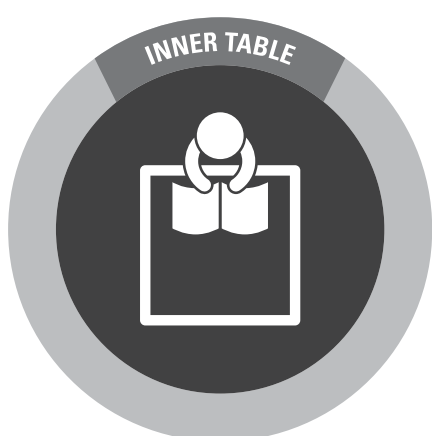


Sermon Notes

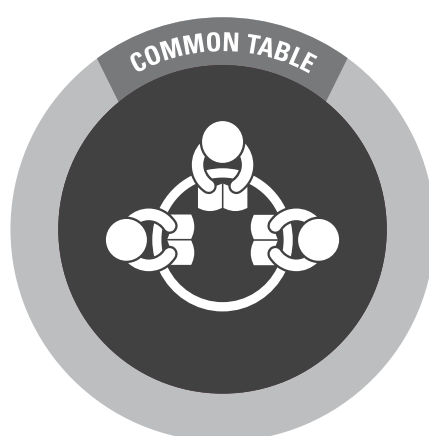
“Whatever is Right”
February 3rd, 2019



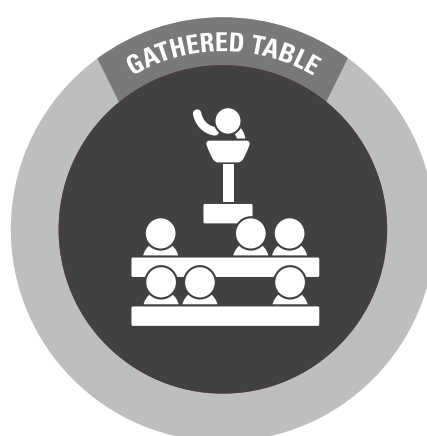
**First
Friends**
Church



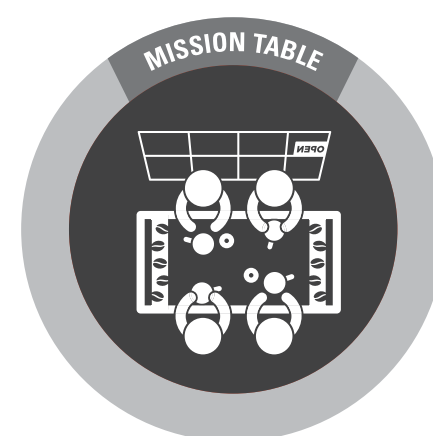
Seeking God
in Solitude



Finding God
in Friendship



Celebrating God
in Community



Reflecting God
in Relationships

Reflection Questions *(please use these individually or in groups)*

Sermon Questions:

1. Which of Jesus' teachings from the Sermon on the Mount do you find most challenging to obey? Which comes most easily? Ask the Spirit to strengthen you to think and act in all the ways Jesus teaches us to live justly.
2. What area of suffering/injustice breaks your heart? What do you do with that heartbreak? How are you addressing those injustices in order to help right those wrongs?
3. Is there someone you need to forgive in order to set you both free from the burdens of tension and disunity? Or, is there a relationship that remains broken because of past hurt you have caused and for which you haven't taken responsibility?

Additional Questions:

4. One of the reasons our society is so divided is because we don't understand one another. How can empathizing with the "other side" lead to more unity?
5. Do you feel like part of your Christian faith is working to mend and heal injustices in the world? What would it look like if the church took this responsibility seriously and not just as an "extra credit" aspect to their faith journey?

Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **Matthew 5:21-24** | In what ways (either by you or towards you) has anger affected your life? How do we train ourselves to deal with our anger better?
- **Matthew 5:27-28** | In what ways has lust (sexual, financial, power, etc.) affected your life? How can we learn to be satisfied with what God has gifted us?
- **Matthew 5: 38-42** | We live in a retributive world where justice is often equated with "getting even." But an eye for an eye leaves the whole world blind. How can we become better forgivers, not only for the sake of the person we're forgiving, but for ourselves as well?
- **Matthew 5:43-44** | Do you view your enemies as people to be loved? Try praying for an enemy this week.

Self-Care Disciplines *(Excerpts from Celebration of Discipline by Richard Foster)*

February Discipline: Solitude & Silence | Starting Small (p.106)

The discipline of silence and solitude are interwoven into the DNA of a Christian person. We rely on them like one relies on food or water. Perhaps this is why so many folks feel spiritually malnourished or dehydrated because they are not opening themselves up to silence and solitude. Solitude is not simply the absence of noise but the absence of distraction. Whenever we are able to sit and rest in the presence of God, our eyes are opened in ways that we wouldn't have imagined before.

Open yourself up to starting small. Engaging in silence can be an intimidating thing. We often have to come face to face with ourselves and our struggles in the silence. Distraction is much easier. This week, don't feel like you need to go on some grand silent retreat or hideout in a cave for the weekend. Find little pockets throughout your day to spend just a few moments focused in the quiet. This could be as you sip your morning coffee, or while you drive to and from work with the radio off. There are numerous ways to engage in solitude. These tiny little moments can help reorient your life like a compass needle. They are little moments that help all of us to be genuinely present wherever we are.