



Resolve for More: Strengthening Our Roots

Text: 3 John 2

Founding Pastor Ken Werlein

1. We're a little more than a week into 2017. Have you set some resolutions or goals for 2017?
 - a. If you set some resolutions, how are they going? Are you sticking to the commitments you've set?
 - b. Do your resolutions include plans to practice spiritual disciplines?
 - c. What is the importance of including spiritual disciplines (that focus on the inside) in our resolutions or goals rather than just external performance goals?

2. Have you resolved at any point in the past to regularly read Scripture?
 - a. How did it go?
 - b. Is this a regular part of your life right now? If so, what does that look like?
 - c. What challenges do you face in this area? Finding the time, energy, or motivation? Finding the right time? Having a plan? Spend time sharing those challenges with your group members and seeing how you can help each other overcome those challenges.

3. Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. These words written by the apostle Paul to his protégé, Timothy, form a classic text on the central role that Scripture is to play in the life of a believer.
 - a. V. 16 says that all Scripture is breathed out by God or inspired by God. What does this mean?
 - b. List the four things that Scripture is profitable or useful for, and restate each one in your own words.
 - c. Why do you think the four benefits of Scripture are listed in this particular order?
 - d. What does v. 17 say the result will be if we regularly study God's word?
 - e. What are the practical implications of the fact that ALL Scripture is inspired and profitable? How is that different from the way many Christians approach the Bible?

4. Read Psalm 119. This Psalm is the longest chapter in the Bible, and is another passage dedicated to the place of the word of God in the life of a believer.
 - a. What different words and phrases do you see for the word of God? Each one has its own nuance of meaning. Define each word or phrase in your own words.
 - b. What blessings does the word of God bring to the life of the believer?
 - c. What are we to do with the word of God?
 - d. V. 11 gives one reason for memorizing Scripture. What is that reason? Have you ever memorized Scripture? If so, what benefits have you reaped?
 - e. Do any of the Psalmist's words about the nature and benefits of Scripture or his view of Scripture challenge you? How so?
5. Complete a SOAP study together. Utilize Colossians 1:5-8. Take a few minutes together to look and practice applying the SOAP method. (See Study Deeper for more information on method if needed)
 - a. Scripture
 - b. Observation
 - c. Application
 - d. Prayer

Challenge: Take up Pastor Ken's challenge and commit to 15-20 minutes per day engaging Scripture for the next 7 days using whatever Bible reading plan you prefer. If you don't have one, use the Faithbridge plan found in the Study Deeper section. Next week, share what God taught you through His Word this week.

STUDY DEEPER

Why S.O.A.P. it?

It's one thing to simply read scripture, but **when you interact with it, when you learn to slow down to REALLY read it, suddenly words start popping off the page.** By SOAPing your verses you are able to dig deeper into scripture and "see" more than if you simply read the verses and then went on your merry way. Let me encourage you to take the time to S.O.A.P. the daily verses and see for yourself how much more you get out of your daily reading.....you'll be amazed.

What does S.O.A.P. mean?

S– The S stands for Scripture- you physically write out the scripture.....you'll be amazed that what God will reveal to you just by taking the time to slow down and actually write out what you are reading!

O– The O stands for observation- what do you see in the verses that you're reading? Who is the audience? Is there a repetition of words? What words stand out to you?

A– The A stands for Application- this is when God's Word becomes personal. What is God saying to me today? How can I apply what I just read to my own personal life? What changes do I need to make? Is there an action that I need to take?

P– And finally P stands for Prayer. Pray God's Word back to Him. If He has revealed something to you during this time in His Word, pray about it. Confess if He has revealed some sin that is in your life.

Studying God's Word like this can take as little or as long as you have time to give. Some days it can take just 10 or 15 minutes, other days longer.

<http://lovegodgreatly.com/lgg/how-to-soap/>

Suggestions for Reading Plans

<http://faithbridge.org/news/news-feed/soap-journaling/>

<http://www.ligonier.org/blog/bible-reading-plans/>