

## **“SOAP” Method of Personal Bible Study**

### **Fall Life Group 2012**

**“SOAP”** is a Bible reading and journaling approach taught by Wayne Cordeiro in the book, *The Divine Mentor*. It is a structured method of helping individuals to process, journal, reflect on, and apply God’s word to their personal lives.

#### **Why “SOAP”?**

**Psalm 119:105 says, “Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.”**

As a follower of Jesus, it is important to set aside daily time with God for prayer and reading of His word. As we read his word we begin to understand God and the way he desires us to live. As we reflect on and apply his word to our personal lives, the Bible comes alive and begins to transform the way we think, act, respond, and make decisions. As a result, we become more like Jesus.

SOAP is one method for helping structure your time with God and it provides a great format to document what God is teaching you through his word.

#### **What do I need?**

- **A Bible** you can read and understand. We suggest using a New Living Translation or a New International Version.
- **A reading plan.** You can find one online at [www.youversion.com](http://www.youversion.com). As a Life Group this fall, we will be focusing together on the book of **John**.
- **A Journal and Pen** to help you record, process, and personally apply what you read.

#### **How do I “SOAP”?**

##### **(S) SCRIPTURE**

- Open your Bible and spend ~10 minutes reading the portion of Scripture in your reading plan for today
- Write the reference of what you read in your journal along with the date.
- As you read, ask God to highlight a verse(s) that speaks into your life and write it in your journal.

### **(O) OBSERVATION**

- Make observations about what you just read and write them in your journal.
- Think about: What is going on? What is the context or the people being spoken to? What is the background or setting for this verse?
- Paraphrase and write this scripture down in your journal, in your own words.
- What do you think God is saying to you in this scripture?

### **(A) APPLICATION**

- Personalize what you have read by asking yourself how it relates to your life right now.
- Ask yourself how you can apply what you just read to your own life and write it in your journal.
- Ask yourself how your life will be different or changed as a result of God speaking this scripture to you?

### **(P) PRAYER**

- Write out a prayer to God in your journal.
- Your prayer should relate to the verse that you highlighted. It could be asking for help, thanking God, etc. Write down what your heart desires to say to God in response to his word.

**James 1:22 says, "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."**

**2 Tim 3:16-17 says, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work."**

It's not enough to just read the words... you've got to learn to let the words read you. Let them overtake you, speak to you, correct you, challenge you, comfort you, convict you, change you... And when you do you'll begin to grow and be the person God created you to be.

### **Why do this as a group?**

Journaling is a very personal time with the God, but it's great to share what God is teaching you with a small group of friends. Through discussion, you may be able to look deeper into what God is speaking to you, gain new insight and understanding, and encourage others.