

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

Are you satisfied with where you are at on your journey? Why or why not?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

King Solomon writes, While I was at the window of my house, looking through the curtain, I saw some naive young men, and one in particular who lacked common sense. He was crossing the street near the house of an immoral woman, strolling down the path by her house. It was at twilight, in the evening, as deep darkness fell. The woman approached him, seductively dressed and sly of heart. She was the brash, rebellious type, never content to stay at home. She is often in the streets and markets, soliciting at every corner.

She threw her arms around him and kissed him, and with a brazen look she said, “I’ve just made my peace offerings and fulfilled my vows. You’re the one I was looking for! I came out to find you, and here you are! My bed is spread with beautiful blankets, with colored sheets of Egyptian linen. I’ve perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. Come, let’s drink our fill of love until morning. Let’s enjoy each other’s caresses, for my husband is not home. He’s away on a long trip. He has taken a wallet full of money with him and won’t return until later this month.” **Proverbs 7:6–20 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

Direction determine destination.

We always end up where the path we are on takes us.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

Have you ever watched a disaster play out? What did you do? Next time, what will you do?

Who do you resonate with most in this story?

Are you at a place in your life where you become the wise father or mother figure using a tragic story to educate and warn those you influence?

Whose voice do you need to be listening to *right now* in your own life?

Who needs to hear your voice of encouragement and wisdom *right now*?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, thank you for wise people who care enough to help younger and less experienced individuals recognize where the path they are tempted to go down leads. Help us have the strength to live out what our faith prompts us to do.

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

What is the difference between the path of self-discipline and the path of regret?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

So she seduced him with her pretty speech and enticed him with her flattery. He followed her at once, like an ox going to the slaughter. He was like a stag caught in a trap, awaiting the arrow that would pierce its heart. He was like a bird flying into a snare, little knowing it would cost him his life. So listen to me, my sons, and pay attention to my words. **Proverbs 7:21–24 NLT**

Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God’s anger, just like everyone else.

But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God’s grace that you have been saved!) For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus.

God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. **Ephesians 2:1–10 NLT**

Sermon Insight: Every choice we make is a step on a path.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

Sin, brokenness, and spiritual death (being independent and disconnected from the source of light, life and wisdom) is sadly part of the universal human experience. Yet God shows mercy in sending Jesus and allowing us to have live through him! How are you experiencing this life privately? In your relationships? At your school/work/place of service?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, I am well aware that every choice I made becomes a permanent part of my history. Thank you for breaking the power and bonds of sin so that I can be connected to you and experience forgiveness and power in my life!

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

What is the source and environment of your greatest temptations?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

Don't let your hearts stray away toward her. Don't wander down her wayward path. For she has been the ruin of many; many men have been her victims. Her house is the road to the grave. Her bedroom is the den of death. **Proverbs 7:25–27 NLT**

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 6:15–23 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

Paul used the language of slavery because we are not historically very good at handling “freedom.” In what way do “slavery” to the following disciplines help you experience real freedom?

- Working out physically
- Mental exercise
- Working to have healthy relationships
- Worshipping/giving attention/focusing on God's principles

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, thank you for showing me the path to freedom and teaching me what real freedom feels like. Help me trust you as I follow Paul's instruction to give myself to be a slave to righteous living so that I will become holy.

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

Who have been the voices of reason and wisdom in your life? What is your relationship with that person(s) now? How will you express your gratitude, if you are still able?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

Listen as Wisdom calls out! Hear as understanding raises her voice! On the hilltop along the road, she takes her stand at the crossroads. By the gates at the entrance to the town, on the road leading in, she cries aloud,

“I call to you, to all of you! I raise my voice to all people. You simple people, use good judgment. You foolish people, show some understanding. Listen to me! For I have important things to tell you. Everything I say is right, for I speak the truth and detest every kind of deception. My advice is wholesome. There is nothing devious or crooked in it. My words are plain to anyone with understanding, clear to those with knowledge. Choose my instruction rather than silver, and knowledge rather than pure gold. For wisdom is far more valuable than rubies. Nothing you desire can compare with it.

“I, Wisdom, live together with good judgment. I know where to discover knowledge and discernment. All who fear the LORD will hate evil. Therefore, I hate pride and arrogance, corruption and perverse speech. Common sense and success belong to me. Insight and strength are mine. Because of me, kings reign, and rulers make just decrees. Rulers lead with my help, and nobles make righteous judgments.

“I love all who love me. Those who search will surely find me. I have riches and honor, as well as enduring wealth and justice. My gifts are better than gold, even the purest gold, my wages better than sterling silver! I walk in righteousness, in paths of justice. Those who love me inherit wealth. I will fill their treasuries. The LORD formed me from the beginning, before he created anything else. I was appointed in ages past, at the very first, before the earth began. **Proverbs 8:1–23 NLT**

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

“Wisdom” (personified as a woman sharing the very mind of God) calls to ALL PEOPLE! What does that say about God’s heart of inclusion and every person’s individual responsibility?

Here is an important question from Pastor Greg in the sermon: *Is the path you are on taking you where you want to go?*

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, I thank you for including me in the opportunity to know, hear, and benefit from your wisdom. I have ignorantly and intentionally taken destructive paths and ask for your mercy and power to take steps down the path that will lead me toward the destination I want. I love you!

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

CONVERSATION STARTER

Where do you long to be most? Who do you long to be with most?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION

“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!

Sermon Insight: There is only one path that will bring purpose, meaning, and value to our lives.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS

We are all looking for significance (to be important) and security (to be accepted and loved). While there are many temporary things on earth that promise to give both, Jesus helps us focus on what really matters: loving God and loving people as we love ourselves. When everything else comes to an end, God and people will last forever. How can this change your perspective? What will you focus on *today*?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS

Lord, thank you for revealing yourself as the true source of the path to wholeness, the truth that never disappoints, and eternal life. I’m reminded of the hymn that says, “Turn your eyes upon Jesus! Look full in his wonderful face! And the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace!”