

DAY 1 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

If you were to assess your “spiritual nutrition,” where does “prayer” fit into your “diet”? Is it an enjoyable part of your daily “food”? Is it a “supplement” that you only take when needed?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

**Scripture:**

“When you pray, don’t be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I tell you the truth, that is all the reward they will ever get. But when you pray, go away by yourself, shut the door behind you, and pray to your Father in private. Then your Father, who sees everything, will reward you.

“When you pray, don’t babble on and on as the Gentiles do. They think their prayers are answered merely by repeating their words again and again. Don’t be like them, for your Father knows exactly what you need even before you ask him!

Pray like this: **Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.** May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need, and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. **Matthew 6:5-13 NLT**

**Sermon Insights:**

Jesus is not teaching or advocating a magic formula, and he is not advocating ritual or rote prayers. Rather he is trying to tell us that God is more interested in our hearts than in our words.

God knows our needs, and he expects us to come to him, but not with an abundance of empty words and repetitive phrases like we are somehow trying to get God’s attention. We should pray earnestly using our minds and own words from our hearts.

Our God is a big God, a powerful God, a God who is strong enough to save sinners from their sins. And we can approach God’s throne in confidence that he hears us.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Jesus indicates that you will be rewarded sometime in the future for private prayer to our Father. How does that change your perspective?

**“Our Father”** – Are you responding to God as a close Father? Why or why not?

**“...in heaven”** – Pastor Greg said, “I think by the context that the intended meaning that Jesus gave us is this: ‘Our Father, the God of the heavens, who is all around us just like the very air we breathe...’ How is it beneficial to think of God not as “far away” but “very close all the time”?

**“...may your name be kept holy.”** – God is strong enough to save us from our sins. How are you approaching God’s throne with confidence?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for being my Father who is near all the time and is powerful enough to forgive my sins and assure me of your love. Help me to trust you and keep you in the forefront of my mind and heart.

DAY 2 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

What is some bad advice that you’ve been told?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

**Scripture:** Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. **May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.** Give us today the food we need, and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. **Matthew 6:9-13 NLT**

He came into the very world he created, but the world didn’t recognize him. He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God. **John 1:10-13 NLT**

O Lord, I give my life to you. I trust in you, my God! Do not let me be disgraced, or let my enemies rejoice in my defeat. No one who trusts in you will ever be disgraced, but disgrace comes to those who try to deceive others. Show me the right path, O Lord; point out the road for me to follow. Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in you.

Remember, O Lord, your compassion and unfailing love, which you have shown from long ages past. Do not remember the rebellious sins of my youth. Remember me in the light of your unfailing love, for you are merciful, O Lord. The Lord is good and does what is right; he shows the proper path to those who go astray. He leads the humble in doing right, teaching them his way. The Lord leads with unfailing love and faithfulness all who keep his covenant and obey his demands.

For the honor of your name, O Lord, forgive my many, many sins. Who are those who fear the Lord? He will show them the path they should choose. They will live in prosperity, and their children will inherit the land. The Lord is a friend to those who fear him. He teaches them his covenant. My eyes are always on the Lord, for he rescues me from the traps of my enemies. **Psalms 25:1-15 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

In the process of learning, Christians sometimes say funny things that may sound spiritual but aren’t. Have you ever heard someone say “God’s will always happens” or “God is in control” (specifically implying that he chooses and approves of everything that happens) or “Everything happens for a reason” (implying that God chooses to use evil for a specific “outcome” or “reason”)? Why would we be tempted to apply these false ideas to God?

When Jesus teaches us to pray, “May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven,” he is teaching us that 1) God’s will does NOT always happen on earth, and 2) God has given us a role to play in inviting his will to be done on earth. How does this confirm or challenge your definition of God’s “power” and “control”?

Would you say that God, in his “sovereignty,” takes risks and chooses to be vulnerable, allowing himself to be saddened, disappointed, and hurt?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, forgive my sins, teach me the truth about who you are, and help me to trust you completely!

DAY 3 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

Fill in the blank...“I find myself worrying most about \_\_\_\_\_.”

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

**Scripture:** Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. **Give us today the food we need**, and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. **Matthew 6:9-13 NLT**

“Don’t store up treasures here on earth, where moths eat them and rust destroys them, and where thieves break in and steal. Store your treasures in heaven, where moths and rust cannot destroy, and thieves do not break in and steal. Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be. “Your eye is like a lamp that provides light for your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body is filled with light. But when your eye is unhealthy, your whole body is filled with darkness. And if the light you think you have is actually darkness, how deep that darkness is!

“No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money. “That is why I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn’t life more than food, and your body more than clothing? Look at the birds. They don’t plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren’t you far more valuable to him than they are? Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

“And why worry about your clothing? Look at the lilies of the field and how they grow. They don’t work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. And if God cares so wonderfully for wildflowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

“So don’t worry about these things, saying, ‘What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?’ These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers, but your heavenly Father already knows all your needs. Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. “So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today’s trouble is enough for today. **Matthew 6:19-34 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Do you depend on God...daily?

Jesus said, “You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.” He gave two steps for “heart health:”

- 1) Seek the Kingdom of God above all else
- 2) Live righteously

How are you going to accomplish each? What did Jesus promise?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for not only knowing my needs but being so intimately involved in my life that you care to meet my needs. Teach me to trust you and have a peace-filled, generous heart!

DAY 4 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

“Power follows focus” – what are your thoughts about that statement?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

**Scripture:**

Pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need, and **forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us**. And don't let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. **Matthew 6:9-13 NLT**

Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see— such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world.

Everything was created through him and for him. He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. Christ is also the head of the church, which is his body. He is the beginning, supreme over all who rise from the dead. So he is first in everything. For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ, and through him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross.

This includes you who were once far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions. Yet now he has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault. But you must continue to believe this truth and stand firmly in it. Don't drift away from the assurance you received when you heard the Good News. **Colossians 1:15-23 NLT**

**Sermon Insights:**

The pathway to healing is forgiveness, just as we have been forgiven. Two simple lessons:

First, we must ask for forgiveness time and time again.

Second, unforgiveness blocks God's blessing and our healing! Unforgiveness allows the one who hurt us to continue hurting us!

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

God punished evil at the cross. For us to claim Jesus' blood as the means for our forgiveness, we must extend God's forgiveness through us to others. How does focusing on Jesus help us forgive?

What do you need to ask forgiveness for?

Who or what do you need to forgive to release God's blessing and healing into your life?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, you are awesome beyond all comprehension. You existed before anything that was created. And you chose to love and forgive me. Empower me to love and forgive others as you have treated me.

DAY 5 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

What is your “prized possession”?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

**Scripture:**

And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. **Matthew 6:13 NLT**

Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking. But when you ask him, be sure that your faith is in God alone. Do not waver, for a person with divided loyalty is as unsettled as a wave of the sea that is blown and tossed by the wind. Such people should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Their loyalty is divided between God and the world, and they are unstable in everything they do.

Believers who are poor have something to boast about, for God has honored them. And those who are rich should boast that God has humbled them. They will fade away like a little flower in the field. The hot sun rises and the grass withers; the little flower droops and falls, and its beauty fades away. In the same way, the rich will fade away with all of their achievements.

God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him. And remember, when you are being tempted, do not say, “God is tempting me.” God is never tempted to do wrong, and he never tempts anyone else. Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away. These desires give birth to sinful actions. And when sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.

So don’t be misled, my dear brothers and sisters. Whatever is good and perfect is a gift coming down to us from God our Father, who created all the lights in the heavens. He never changes or casts a shifting shadow. He chose to give birth to us by giving us his true word. And we, out of all creation, became his prized possession. **James 1:2-18 NLT**

**Sermon Insights:** This part of the Lord’s Prayer reminds us to call upon the Father for strength against temptation—*in advance*. We are not to fight a secret war against sin; the Father wants to be our continual partner.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

What do believers who are poor have to boast about?

“When sin is allowed to grow, it gives birth to death.” Identify your sin...be honest about it...confess it...be free of its power over you.

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, give me wisdom and the desire and power to obey you. Don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one!