**Bible Study & Journaling Instructions**

This Bible study is suitable for those who have never studied the Bible before as well as those who have been studying God’s Word for years. The method of study is simple:

Begin by praying that God will speak to your heart as you get into His Word, and read the passage or verses. Be open to encouragement, direction or correction from the Lord as you read. Underline key phrases or make notations in the margins of your Bible as the Lord brings to mind people or situations you should pray for, promises to stand upon, or lessons you need to apply to your life.

After reading the scriptures, answer the questions.

The final question is always “Journal this verse or passage SOAP style. To do this, please select a verse or paragraph that particularly spoke to you or caught your attention. If nothing “jumps off the page”, select a sentence or two that you think might have some spiritual significance to your life.

Copy that verse or passage word for word. Writing out the verse or verses will help you remember what God is saying to you.

Then, in your own words, write what you observed in that verse or paragraph. (Consider: What is the context? What or who is it about? How would I have felt or reacted had I been there? What is really being said? What does it mean? Why is it important?)

Next, and most importantly, write out how this passage applies to your life. Is there something you need to change? A promise to stand on? An order to follow? Write out how you will be different because of what you have just read.

Finally, write a brief prayer to God, based on this passage. Thank Him for speaking to you. Tell Him what’s on your heart. Ask Him to help you change based on what you have just read.

If you have any questions about journaling, or problems getting started, don’t hesitate to call your small group shepherd for help.

A simple acrostic to help you remember these steps is **“SOAP”**

**S = Scripture**

**O = Observation**

**A = Application**

**P = Prayer**

Example:

**S:** Deuteronomy 31:8 “The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”

**O:** Moses’ ministry of leading the Israelites out of slavery into the promised land was ending, and Joshua’s ministry was just starting. These words were to Joshua and the people. Just as God had been with them when Moses was leading them, He would continue to be with them going forward. In fact, He would never leave or forsake them. Therefore they were told not to be afraid or discouraged.

**A:** These words are for me today as much as they were for the Israelites thousands of years ago. God and his character and provision for those He loves hasn’t changed. When I’m in an uncomfortable, scary or stressful situation, I need to remember that God is with me, He’ll never leave or forsake me, and because He’s with me, I must not be afraid or discouraged. He will help me.

**P:** Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for this wonderful reminder today. You will never leave me or forsake me! Because you are always with me, I can face any challenge that you allow to come into my life. Fill me with faith instead of fear and help me live in a way that pleases you and brings a smile to your face. In Jesus’ Name, Amen.