



REFLECTING ON SCRIPTURE

A guide for personal engagement
with God's Word

The most important catalyst for spiritual growth is personal engagement with God's Word. SOAP (Scripture, Observation, Application, & Prayer) is an approach to reflecting on a passage in the Bible.

Scripture

Ask the Lord to speak to you as you read his Word. As you read, note any verses that are particularly meaningful to you today. When you finish reading, choose one of those verses and write it down.

Observation

Observe carefully what the verse says, and write down what you discover. The following questions may help you.

- What strikes you as you read this verse?
- Does anything in the context (paragraph, chapter, etc.) relate to or help you understand this verse?
- What do you see it telling you about . . .
 - God?
 - Yourself?
 - Your relationship with God?
 - Your relationship with other people?
- What do you think is the author's main point?

Application

Personalize what you've read by considering how it applies to your life right now. Ask yourself: If I really believed what this verse is saying, how would it affect the way I think? The way I act? My relationship with God? With other people?

Write down at least one way you want to apply what you've seen in this verse.

Prayer

Write out a brief prayer. Thank God for what he's shown you. Ask him to help you apply it to your life. If you saw something for which you want to praise or thank God, do it. If you're moved to ask him for something, go ahead. If you're convicted of sin, ask him to forgive you. If you're motivated to do something, ask him to enable you.

When you're finished, you might want to give a title to what you've written so you can more easily summarize and remember it.

In his book, *The Divine Mentor*, Pastor Wayne Cordeiro gives this example of a journal entry he wrote using the SOAP method.

Marching Orders

Scripture

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the housetops. (Matthew 10:27)

Observation

The question is not “Is God speaking?” The question is “Am I listening?” Oh, God can thunder, if He so chooses, but I think He’d rather whisper. That way, my heart has to incline toward Him. He speaks in the darkness and whispers in my ear. If I’m not listening to Him in the darkness, what will I speak when I get into the light? If I’m not hearing Him whisper in my ear, what will I have to proclaim on the housetops?

Application

What a great word! I am duly reminded today not only to talk to God in prayer; it is equally important for me to hear Him in prayer! He is constantly giving me words of instruction for my marriage, ministry, and future. I cannot afford not to incline my ear to Him and listen for His whispers.

Prayer

Dear Jesus, help me to hear You today. I want to be still so that I may hear Your marching orders for my day, my week, my life. Speak, Lord. Your servant is listening!