

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

What have you had fun giving away and why?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

NOTE: This Psalm was likely written by David near the end of his life as a prayer for his son Solomon.

Long live the king! May the gold of Sheba be given to him. May the people always pray for him and bless him all day long. May there be abundant grain throughout the land, flourishing even on the hilltops. May the fruit trees flourish like the trees of Lebanon, and may the people thrive like grass in a field. May the king’s name endure forever; may it continue as long as the sun shines. May all nations be blessed through him and bring him praise.

Praise the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does such wonderful things. Praise his glorious name forever! Let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and amen! *This ends the prayers of David son of Jesse.* **Psalm 72:15-20 NLT**

Solomon son of David took firm control of his kingdom, for the LORD his God was with him and made him very powerful....God appeared to Solomon and said, “What do you want? Ask, and I will give it to you!” Solomon replied to God, “You showed great and faithful love to David, my father, and now you have made me king in his place. O LORD God, please continue to keep your promise to David my father, for you have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust of the earth! Give me the wisdom and knowledge to lead them properly, for who could possibly govern this great people of yours?”

God said to Solomon, “Because your greatest desire is to help your people, and you did not ask for wealth, riches, fame, or even the death of your enemies or a long life, but rather you asked for wisdom and knowledge to properly govern my people—I will certainly give you the wisdom and knowledge you requested. But I will also give you wealth, riches, and fame such as no other king has had before you or will ever have in the future!” **2 Chronicles 1:1, 7-12 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

God’s desire is for us to leverage our influence and affluence for him! In doing so we will be blessed with meaning and purpose in life.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Who do you influence? What would they say has been your greatest contribution to their success?

What resource has God given you in abundance for the explicit purpose of meeting the needs of others?

Generosity has the effect of blessing both the giver and the receiver; Jesus even says the giver is the one who is blessed more! How have you experienced the joy of generosity?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for calling us to use our influence and affluence, whatever they may be, to help others in your name. Help us be bold and confident in you as we step out in faith.

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

When do you like to ask for help?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

Jesus said, 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. **Matthew 6:5–13 NLT**

So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do. Then the name of our Lord Jesus will be honored because of the way you live, and you will be honored along with him. This is all made possible because of the grace of our God and Lord, Jesus Christ. **2 Thessalonians 1:11–12 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

When you pray, what do you pray for?

Do you ask God to bless you with the means to influence, bless, and lead others?

Do you ask God to leverage your influence and affluence to change the world?

If you have children, do you pray for God to develop in them strength of character and wisdom for decision-making?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, help me not forget—even as I learn about wise prayers—that you genuinely love me, have my best interests in mind, know my needs, and have given me the incredible opportunity to have a real relationship with you! Teach me to trust you! Know that I'm willing and also that I need your guidance. Thank you for loving and leading me!

DAY 3 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER ("SOAP")

CONVERSATION STARTER

How would you define "poverty"? What really makes someone "poor"?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

Give your love of justice to the king, O God, and righteousness to the king's son. Help him judge your people in the right way; let the poor always be treated fairly. May the mountains yield prosperity for all, and may the hills be fruitful. Help him to defend the poor, to rescue the children of the needy, and to crush their oppressors. May they fear you as long as the sun shines, as long as the moon remains in the sky. Yes, forever!

May the king's rule be refreshing like spring rain on freshly cut grass, like the showers that water the earth. May all the godly flourish during his reign. May there be abundant prosperity until the moon is no more. May he reign from sea to sea, and from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth. Desert nomads will bow before him; his enemies will fall before him in the dust. The western kings of Tarshish and other distant lands will bring him tribute. The eastern kings of Sheba and Seba will bring him gifts. All kings will bow before him, and all nations will serve him.

He will rescue the poor when they cry to him; he will help the oppressed, who have no one to defend them. He feels pity for the weak and the needy, and he will rescue them. He will redeem them from oppression and violence, for their lives are precious to him. **Psalm 72:1–14 NLT**

NOTE: God gave many instructions to the people he had 1) freed from slavery, and 2) blessed to be a blessing to the world:

"True justice must be given to foreigners living among you and to orphans, and you must never accept a widow's garment as security for her debt. Always remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God redeemed you from your slavery. That is why I have given you this command."

Deuteronomy 24:17–18 NLT

Sermon Insights:

The backdrop of this Psalm is the epic story of the heart of God.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

How have you personally encountered poverty?

What does this Psalm teach us about God's plan and purpose for those with leadership positions in the government?

Have you been shown mercy in your life? How can you be a blessing to someone else today?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for caring about those who cannot provide for, care for, or defend themselves. Help us to share and show your heart of mercy and kindness when it is within our power to make a difference.

DAY 4 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER ("SOAP")

CONVERSATION STARTER

Do you typically focus on the past, present, future, or a blend?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

*King David wrote Psalm 72 as a prayer for Solomon, his son. God also used the prayer as a "Messianic Psalm" which means it pointed to the "Messiah" (Jesus) who would come to fulfill God's plan fully. "May the king's name endure forever; may it continue as long as the sun shines. **May all nations be blessed through him and bring him praise.** Praise the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does such wonderful things. Praise his glorious name forever! Let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and amen!" Psalm 72:17–19 NLT*

*The angel Gabriel to Mary, telling her she would become the mother of Jesus: "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. **The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David.** And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!" Luke 1:30–33 NLT*

*Soon after, Zechariah the priest gave a prophecy about Jesus: "...Zechariah, was filled with the Holy Spirit and gave this prophecy: 'Praise the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has visited and redeemed his people. **He has sent us a mighty Savior from the royal line of his servant David, just as he promised through his holy prophets long ago.** Now we will be saved from our enemies and from all who hate us. He has been merciful to our ancestors by remembering his sacred covenant—the covenant he swore with an oath to our ancestor Abraham. We have been rescued from our enemies so we can serve God without fear, in holiness and righteousness for as long as we live.'" Luke 1:67–75 NLT*

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

How does watching God's plan unfold throughout the ages help you to trust him with TODAY?

How does the long-term view of God's powerful plan, including decades and centuries of difficulty for God's people, help believers stay faithful despite hardship?

A common question is, "Why do bad things happen to good people?" Another question to ponder, "Why do good things happen to sinful people (a group that includes every Christian who ever lived)?"

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you not only for being faithful to your people and your plan forever...but also for giving us the Bible so we can see your faithfulness in the past, trust you in the present, and embrace real hope for the future!

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

What character trait in YOU reminds you most of Jesus?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

NOTE: King Solomon started out well but lost his way.

In Solomon’s old age, they turned his heart to worship other gods instead of being completely faithful to the LORD his God, as his father, David, had been. **1 Kings 11:4–13 NLT**

The Apostle Paul wrote, “With the Lord’s authority I say this: Live no longer as the Gentiles do, for they are hopelessly confused. Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him. They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity.

But that isn’t what you learned about Christ. Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.

So stop telling lies. Let us tell our neighbors the truth, for we are all parts of the same body. And “don’t sin by letting anger control you.” Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a foothold to the devil. If you are a thief, quit stealing. Instead, use your hands for good hard work, and then give generously to others in need. **Ephesians 4:17–28 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

God does have a plan to meet this overwhelming spiritual human need ... and it is us! We are God’s plan!

We are blessed to be a blessing, which is why we work hard to bless the underprivileged here in our communities and, through our outreach partners, around the world.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Have you trusted Jesus to COMPLETELY take your guilt and shame upon his body on the cross and do away with it forever?

How have you been freed from your old life to be able to make a difference?

How has generosity changed your life?

How are you going to be generous today?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, I humbly thank you for giving me the desire and the power to live a new life. Help me abandon the broken and tattered remains of my old life. Through your Holy Spirit, please continue to renew my thoughts and attitudes so I can become more like you—truly righteous and holy!