

## LOVE

### “SOAP” Bible Study Method

#### “S” – SCRIPTURE

Background: Jesus is getting ready to head to Jerusalem for the final time. He knows that when he gets there, he faces certain death and betrayal. Before he sets out, a rich young man approaches him to inquire about eternal life.

#### Read **Mark 10:17-22**

#### “O” - OBSERVATION

1. What do you learn about the young man in this passage? What does he want (v. 17)? What is important to him (v. 18)? What does the young man say about himself (v. 20)?
2. Why do you think Jesus responds to the young man’s first question about eternal life with a question about “goodness” and a description of who and what is “good”?
3. The young man appears to fixate on “goodness” and believe that because he has kept the commandments listed by Jesus, he is “good” (v. 20). The young man does not recognize his own sin and brokenness: he believes that following the law and commandments make him “good.” What does Jesus feel for the young man when he looks at him (v. 21)? The word for “loved” in this passage is “agape” in Greek, which means divine, unconditional, self-sacrificing, active, volitional, and thoughtful love. What does Jesus’ response to the young man’s attitude (v. 21) tell you about what Jesus values?
4. Jesus forces the young man to realize that what will give him eternal life is not rule following, it’s a relationship with Jesus. Jesus cares about a relationship with the young man, not the young man’s performance. Jesus also makes it clear that a relationship with him is an all-or-nothing kind of deal: it requires the young man to give up what he values. What does Jesus promise the young man if he follows him (v. 21)? Why do you think this promise wasn’t enough for the young man?

#### “A” - APPLICATION

1. Do you have any “laws” in your life – as the young man does – that make you feel “righteous”? Church or Bible Study attendance? Giving away money to good causes? Prayer? Abstaining from certain “bad” things? Not gossiping? Volunteering? Etc. What does Jesus say is more important to him than all of these things?
2. Do you have a thing, person, relationship, desire, pleasure, situation, reputation (etc.) that you cannot live without? These things that you can’t give up are called “idols” – they are things that you love and value above God. Everyone has idols. When you feel yourself getting defensive or angry, justifying your actions, lusting after something, or sinning in almost any way, it is often because one of your idols is in play.

Do you ever do what the young ruler does with his idol: do you “rule-follow” to justify keeping and protecting an idol? Based on Jesus’ interaction with the rich young man, what do you think

Jesus' response is to your love for this thing? What does Jesus promise you if you surrender your idols and follow him alone (v. 21)?

3. What does it mean to you to have a Savior who sees your brokenness and sin and LOVES you anyway? What are the dark corners of your heart that are unlovable? If Jesus can see these corners and still love you, what difference does that make to your life? How can you respond to that love?

“P” – PRAYER

Jesus, thank you for loving me. I am a sinner in great need of your love. I confess that I value my comfort, my relationships, and my status far more than I value my relationship with you. I do not love you with my whole heart, soul, mind, and strength (Mark 12:30). Jesus, teach me to love you better: help me to devote every aspect of my being to you and your glory. When I turn to other things to make myself feel significant and worthwhile, please remind me that my boast is to be in you alone (Galatians 6:14). In you alone I am wholly loved and accepted, and apart from you, I can do nothing (John 15:5).