# Day 1 – Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer (“SOAP”)

### Conversation Starter

If you were to sit with your “hurt” like it were another person in the room, how would you approach your “hurt”? Would you sit and quietly listen to what it has to say? Would you impatiently interrupt or resolutely ignore? Would you have a conversation with God about it?

### Scripture Observation

*For the choir director: A psalm of David, to be accompanied by stringed instruments.*

Listen to my prayer, O God. Do not ignore my cry for help! Please listen and answer me, for I am overwhelmed by my troubles. My enemies shout at me, making loud and wicked threats. They bring trouble on me and angrily hunt me down.

My heart pounds in my chest. The terror of death assaults me. Fear and trembling overwhelm me, and I can’t stop shaking. Oh, that I had wings like a dove; then I would fly away and rest! I would fly far away to the quiet of the wilderness. Interlude

How quickly I would escape— far from this wild storm of hatred.

Confuse them, Lord, and frustrate their plans, for I see violence and conflict in the city. Its walls are patrolled day and night against invaders, but the real danger is wickedness within the city. Everything is falling apart; threats and cheating are rampant in the streets. … **Psalm 55:1-11 NLT**

### Application Suggestions

Think back to a time when you “minimized” or “ignored” your hurt. Did it get better in the long run?

Do you acknowledge the reality of your hurt in your conversations with God?

David was aware that the real danger was not “out there” but was much closer to home. Are you focused on the dangers close to home? Why or why not?

### Prayer Suggestions

Lord, thank you for listening when I cry for help. Sometimes I do not feel your presence and am overwhelmed by fear, frustration, and hurt. Teach me to trust in you even when my fear and hurt feel like they are suffocating me. Confuse my enemies and give me peace!

# Day 2 – Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer (“SOAP”)

### Conversation Starter

Have you ever been hurt by betrayal?

### Scripture Observation

**Psalm 55 continued: …** It is not an enemy who taunts me— I could bear that. It is not my foes who so arrogantly insult me— I could have hidden from them. Instead, it is you—my equal, my companion and close friend. What good fellowship we once enjoyed as we walked together to the house of God. Let death stalk my enemies; let the grave swallow them alive, for evil makes its home within them.

But I will call on God, and the LORD will rescue me. Morning, noon, and night I cry out in my distress, and the LORD hears my voice. He ransoms me and keeps me safe from the battle waged against me, though many still oppose me. God, who has ruled forever, will hear me and humble them. *Interlude*

For my enemies refuse to change their ways; they do not fear God. As for my companion, he betrayed his friends; he broke his promises. His words are as smooth as butter, but in his heart is war. His words are as soothing as lotion, but underneath are daggers!

Give your burdens to the LORD, and he will take care of you. He will not permit the godly to slip and fall. But you, O God, will send the wicked down to the pit of destruction. Murderers and liars will die young, but I am trusting you to save me. **Psalm 55:12-23 NLT**

### Application Suggestions

“Give your burdens to the LORD, and he will take care of you.” How can we faithfully do this?

* Identify, don’t hide/minimize/ignore, your burdens.
* When you picture yourself “giving” your burdens to God, is it forceful? Fearful? Happy? Unsure?
* Trust that he will take care of you—in his time and in his way. This takes *trust*…

### Prayer Suggestions

Lord, my hurt is genuinely more than I can or should bear on my own. My temptation is to fix, manage, and control my hurt in MY ways on MY schedule, but that has not gone well. Teach me to trust that you WILL take care of me in your way and time.

# Day 3 – Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer (“SOAP”)

### Conversation Starter

Is there someone in your life that you are not eager to forgive because of the way you have been treated?

### Scripture Observation

Jesus entered Jericho and made his way through the town. There was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was the chief tax collector in the region, and he had become very rich. He tried to get a look at Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree beside the road, for Jesus was going to pass that way.

When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. “Zacchaeus!” he said. “Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today.”

Zacchaeus quickly climbed down and took Jesus to his house in great excitement and joy. But the people were displeased. “He has gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner,” they grumbled.

Meanwhile, Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, “I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!”

Jesus responded, “Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost.” **Luke 19:1-10 NLT**

### Application Suggestions

Do you know of a greater power than God’s kindness? The power of love and forgiveness can turn a cold-hearted enemy into a trusted family member. Do you believe in kindness enough to show it to those in your life who likewise do not deserve it?

No doubt many in the crowd had been oppressed by people like Zacchaeus. They did not even want to let him get close to Jesus. Jesus, however, showed great kindness to Zacchaeus by walking right through the crowd and choosing HIM to honor. This kindness opened up Zacchaeus’ heart, and he repented and was saved. Kindness not only changes hard hearts, it also reveals bitterness in people and an unwillingness to forgive.

How has God shown you individual kindness?

### Prayer Suggestions

Lord, I know I need to be forgiven. I also know that I need to forgive. Thank you for taking on our guilt at the cross. Please forgive my sins as I forgive those who sin against me.

# Day 4 – Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer (“SOAP”)

### Conversation Starter

Creating a will directs your assets when you die. Surrendering your will to God protects your soul after you die. Are you planning ahead?

### Scripture Observation

Do not let sin control the way you live; do not give in to sinful desires. Do not let any part of your body become an instrument of evil to serve sin. Instead, give yourselves completely to God, for you were dead, but now you have new life. So use your whole body as an instrument to do what is right for the glory of God. Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God’s grace.

Well then, since God’s grace has set us free from the law, does that mean we can go on sinning? Of course not! Don’t you realize that you become the slave of whatever you choose to obey? You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living. Thank God! Once you were slaves of sin, but now you wholeheartedly obey this teaching we have given you. Now you are free from your slavery to sin, and you have become slaves to righteous living.

Because of the weakness of your human nature, I am using the illustration of slavery to help you understand all this. Previously, you let yourselves be slaves to impurity and lawlessness, which led ever deeper into sin. Now you must give yourselves to be slaves to righteous living so that you will become holy.

When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the obligation to do right. And what was the result? You are now ashamed of the things you used to do, things that end in eternal doom. But now you are free from the power of sin and have become slaves of God. Now you do those things that lead to holiness and result in eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord. **Romans 6:12-23 NLT**

### Application Suggestions

Hurt (that you cause or that is caused to you) can tempt you to respond by trying to control people or situations that are not yours to control, define life differently than God created it to be lived, and harden your heart to God, yourself, others, and life. When God made you “free from the power of sin,” it was so God could teach and refine your heart and mind.

Have you become a “slave of God”? How is it going?

### Prayer Suggestions

Lord, thank you for saving me from the power of sin that leads to guilt, isolation, and death. Thank you for your free gift of eternal life through Jesus!

# Day 5 – Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer (“SOAP”)

### Conversation Starter

If you were to replace all the hurt, anger, and unforgiveness in your life with peace, joy, and optimism, how different would your life look?

### Scripture Observation

Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.

Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God’s people. Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes—these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God. You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God. For a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world.

Don’t be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins, for the anger of God will fall on all who disobey him. Don’t participate in the things these people do. For once you were full of darkness, but now you have light from the Lord. So live as people of light! For this light within you produces only what is good and right and true.

Carefully determine what pleases the Lord. Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, expose them. It is shameful even to talk about the things that ungodly people do in secret. But their evil intentions will be exposed when the light shines on them, for the light makes everything visible. This is why it is said, “Awake, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light.” **Ephesians 5:1-14 NLT**

### Application Suggestions

Jesus loved us and sacrificed for us to bring us close to God. How will you follow his example?

Why is thankfulness the antidote to the poisons of sexual immorality, impurity, and greed?

“Live as people of light” – how will you keep focused on the LIFE Jesus wants to grow in you?

### Prayer Suggestions

Lord, thank you for not weighing me down with guilt and shame for the hurt in my life (what I’ve caused and what has been done to me). Thank you, instead, for giving me forgiveness so that I can imitate you and be a “light” in this dark world!