

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

Have you ever bitten into something that did not taste at all like what you expected?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

Jesus said, “Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. A good tree can’t produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can’t produce good fruit. So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.” **Matthew 7:15–20 NLT**

Jesus told some church-going, law-abiding, stand-up pillars of the Jewish community, “For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.” **John 8:44–45 NLT**

The Apostle Peter wrote to the church, “Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your family of believers all over the world is going through the same kind of suffering you are. In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation. All power to him forever! Amen.” **1 Peter 5:8–11 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

To be successful in life, I must know my Enemy. “Satan is a liar.”

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

As you continue to grow in your ability to navigate the Bible, consider looking up the verses and reading the surrounding context. One of the most important principles that lead to good interpretation is to simply read the section in context.

Do you have an example in your life of someone influential who appeared harmless but turned out to be very destructive?

There are people who, like Satan, hate the truth. What is your attitude towards truth? Do you share it or keep it to yourself?

If “staying alert” can keep us from being devoured by our great enemy, the devil, then we have a choice to make. What safeguards are you putting in your life so you are not deceived and destroyed by Satan’s deception?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for teaching us about our enemy. Help me remain alert, prayerful, and well connected to trustworthy people so we can be safe from the attacks of the enemy. Thank you for calling me to share in your eternal glory through Jesus.

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

Have you ever been genuinely confused or deceived by a disguise?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

These people are false apostles. They are deceitful workers who disguise themselves as apostles of Christ. But I am not surprised! Even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no wonder that his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. In the end they will get the punishment their wicked deeds deserve. **2 Corinthians 11:13–15 NLT**

Gently instruct those who oppose the truth. Perhaps God will change those people’s hearts, and they will learn the truth. Then they will come to their senses and escape from the devil’s trap. For they have been held captive by him to do whatever he wants. **2 Timothy 2:25–26 NLT**

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. **James 1:14–18 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

To be successful in life, I must know my Enemy. “Satan works to deceive.” “Satan will enslave you.” “Satan is relentless.”

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Name an example of people who disguise themselves as servants of righteousness.

Is there someone in your life you need to “gently instruct” because they oppose the truth?

“Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away.” Jesus said that where your treasure is, there your heart “will be also.” Why is it SO important that you cultivate healthy desires and refuse to allow evil desires to grow?

How can it help to focus on God’s “good and perfect gifts”?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for being trustworthy and true, giving good and perfect gifts, and never changing or casting shifting shadows. Help grow healthy desires in me, and help me die to evil desires so that sin does not grow in me and give birth to death.

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

What is your initial reaction to “vulnerability” – positive or negative?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

Jesus said, “God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted. God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth.

“God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied. God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy. God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they will see God.

“God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God. God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

“God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

“You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.” **Matthew 5:3-13 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

To be successful in life, I must embrace my vulnerability.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

“God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him” – do you believe this is a point of time in the past (“I repented once”) or an ongoing reality (“I am always going to need Jesus”)?

What is your top favorite trait above that “God blesses” and why?

What is your least favorite trait above that “God blesses” and why?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for making me truly secure in you as I embrace my vulnerability. Thank you for giving me confidence and a purpose!

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

What is the most important gift you have ever given someone?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it? Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. **Romans 6:1–4 NLT**

By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world’s corruption caused by human desires.

In view of all this, make every effort to respond to God’s promises. Supplement your faith with a generous provision of moral excellence, and moral excellence with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with patient endurance, and patient endurance with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love for everyone.

The more you grow like this, the more productive and useful you will be in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But those who fail to develop in this way are shortsighted or blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their old sins. So, dear brothers and sisters, work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen. Do these things, and you will never fall away. Then God will give you a grand entrance into the eternal Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. **2 Peter 1:3-11 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

To be successful in life, I must surrender my life fully.

The acronym HALT (hungry, angry, lonely, tired) identifies common environments of temptation.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Why is it important that baptism is a picture of a burial and a resurrection?

“God has given us everything we need for living a godly life” – what’s your next step?

Pick one or two of the steps Peter identified to work on this week.

Which of the “HALT” temptation environments affects you the most?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for your great and precious promises! Thank you that by your power, you’ve given me everything I need to live a godly life! Thank you that you have called and chosen me and given me the power to respond! Thank you that I can look forward to a “grand entrance” into your eternal Kingdom!

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

What fear have you overcome?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil. For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.

Therefore, put on every piece of God’s armor so you will be able to resist the enemy in the time of evil. Then after the battle you will still be standing firm.

Stand your ground, putting on the belt of truth and the body armor of God’s righteousness.

For shoes, put on the peace that comes from the Good News so that you will be fully prepared.

In addition to all of these, hold up the shield of faith to stop the fiery arrows of the devil.

Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all believers everywhere. **Ephesians 6:10-18 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

To be successful in life, I must be on guard spiritually.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Consider taking an “action step” connected with each of our core values at Antioch Christian Church:

- The Bible is relevant to our lives. (What do I need to learn from Scripture?)
- Life is better together. (Who do I need to connect with?)
- Everyone has a next step. (Who am I serving?)
- We were made to make a difference. (Who am I leading?)

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for giving me significance and security. Thank you for helping me be successful in life by knowing my Enemy, embracing my vulnerability, surrendering my life fully, and being on guard spiritually.