

Introduction to S.O.A.P.

S.O.A.P. is an acronym:

S: Scripture

O: Observation

A: Application

P: Prayer

Let's look at these one by one.

Scripture - This step involves reading a passage from the Bible. Basically, the idea here is that you would (having first prayed that God might open your heart to His Word) read the biblical text highlighting or underlining along the way verses or passages that stand out for you. Invariably, when you look back over those highlighted (underlined) passages, one will stand out above the others. That selected passage now become your 'S' (Scripture) for the purposes of the S.O.A.P. study.

Observation - For this step begin looking carefully at the Scripture passage selected - what observations might you make about those verses? What is the passage saying about God? About you? About the relationship you have with God or the relationship you share with others? What words are repeated and what might that mean? What questions does the text raise? Make your own Observations as you work your way through the reading plan.

Application - For this step begin to think through how you might apply one or more of the Observations you just made. You will want to be as specific as possible in this section: I will..., I'll try not to..., I need to remember to..., etc. What do the Observations you made require of you as a disciple of Jesus Christ?

Prayer - The final step is talking to God. Your Prayer might simply be a prayer of thanksgiving, or you might ask God to help you live out His Word for your life, or it might be a prayer of confession if the passage has opened your eyes to an area of sin. Your Prayer should be a direct reflection of the Scripture/Observation/Application process you have just gone through. Of course, prayer would also include listening for the voice of the Holy Spirit as God ministers to you through His Word. You would then write down the essence of your Prayer.