

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

If you had a five-year-old ask, “What is God like?” how would you answer?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. **Genesis 1:1-3 NLT**

Then the LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.” **Genesis 2:18 NLT**

The Apostle John wrote, “In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. He existed in the beginning with God. God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it....

*So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father’s one and only Son.” **John 1:1-5, 14 NLT***

Sermon Insights:

We were created for connection.

You only need to read the first three verses of the Bible to discover what is taught in the rest of Scripture: there is one God in the form of a tri-union of divine entities existing without beginning or end as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Think about the power of this “eternal community of oneness,” this firm foundation upon which all circles of influence can rest!

Reality is not just matter or energy, atoms or particles, but a community of divine persons who, from all eternity, are devoted to love and delight and joy and servanthood with one another: Father, Son, and Spirit.

The ultimate sufficiency of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Spirit) is what allows us to say with assurance, “Everything will be okay.”

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

On a scale of 1-10 (1 being lonely, 10 being fully connected), where would you rate yourself? Where would you like to be? What step are you going to take TODAY to head in that direction?

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit have been eternally one God together. Perfect unity in community. How does that affect your understanding of God and how God uniquely created you?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, you are greater than I’ve ever imagined. Thank you for sending your son, Jesus, who was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. We live in a broken, suffering world. And yet you came to give us light and bring us hope. As I connect with you and grow in my peace, help me to uniquely benefit others by connecting with them.

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

Can you name three things that grow if they are connected?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

This clearly means that Christ also descended to our lowly world. And the same one who descended is the one who ascended higher than all the heavens, so that he might fill the entire universe with himself.

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won’t be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

Ephesians 4:9–16 NLT

Sermon Insights:

We grow when we are connected.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Jesus is the “head” and the church is the “body of Christ.” When we are connected to Jesus and each other, how do these things grow?

- 1) My empathy for others
- 2) My security that helps me stay focused and stable when storms come
- 3) My significance in living my life to serve others

Whose responsibility is it to “equip God’s people”?

Whose responsibility is it to “do God’s work”?

“As each part does its special work”: what special work has God called you to contribute?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, it is amazing how you have created us, saved us from our sin to do good works, and placed us in a powerful and eternal family with Jesus at the head. Thank you for helping me understand Jesus’ love more; fill me with compassion and power to make a difference!

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

Do you find that it is easier to accept others who are different from you when you get to know them?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

We who are strong must be considerate of those who are sensitive about things like this. We must not just please ourselves. We should help others do what is right and build them up in the Lord. For even Christ didn't live to please himself. As the Scriptures say, “The insults of those who insult you, O God, have fallen on me.” Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled.

May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus. Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory. Remember that Christ came as a servant to the Jews to show that God is true to the promises he made to their ancestors. He also came so that the Gentiles might give glory to God for his mercies to them.

That is what the psalmist meant when he wrote: “For this, I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing praises to your name.” And in another place it is written, “Rejoice with his people, you Gentiles.” And yet again, “Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles. Praise him, all you people of the earth.” And in another place Isaiah said, “The heir to David's throne will come, and he will rule over the Gentiles. They will place their hope on him.”

I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. **Romans 15:1–13 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

We find acceptance when we are connected.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Since the inception of the church, there have been temporary issues that have threatened to divide the church. There is always a group that says, “YES—this is good!” and there is always a group that says, “NO—this is bad!” History tells us that people divide over many things. Jesus offers the world a better way through the united church: unite around JESUS (that's what matters!), and agree to disagree on the non-essentials.

How has God accepted you?

While it is good to have opinions and take stands, what should your overall focus be?

How does focusing on Jesus help you accept and love others who are different from you?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for not judging me the way I'm very tempted to judge others. Help me to become like Jesus so that I know and embrace truth, speak it in love, and care for everyone despite our differences.

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

Do you think of yourself as a “gifted” person? Are you developing your ability to use the gifts God has given you?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

Now, dear brothers and sisters, regarding your question about the special abilities the Spirit gives us. I don’t want you to misunderstand this. You know that when you were still pagans, you were led astray and swept along in worshiping speechless idols. So I want you to know that no one speaking by the Spirit of God will curse Jesus, and no one can say Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit.

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us.

A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge. The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have. **1 Corinthians 12:1–11 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

We serve best when we are connected.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Task 1) Discover your Spiritual Gifts! lifeisforliving.org/resources

Task 2) Develop your Spiritual Gifts! Often, we worry about what we are *not* good at, and we spend very little time being grateful for, and developing, what God has given us to share with others.

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for giving me special gifts to be used to bless others. Help me discover my gifts and develop my ability to serve you and bless others with them!

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

When you are hurting, do you like to connect with others or isolate and avoid others?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

Are any of you suffering hardships? You should pray. Are any of you happy? You should sing praises. Are any of you sick? You should call for the elders of the church to come and pray over you, anointing you with oil in the name of the Lord. Such a prayer offered in faith will heal the sick, and the Lord will make you well. And if you have committed any sins, you will be forgiven.

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results. Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years! Then, when he prayed again, the sky sent down rain and the earth began to yield its crops.

My dear brothers and sisters, if someone among you wanders away from the truth and is brought back, you can be sure that whoever brings the sinner back from wandering will save that person from death and bring about the forgiveness of many sins. **James 5:13–20 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

You will never heal all by yourself in isolation. We heal best when we are connected.

Life is better together. Is it time for you to get connected at Antioch?

Rooted | lifeisforliving.org/rooted

Connection Event lifeisforliving.org/adults

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Just as a body cannot heal unless it is well connected, Christians cannot heal apart from the grace and presence of God, and God has ordained that much healing comes through the presence and participation of other believers.

What do you need to confess to God...and to another trustworthy Christian?

What do you need to ask God for...and then share it with trustworthy Christians?

Who is “wandering” who needs you to tell them the truth in love?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for providing incredible mental, spiritual, emotional, relational, and physical healing. Teach us to reach out and connect with other believers so that we can receive and participate in the healing you want to bring!