

# How to S.O.A.P you Bible Study

A simple way to start interacting with Scripture during your devotions.

“Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.” (Ps. 119:105)

Christians, who are serious about deepening their relationship to their Heavenly Father and growing in knowledge about their faith, know that they should spend time daily in prayer and reading scripture. There is one problem! LIFE is BUSY! Often our wonderful intentions of opening our Bibles can easily go by the wayside to the demands of daily life.

I want to introduce to a method that may help you simplify your devotional time while intensifying you time with God.

May God bless and keep you as you strive to daily focus on your relationship with him while you dive deeper into his word.

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF S.O.A.P?

The SOAP method will help you deepen your understanding of God and your Christian walk by helping you to interact with God’s word and help you go deeper...slowing down your reading a bit to help you really understand what God is saying to you that day.

## WHY USE S.O.A.P?

Have you ever been reading a novel, a text book, or even the Bible, and realize that your mind has drifted, and although you know you the words went from the page to your eyes, they didn’t register? I have done this many times (especially when I am tired or in a rush).

S.O.A.P is a simple method to slow us down as read scripture so that we dig deeper. It isn’t about finishing the “words” but rather “understanding” what God wants us to understand. It makes us read for comprehension and for purpose all the while prayerfully asking God to show a truth in his word for us.

## WHAT DOES S.O.A.P STAND FOR?

- S – SCRIPTURE –** This can mean several things depending on how much scripture you use during your daily devotions. Many people find it a powerful experience to write out the scripture that you are using.  
If you use a larger portion (several chapters at a time) I would suggest you simply write at the top of your journal the reference. If a verse hits you in a certain way, perhaps you will write that verse out.
- O – OBSERVATION -** As you read your scripture, is there anything jumping out at you? Do you see repeated phrases or themes? Do you notice a new detail that you had never thought about? What comes to mind as you read? Who is writing, speaking, the object of the words, or what group of people are being dealt with or written about?
- A – APPLICATION -** This is the point where your study becomes personal! You ask the big question “What is God saying to me and how does that apply to my life today?” What encourages me about what I read? Am I obeying God? How can I do better? What changes are needed in my life? When you start applying these types of questions to your reading you will ask another major question, “What actions do I need to take?”
- P – PRAYER -** You have read, observed, and applied. Now spend some time with God and craft a prayer that is important to you and what you have encountered today. Perhaps you have been convicted of something that needs to change – confess it to God. Be specific with your confession. There is power in being truthful with the One who knows everything that is going on in your life.

## HOW DO I DO S.O.A.P?

My first suggestion would be to go out and get a journal or notebook from the store. It doesn't have to be expensive. It is an amazing experience to re-read previous entries that you have made, and many people keep their journals. I would also suggest that you use a "modern" translation (NIV, NLT, RSVP etc...). I have nothing against the KJV, but for daily study a modern translation can be very helpful.

I have been asked "when is the best time to do devotions?" The proper answer is "anytime you can!" The benefits of doing your devotions in the morning is that it is fresh in your mind and you can take it with you and meditate on what you read during the day. If you just can't get up – then do it before you go to bed.

Many often find it helpful to dedicate a "spot" to devotions (kitchen table, living room chair, etc...). When you dedicate an area for devotions, you are helping your body and brain create a habit. Creating "habits" help you continue to have regular times with God.

The S.O.A.P. method is very popular, and you can find many articles about it on the internet. Here is just one example of an entry taken from the website "Love God Greatly" ([lovegodgreatly.com](http://lovegodgreatly.com)).

### Colossians 1:5-8

**S**– The faith and love that spring from the hope that is stored up for you in heaven and that you have already heard about in the word of truth, the gospel that has come to you. All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth. You learned it from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is a faithful minister of Christ on our behalf, and who also told us of your love in the Spirit.

**O**– (Many times I just bullet my observations.....what I'm seeing at first glance when looking at the verses)

- When you combine faith and love, you get hope.
- We have to remember that our hope is in heaven.....it is yet to come.
- The gospel is the word of truth.
- The gospel is continually bearing fruit and growing from the 1st day to the last.
- It just takes one person to change a whole community.....Epaphras.

**A-**Something that stood out to me today was how God used one man, Epaphras to change a whole town!!! I was reminded that we are simply called to tell others about Christ.....it's God's job to spread the gospel....to grow it and have it bear fruit. I felt today's verses were almost directly spoken to LGG.....*"all over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth."* Isn't it fun when God's Word becomes so alive and speaks directly where we are at?!!!! My prayer today is that all the women involved in this Bible study will understand God's grace and have a thirst for His Word.

**P-** Dear Lord, please help me to be a "Epapras" .....to tell others about you and then leave the results in your loving hands. Please help me to understand and apply what I have read today to my life personally, thereby becoming more and more like you each and every day. Help me to live a life that bears the "fruit" of faith and love.....anchoring my hope in heaven, not here on earth. Help me to remember that the BEST is yet to come!

## HOW DO I DECIDE WHAT TO READ?

This is up to you. Many people have a knack for opening their Bibles to a different passage each day and they find it meaningful. I would like to suggest a more regimented approach.

There are many good resources to help you systematically go through the Bible in one or two years. Many plans will have you read a portion from the Old Testament, a Psalm or a Proverb, and a portion from the New Testament. By using this method, you will start to see that there is a theme running through that Bible regarding God's relationship to His children, the promise and coming of the Messiah, and hope for the future.

If you don't use a computer, I would suggest picking up a "Through the Bible in a Year" bible. It is broken up into daily readings to take you through the entire Bible in a year.

On-line you find many sites that offer "reading plans" to help you achieve different objectives. Some of these might be reading through the Old or New Testament in a certain period of time to the more traditional one-year approaches.

One of my favourites is found at [www.lifejournal.cc](http://www.lifejournal.cc). At the top of the page you can click on "online devotions" and it will take you to the reading plan each day. Just bookmark the site and you can easily access it from your laptop, tablet, or smartphone.

Another site I found in a "google" search was [www.biblestudytools.com](http://www.biblestudytools.com). This give you many options and versions to choose from to help you in your pursuits of God.