

A
JESUS
SHAPED
LIFE

40 Day Journal

Geologists tell us that the Colorado River carved the canyon over millions of years. The river cut so deep that its strata reveal 40% of the earth's history. Even now, the relentless water flow continues to imperceptibly erode the canyon floor, deepening and widening it.

Whether we realize it or not, there are seen and unseen forces working on you and me, too. As you read this, our thinking, values, and character are being shaped by a myriad of influences. Some of these forces are obvious, such as our family of origin, nationality, or education. Our life experiences, both painful and joy-filled, also significantly influence who we are.

If all that sounds disconcerting, here is some good news: if you are a follower of Jesus, there is a supernatural force at work in your life, shaping you in healthy, exciting ways. The power of God is at work in you to form you into the image of Jesus.

Those verses tell us that God works to shape us, but that we are not passive in the process. We are not like the rock of the Grand Canyon that lies motionless while it is carved into a new shape by the river. Rather, we are engaged in a cooperative effort between God and ourselves. God works in us, and we work out our salvation. He acts, and we respond with the strength God provides. When it comes to becoming like Christ, without God we cannot, and without us, God will not.

My prayer for you over these next forty days comes from 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24:

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and He will do it.

Welcome to our 40-day faith adventure – let the journey begin!



Pastor Steve



WELCOME

WEEK ONE

MESSAGE NOTES

Made for This

God wants to make us holy. Does that idea inspire you or induce you to cringe? Your answer likely depends on what you think it means to be holy. If you think that "holy" is a code word for "well-behaved," you probably won't be enthusiastic about it. If you imagine holiness to be a grim, duty-bound exercise in rule-keeping, you may say, "I'll pass." In reality, true holiness bears no resemblance to those cliché stereotypes.

"Holy" is the word the Bible uses to describe God's character. Holiness is not sterile rule-keeping; it is the word that sums up God's goodness and His power. Holiness is wholeness. It is our outer life matching our inner life. It is made up of life-giving emotions, thinking, and actions. It is life as God originally intended at creation.

Jesus saves us from both the _____ and the _____ of sin

Romans 6:6-7

Christlikeness is _____ but not _____

Galatians 5:16-17

God's Spirit empowers us to:

- _____ sin

John 16:8

- _____ behavior

First step to Christlikeness:

_____ to be _____

GROUP GUIDE

Conversation Starters If you could visit anywhere in the world, where would you go and why?

Worship Together Spend a few moments in worship. You can sing together, read a Psalm, etc.
Recommended Song: "Build My Life" (YouTube Link: [xr.church/song1](https://www.xr.church/song1))

Checking In Share one thing you are excited about for the next 6 weeks of the Faith Adventure. What are you worried, unsure, or anxious about?

Watch Recap of "Jesus-Shaped Life" week 1 on the **Crossroads App** or [xr.church/jesusshapedlife](https://www.xr.church/jesusshapedlife)

Read Philippians 2:12b-13. Spend a few moments in prayer, asking God to guide your conversation together. Then break into groups of 3 to discuss the following questions.

Group Discussion Questions

1. When you hear the word "holy," what comes to your mind? How closely does that image resemble Jesus' character and life?
2. Does pursuing a Jesus-shaped life mean that we will lose our individuality? Why or why not?
3. In what ways do you most frequently see your old nature show up in your thoughts and actions? How would your life be different if your new nature were able to win more of the inner battles?
4. On a scale of 1-10, how confident are you that you will become more like Jesus over the next six months? Why?
5. What pitfalls might we face if we do not realize that it is the grace of God that enables us to become like Jesus?
6. Share a time you recently sensed the Spirit's conviction. How does knowing that you are already accepted by God change the way you respond?
7. Why is repentance essential to a vibrant spiritual life?

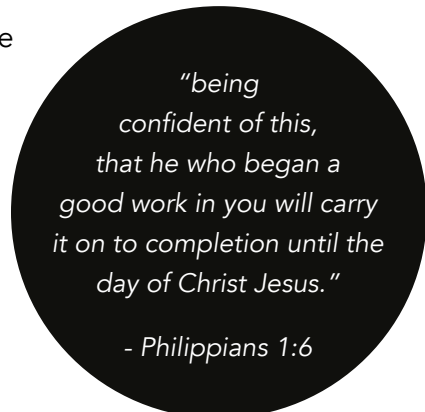
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Response

- a. What stood out the most from this week's readings, message, discussion, and prayer time? Where is God asking me to focus my attention this week?
- b. What will I do in response?

Share and Pray Take a moment and share what you wrote down. What questions, concerns, or insights might you have regarding what God is asking you to do this week? Spend time praying for one another. Pray to be empowered by His Spirit to take action this week on what each person wrote down.

Pray for the Open Chair Take an open chair and close by praying that God would fill it with someone who needs to experience His love and power through the group next week.



Week 1 – Day 1 – Ephesians 1

S Ephesians 1:4 "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless"

O "He chose" - Long before 2020, before creation even, God had me...had us, in His mind's eye. He knew I would mess things up and how I would fall short. Yet, still He chose to create us and invite us into relationship. To be in that relationship, we must be holy and blameless - only possible through the blood of Jesus.

A God adopts me through Jesus. His work and plan of salvation is a gift of love. My only response is to give my life back to Him as a sacrifice and to open my eyes and heart to see others around me as God sees them - chosen before creation for love!

P Lord, open my eyes, my ears, and my heart to those around me! Thank You for loving me enough, even in my brokenness, to send Your Son to adopt me. Help me live according to that love and reflect that love.

Week 1 – Day 2 – Ephesians 4

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 1 – Day 3 – Romans 6

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 1 – Day 4 – Isaiah 6

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 1 – Day 5 – John 16

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 1 – Day 6 – Matthew 4

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

MESSAGE NOTES

WEEK TWO

The Obedience of Jesus

Obedience starts with the choice to _____

Matthew 9:9

Matthew 4:18-20

Luke 18:22-23

Follow Me in _____

Follow Me through _____

Luke 12:22-31

Follow Me through _____

John 5:6-8

Follow Me to _____

Matthew 28:18-20

Following Me will _____

Mark 8:18-22

The _____ of following Me

James 1:22 says, "Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says." If we hear what God says but do not do it, we practice self-deception. We believe we are growing spiritually, but we are not. We think we are pleasing God, but unless we do what God says, we are not. Jesus once asked, "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord' and do not do what I say?" (Luke 6:46)

Perhaps you know what God is calling you to do. If so, you can grow by doing it. If you are not sure, read the Bible until you come to a command or an example and do it. Don't put limits on your obedience. You will find that saying "yes" is the way to a Jesus-shaped life of joy and peace.

GROUP GUIDE

Conversation Starter Are you a night owl or an early riser? Share something about getting up early or going to bed late that is a positive!

Worship Together Spend a few moments in worship. You can sing together, read a Psalm, etc. Recommended Song: "Here as in Heaven" (YouTube Link: [xr.church/song2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xr.church/song2))

Review Your Week

- How did I act on what God told me to do over the last week?
- Where have I noticed God at work?

Watch Recap of "Jesus-Shaped Life" week 2 on the [Crossroads App](#) or [xr.church/jesusshapedlife](https://www.xr.church/jesusshapedlife)

Read Matthew 9:9, Matthew 4:18-20. Spend a few moments in prayer, asking God to guide your conversation together. Then break into groups of 3 to discuss the following questions.

Group Discussion Questions

1. What possible honest answers might someone give to the question Jesus asks in Luke 6:46 "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord' and not do what I say?" Why is it a contradiction to say Jesus is my Lord and not obey Him?
2. Why is legalism attractive on a certain level? Why is it spiritually deadly?
3. What is the difference between regretting a sin and renouncing it?
4. On a scale of 1-10, how loved by God do you feel right now?
Unless it is a ten, pray for each other to be filled with more of His love.
5. Share a time you successfully resisted a temptation. What were the keys to victory?
6. Is there an issue in your life you've given up trying to change because you've been unsuccessful? What is God saying to you about that right now?
7. Take a moment to pray for each other to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

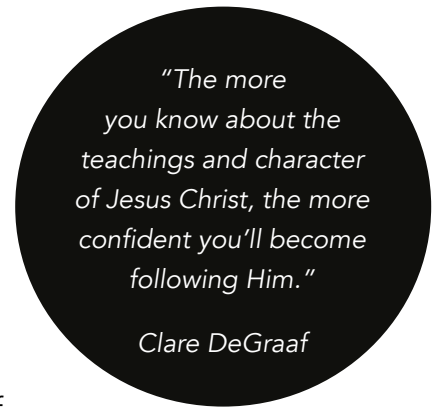
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Pray for the Open Chair Take an open chair and close by praying that God would fill it with someone who needs to experience His love and power through the group next week.



Week 2 – Day 1 – Matthew 26

S Matthew 26:41 “Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

O There are times when our flesh and spirit are at odds. It takes effort and focus to follow the will of God in moments of temptation.

A I will recognize the moments today when I’m tempted to disobey God. In those moments today, I’ll turn to prayer for strength.

P Lord, Give me discernment to recognize the moments I’m tempted and the wisdom to turn to You in prayer.

Week 2 – Day 2 – Matthew 23

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 2 – Day 3 – Titus 2

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 2 – Day 4 – Matthew 4

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 2 – Day 5 – Romans 6

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 2 – Day 6 – Matthew 5

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

The Relationships of Jesus

Christ-likeness shows up as _____

Ephesians 5:1-2

Ephesians 4:24

Key: _____ what we received from _____

A. Remember we're _____

Ephesians 4:25

Ageism

B. Restrain _____

Ephesians 4:26

God restrained His anger toward us

C. _____ freely

Ephesians 4:32

We've been forgiven

If we have hearts filled with love, we don't need a thousand laws to keep us in line. When we love others, we will not lie to them, steal from them, or attack them. That's why Jesus said, "all the Law and the Prophets hang on the two commandments" (Matthew 22:40) to love God and love others.

A Jesus-shaped life isn't focused on avoiding sin; holiness is the fruit of loving others. When we are motivated by love, our words will be life-giving. Whatever we do with our talents and spiritual gifts will accomplish God's purposes. Our sacrifices will make an eternal difference when we make them out of love.

GROUP GUIDE

Conversation Starter What is your favorite season/time of the year and why?

Worship Together Spend a few moments in worship. You can sing together, read a Psalm, etc.
Recommended Song: "No Longer Slaves" (YouTube Link: [xr.church/song3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xr.church/song3))

Review Your Week

- How did I act on what God told me to do over the last week?
- Where have I noticed God at work?

Watch Recap of "Jesus-Shaped Life" week 3 on the [Crossroads App](https://www.crossroadsapp.com) or [xr.church/jesusshapedlife](https://www.xr.church/jesusshapedlife)

Read Ephesians 4:24-26, 32 and Ephesians 5:1-2. Spend a few moments in prayer, asking God to guide your conversation together. Then break into groups of 3 to discuss the following questions.

Group Discussion Questions

- If we asked those around you, how high would they say showing love ranked on your priority list last week: Highest priority, somewhat of a priority, or not much?
- How can you tell if you have forgiven someone who hurt you?
- Share a time you were labeled. How did it make you feel?
- Why do you think God calls us to live celibate before marriage and to be faithful in marriage? How does this affect us spiritually?
- Share some way in which someone of another generation has helped you grow spiritually. What steps could you take to mentor or to be mentored by someone of another generation?
- Has your passion for God been increasing or decreasing over the last three months? What step would God have you take?

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Pray for the Open Chair Take an open chair and close by praying that God would fill it with someone who needs to experience His love and power through the group next week.

*"Be patient
in bearing the
imperfections and
weaknesses of others ... just
as others have put up with your
faults"*

Thomas à Kempis

Week 3 – Day 1 – 1 Corinthians 13

S 1 Corinthians 13:1-7 "...but if I didn't love others, I would have gained nothing."

O In the opening passage, Paul lists something that can be perceived as important and then uses this phrase three times to say that if I haven't loved, then it doesn't matter. Many times, we can do good things but for the wrong reasons. We can also have something that is good without having the best thing: love. We can also value our success above another person or even use people for our own agenda.

A I will focus on loving others above my accomplishments or desires.

P God, the love You have for me is immeasurable. I need Your help loving others the way You love me. Shape my heart so that I desire relationships with others above my own agenda.

Week 3 – Day 2 – Acts 7

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 3 – Day 3 – 2 Corinthians 5

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 3 – Day 4 – 1 Thessalonians 4

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 3 – Day 5 – 1 John 2

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 3 – Day 6 – Matthew 22

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

MESSAGE NOTES

WEEK FOUR

The Courage of Jesus

I. Following Jesus makes us _____

1 Peter 2:9-10

As a Jesus-follower:

- You are _____

- You _____

- You are _____

- You _____

- You have been _____

II. Jesus-followers are _____

1 Peter 2:11-12

Embrace a different:

...level of _____

...set of _____

...approach to _____

A Jesus-shaped life is one that is set apart for God. In other words, it is holy. To be holy means to be set apart or dedicated to God. Holy ground is different than other places because it is dedicated to God. And holy people are set apart for God.

We cannot unthinkingly go with the flow of the culture and still live a Jesus-shaped life. It requires intentional navigating to live for Christ. We cannot simultaneously follow Christ and the crowd. As God's people, sometimes our actions will cause us to stand out. That is what it means to be set apart as holy.

GROUP GUIDE

Conversation Starter Name two of your biggest worries or fears and share if you have ever had to face one of them.

Worship Together Spend a few moments in worship. You can sing together, read a Psalm, etc.
Recommended Song: "Overcome" (YouTube Link: [xr.church/song4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xr.church/song4))

Review Your Week

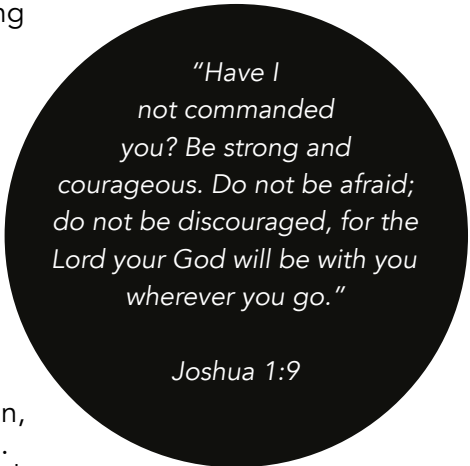
- How did I act on what God told me to do over the last week?
- Where have I noticed God at work?

Watch Recap of "Jesus-Shaped Life" week 4 on the [Crossroads App](#) or [xr.church/jesusshapedlife](https://www.xr.church/jesusshapedlife)

Read 1 Peter 2:9-12. Spend a few moments in prayer, asking God to guide your conversation together. Then break into groups of 3 to discuss the following questions.

Group Discussion Questions

- Do you like to blend in or stand out? How has this influenced your spiritual life?
- In what ways has Jesus changed your thinking? What pattern of thinking would you like to ask God to change?
- Share a time you have paid a price for following Jesus. What was that like? Is there something God is calling you to do now that will carry a price?
- Why is it impossible to be Jesus' disciple unless we die to ourselves?
- Why does viewing pornography damage our spiritual growth? Why is it important to tell a fellow believer about your struggle in order to get free?
- "Money is a rival god." Agree or disagree? Why?



"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Joshua 1:9

Act on It Spend 5-10 minutes alone reflecting on the scripture, discussion, the message, and your time with God. Pray and ask God to speak to you. Finally, complete the Response section and use the space below to record your answers.

Response

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Pray for the Open Chair Take an open chair and close by praying that God would fill it with someone who needs to experience His love and power through the group next week.

Week 4 – Day 1 – 1 Peter 2

S 1 Peter 2:12 “Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.”

O We are not of this world, but belong to God and are part of His kingdom.

Because of this, we are to do away with the enticing things of this world that only bring brokenness to us. We may be accused by those who do not know God of wrongdoing, but our lives will bring glory to God if we do away with sinfulness.

A I will push ahead to become more like Jesus by doing away with things that are sinful, and by bringing glory to God.

P Holy Spirit, reveal to me actions, habits, and sin that keeps me from growing to be like Jesus. Father, help me to reject all that is of this world, and bring You glory. I ask, Lord, that people see Jesus in me. In Jesus’ powerful Name, Amen.

Week 4 – Day 2 – Romans 12

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 4 – Day 3 – 2 Timothy 3

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 4 – Day 4 – Luke 9

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 4 – Day 5 – Matthew 5

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 4 – Day 6 – 1 Timothy 6

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

WEEK FIVE

MESSAGE NOTES

The Justice of Jesus

Something inside each of us revolts against injustice and demands fairness. It grates on us to see wrong prevail. That innate desire for justice is an echo of God's character. Humans reflect the image of God, and the scriptures reveal that God is just.

God's concern for justice prompts some believers to organize in order to help those in need. Others express that concern in more individual ways around their neighborhood and workplaces. We cannot overcome all of the world's ills, but that should not keep us from making the difference we can.

GROUP GUIDE

Conversation Starter You are trapped in an elevator for 24 hours. Who do you want to be trapped with and why?

Worship Together Spend a few moments in worship. You can sing together, read a Psalm, etc.
Recommended Song: "King of my Heart" (YouTube Link: [xr.church/song5](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xr.church/song5))

Review Your Week

- How did I act on what God told me to do over the last week?
- Where have I noticed God at work?

Watch Recap of "Jesus-Shaped Life" week 5 on the [Crossroads App](#) or [xr.church/jesusshapedlife](https://www.xr.church/jesusshapedlife)

Read Matthew 25:31-46. Spend a few moments in prayer, asking God to guide your conversation together. Then break into groups of 3 to discuss the following questions.

Group Discussion Questions

1. What injustice or need in the world stirs you most? In prayer, ask God how He feels about this issue, and what He wants you to do in response.

2. Which aspect of being a servant is easiest for you? Hardest?

Serve any need Serve without expectation of return Serve unnoticed

3. Share a time you felt loved or cared about because someone met a need of yours.

4. Which of these four categories describe your participation in the racial divide?

Active Racist Passive Racist Beginning Reconciler Advocate

5. In Matthew 25, Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." How have you cared for the "least of these?"

6. Why are good works and good deeds inseparable in expanding God's Kingdom?

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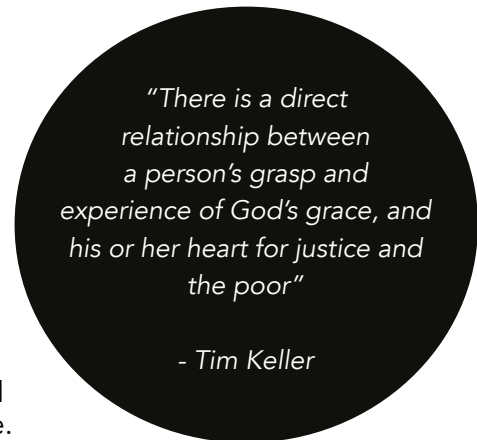
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Week 5 – Day 1 – Matthew 12

S Matthew 12:18 “Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight.”

O The Lord declares Jesus as the One He has chosen, the One He loves and the One He delights in.

A Just as God chose Jesus, God has also chosen me. God loves and delights in me. And that is just not on my good days, or the days I serve Him. God delights in me every day.

P Father, I pray that I would accept the way You love me, even though I may struggle to love myself at times. Fill me with the knowledge that I am chosen, so I may be empowered to share God’s love with those around me.

Week 5 – Day 2 – Philippians 2

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 5 – Day 3 – James 2

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 5 – Day 4 – John 4

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 5 – Day 5 – Matthew 25

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 5 – Day 6 – Luke 9

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

MESSAGE NOTES

WEEK SIX

The Mission of Jesus

To follow Jesus is to _____

Luke 15

Remember what it is like to _____

Two approaches:

1. Invite them to _____

2. Invite them to _____

Either way, _____ them

B -

L -

E -

S -

S -

If we are going to follow Jesus, we need to go where He is going, which is to the lost. It is impossible to take on Jesus' character and remain disinterested in His mission. The reverse is also true; we cannot accomplish in His mission without sharing in His character.

GROUP GUIDE

Conversation Starter If you had the chance, what is one thing you would do over again from this past week? It can be a positive or a negative. Share why.

Worship Together Spend a few moments in worship. You can sing together, read a Psalm, etc.
Recommended Song: "Way Maker" (YouTube Link: [xr.church/song6](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xr.church/song6))

Review Your Week

- How did I act on what God told me to do over the last week?
- Where have I noticed God at work?

Watch Recap of "Jesus-Shaped Life" week 6 on the [Crossroads App](#) or [xr.church/jesusshapedlife](https://www.xr.church/jesusshapedlife)

Read Luke 15:11-32. Spend a few moments in prayer, asking God to guide your conversation together. Then break into groups of 3 to discuss the following questions.

Group Discussion Questions

- "Sharing the faith/evangelism is essential for being a follower of Jesus." Agree or disagree. Why?
- What level of urgency do you feel about the spiritually lost around you? Why?
- What does BLESS stand for? What step would God have you take toward "BLESSING" someone this week?
- Share your 3-minute testimony:
 - My life before Christ
 - How I began a growing relationship with Christ
 - My life since I have been following Christ

Act on It Spend 5-10 minutes alone reflecting on the scripture, discussion, the message, and your time with God. Pray and ask God to speak to you. Finally, complete the Response section and use the space below to record your answers.

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Week 6 – Day 1 – Luke 15

S Luke 15:20 “So he got up and went to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.”

O When someone wants to come closer to God, God responds with compassion and welcome.

A When I encounter someone today who is far from God, I will be motivated to show them the love and compassion God has for them.

P Lord, give me eyes to see others today the way You see them. Let me be connected to You today in a way that when I see that person who needs Your love, I am ready and willing to demonstrate Your love and compassion.

Week 6 – Day 2 – Luke 19

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 6 – Day 3 – Matthew 5

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

Week 6 – Day 4 – Matthew 28

S _____

O _____

A _____

P _____

SOAP Bible Study

One of the ways to get the most out of these 40 days is to spend daily time with God. At Crossroads, we teach the SOAP method of Bible reading because it helps focus on not just what to know, but what to do about it. SOAP is an acronym which describes a process for encountering God in the Bible. The steps are:

- S** Scripture – choose 1 verse from what you’ve read and write it down
- O** Observation – a brief (one or two sentence) summary of what you’ve read
- A** Application – one thing you can do today based on what you’ve read (I will...)
- P** Prayer – ask God for help in doing that

SOAP Sample

S: “One day Jesus was praying in a certain place. When He finished, one of His disciples said to him, ‘Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.’” Luke 11:1

O: The disciples are curious, for some reason, about how Jesus is praying. Maybe they saw the connection between Jesus’ miracles and His devotion to the Father. Whatever the reason was, they wanted training and instruction in how to pray as they saw Jesus doing.

A: I will look to the example of Christ and in this example see His devotion to prayer. I should follow the model of the disciples; see that Jesus Himself prayed and realize how much I should be praying. Jesus knows that being connected to the source of all things is the only way to live a fruitful life in/for the Kingdom of God.

P: Father, I look to the example of Jesus and see His devotion to You through work, life, and prayer. I pray that You will grow my heart so that I will more deeply desire to connect with You every day. Help me to pray through the decisions that come up today and to stay connected to You. Amen.

