

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

What warnings do you pay close attention to, and what warnings do you routinely ignore?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

I don't want you to forget, dear brothers and sisters, about our ancestors in the wilderness long ago. All of them were guided by a cloud that moved ahead of them, and all of them walked through the sea on dry ground. In the cloud and in the sea, all of them were baptized as followers of Moses. All of them ate the same spiritual food, and all of them drank the same spiritual water. For they drank from the spiritual rock that traveled with them, and that rock was Christ. Yet God was not pleased with most of them, and their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

These things happened as a warning to us, so that we would not crave evil things as they did, or worship idols as some of them did. As the Scriptures say, “The people celebrated with feasting and drinking, and they indulged in pagan revelry.” And we must not engage in sexual immorality as some of them did, causing 23,000 of them to die in one day.

Nor should we put Christ to the test, as some of them did and then died from snakebites. And don't grumble as some of them did, and then were destroyed by the angel of death. These things happened to them as examples for us. They were written down to warn us who live at the end of the age. If you think you are standing strong, be careful not to fall. The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure.

So, my dear friends, flee from the worship of idols. You are reasonable people. Decide for yourselves if what I am saying is true. When we bless the cup at the Lord's Table, aren't we sharing in the blood of Christ? And when we break the bread, aren't we sharing in the body of Christ? And though we are many, we all eat from one loaf of bread, showing that we are one body. **1 Corinthians 10:1–17 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

We are invited to partner in the greatest thing that has ever been done—Jesus giving his body and blood so we could be made new, and Jesus can live THROUGH you and me! Worship with communion is not a casual, social event; it is a *participation* with God to live a new life. Why is it of utmost importance to insist on defeating sin?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, THANK YOU for giving me new life. Forgive me of my sin and help me to focus on the help and hope and freedom given to me through Jesus' body and blood.

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

To whom or what are you most loyal (family, friend, company, sports team)?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

We have partnership in the Gospel (“Good News”) of Jesus!

This letter is from Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus. I am writing to all of God’s holy people in Philippi who belong to Christ Jesus, including the church leaders and deacons. May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You share with me the special favor of God, both in my imprisonment and in defending and confirming the truth of the Good News. God knows how much I love you and long for you with the tender compassion of Christ Jesus.

I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ’s return. May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation—the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ—for this will bring much glory and praise to God. **Philippians 1:1–11 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

If Paul were alive today, would he include you in his list of people he is thankful for? Why or why not?

Who are you thankful for in your spiritual journey?

What is the purpose of becoming like Jesus?

Why is “becoming like Jesus” an act of God’s power combined your willingness, and NOT a self-improvement plan with Jesus as your coach? What’s the difference?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, your grace to me astounds me in so many ways. You created me, loved me when I was a rebel sinner, forgave me and empowered me when I turned to you, and now you have gifted and called me to participate in sharing your good news as an eyewitness of your goodness! You are so good!

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

Are you more skilled at innovating or optimizing? Do you create or do you make someone else’s creation better?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

We have partnership with Christ! What do we have to offer that He doesn’t already have?

“Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am. And you know the way to where I am going.”

“No, we don’t know, Lord,” Thomas said. “We have no idea where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

Jesus told him, **“I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. If you had really known me, you would know who my Father is. From now on, you do know him and have seen him!”**

Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.”

Jesus replied, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don’t know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking me to show him to you? Don’t you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me. Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do.

“I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it! **John 14:1–14 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

How would you answer that question: what do you have to offer Jesus that He doesn’t already have—if the very life you have was given to you? Another way to think about this is that you are not the source of goodness but a conduit of his goodness back to Him and others.

What do you think about this statement? “Increasing your capacity to freely share what you have been freely given is true spiritual growth.” How does this apply to you?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, you are my source of life, hope and love. Help me to grow in my ability to freely share what I have been freely given!

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

Who are the two or three people closest to you? Why have you become close?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

We have partnership with each other!

You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not everything is good for you. You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not everything is beneficial. Don’t be concerned for your own good but for the good of others.

So you may eat any meat that is sold in the marketplace without raising questions of conscience. For “the earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it.”

If someone who isn’t a believer asks you home for dinner, accept the invitation if you want to. Eat whatever is offered to you without raising questions of conscience. (But suppose someone tells you, “This meat was offered to an idol.” Don’t eat it, out of consideration for the conscience of the one who told you. It might not be a matter of conscience for you, but it is for the other person.) For why should my freedom be limited by what someone else thinks? If I can thank God for the food and enjoy it, why should I be condemned for eating it?

So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Don’t give offense to Jews or Gentiles or the church of God. I, too, try to please everyone in everything I do. I don’t just do what is best for me; I do what is best for others so that many may be saved. And you should imitate me, just as I imitate Christ. **1 Corinthians 10:23–11:1 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

There are people who have bad attitudes and make extra rules. Don’t follow them and give up your freedom. There are people who have fear and uncertainty surrounding their choices. Don’t harm them by prioritizing your freedom over your spiritual brothers and sisters. How do you tell the difference between would-be dictators and vulnerable brothers and sisters?

What is an area in your life that this helps to clarify?

Healthy Christians serve others out of love, strength and security; unhealthy Christians serve others out of guilt, insecurity and fear. Which describes you? Which do you want to be?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, thank you for clarity and wisdom in navigating how to live in freedom and serve my neighbor. Help me see clearly and act wisely and serve selflessly even when it costs me—so that I can become more like you, sharing in both your sacrifice and your life!

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

Where would you be on a scale of 1-10 between (1) “I LOVE conflict!” and (10) “I avoid conflict at all costs!”?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

We have fellowship (Greek word pronounced “koinonia”) with Jesus and each other!

This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and from our brother Sosthenes. I am writing to God’s church in Corinth, to you who have been called by God to be his own holy people. He made you holy by means of Christ Jesus, just as he did for all people everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours. May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

I always thank my God for you and for the gracious gifts he has given you, now that you belong to Christ Jesus. Through him, God has enriched your church in every way—with all of your eloquent words and all of your knowledge. This confirms that what I told you about Christ is true. Now you have every spiritual gift you need as you eagerly wait for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ. He will keep you strong to the end so that you will be free from all blame on the day when our Lord Jesus Christ returns. God will do this, for he is faithful to do what he says, and he has invited you into partnership with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose. **1 Corinthians 1:1–10 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

The church in Corinth got letters Jesus through Paul because 1) Jesus loved them deeply, and 2) they needed a lot of encouragement and correction. One of the difficulties they had was taking pride in, and *fighting* over, spiritual gifts. A lot of people wanted the public, impressive gifts like prophesying and speaking in tongues. Quiet gifts of service and mercy weren’t as “special.” This was the context in which Paul wrote the “love chapter” (1 Corinthians 13), where he said that everyone should tone it down a bit and aspire to the greatest lifestyle of all: LOVE!

How are you prioritizing LOVE (acting in patient and kind and selfless ways towards others for their good) in your relationships?

How is actively LOVING someone VERY different from “tolerance” and “acceptance”?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, thank you for loving me and giving me spiritual gifts so I can be satisfied in serving others. Teach us to be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.