

S.O.A.P.

SCRIPTURE: Open your Bible to your reading for the day. Take time reading and allow God to speak to you. When you are done, look for a verse that particularly speaks to you, and write it in your journal.

OBSERVATION: What do you think God is saying to you in these verses? What struck you and caught your attention in what you read? Write down your observations, thoughts, or questions.

APPLICATION: How does this reading apply to your life right now? Perhaps it is instruction, encouragement, a new promise, or correction for a particular area of your life. Write how this scripture can apply to you today.

PRAYER: This can be as simple as asking God to help you use this scripture, or even a prayer for a greater insight on what He may be revealing to you. Remember, prayer is a two-way conversation, so be sure to listen to what God has to say! Now, write it out.

C.O.M.A.(INDUCTIVE)

Read the passage scheduled for the day and note in your Bible and journal your responses to the questions below:

- **CONTEXT** – Answer questions like who wrote the passage? Why was it written? Who is the audience? What is the literary genre? What happens immediately before and after this passage? Are there specific themes or ideas expressed?
- **OBSERVATION** – Look to answer questions like is there any structure or arrangement to the passage? Is there any repetition or comparison or contrast? Are there any keywords or phrases? Does anything surprise you or stick out? If there are characters, what do they say and do?
- **MEANING** – Answer questions such as how does the passage describe, point to, or refer back to Jesus? What is the reader supposed to learn about God from the passage? If you could sum up the main point, what would it be?
- **APPLICATION** – Think through questions like: Do these verses challenge or confirm my beliefs? Is there an attitude or assumption I must change? Do I need to change my actions or the way I live according to the passage? Is there a promise I should be believing or an attribute of God's nature that I should be trusting?

S.P.A.C.E. P.E.T.S.

Use the S-P-A-C-E P-E-T-S acrostic as a useful aid to meditation.

IS THERE ANY...

- **Sin to confess?** Do I need to make any restitution?
- **Promise to claim?** Is it a universal promise? Have I met the condition(s)?
- **Attitude to change?** Am I willing to work on a negative attitude and begin building toward a positive one?
- **Command to obey?** Am I willing to do it no matter how I feel?
- **Example to follow?** Is it a positive example for me to copy, or a negative one to avoid?
- **Prayer to pray?** Is there anything I need to pray back to God?
- **Error to avoid?** Is there any problem that I should be alert to or beware of?
- **Truth to believe?** What new things can I learn about God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, or other biblical teachings?
- **Something to praise God for?** Is there something here I can be thankful for?

LECTIO DIVINA

STEP 1: READING ("Lectio")

Take your time and read a short passage (1-4 verses) slowly a couple times to get a sense of what it's saying ("big picture"). If possible, read it out loud.

STEP 2: REFLECTING ("Meditatio")

Read the passage again. What is the author trying to say? Picture what is happening in the story. What words/phrases leap out to you? What do you sense God is saying to you?

STEP 3: RESPONDING ("Oratio")

Read the passage again. Pray and write in your journal how God has spoken to you in this passage and your response back to Him.

STEP 4: REMAINING ("Contemplatio")

Be still. Spend time listening to God and resting in His presence. Ask for His help to live out the truths you've uncovered today.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

READ: One chapter in its entirety a couple times.

- During your first reading don't stop in the middle of a chapter, but read it from start to finish. Your goal is to feel the flow of the chapter, so don't be concerned with the details at the outset. Try to capture the central message and the writer's overall theme.
- Also, try reading it aloud quietly to yourself or in a different translation.

JOURNAL:

- **Major Points.** Describe, summarize, paraphrase, outline, or make a list of the major points in a chapter. Don't try to interpret the chapter; just make observations on its contents.
- **People & Places.** List the most important people in the chapter. Ask questions such as: Who are the main people in this chapter? Why are they included? What is significant about them? Where did this take place? What other places are mentioned?
- **Summary Verse.** Choose a verse that summarizes the whole chapter or one that speaks to you personally. Think about this verse throughout the day.

CROSS-REFERENCES/CONCORDANCE

USING CROSS-REFERENCES:

- Usually found in the side margins, or just below the text.
- They connect the verse that you're reading with other related verses in the Bible. Finding other passages can shed light on what you're reading and studying.
- When you look up cross-references, you can look for common themes or patterns. You might notice that there are exceptions that emphasize different aspects of the topic you're searching, and pick up different details in each passage.
- Parallel passages can shed new light on the passage that you're reading. You can also read the different notes and cross-references on these parallel passages. One passage might lead to another. This is when it gets fun!

USING A CONCORDANCE:

- Most Study Bibles will have some sort of Concordance or index in the back.
- It can be a helpful tool when doing a word study, character study or thematic study by locating other occurrences of the word/person/theme in the Bible.
- It's also helpful with the definitions of Greek, Hebrew, or Aramaic words.