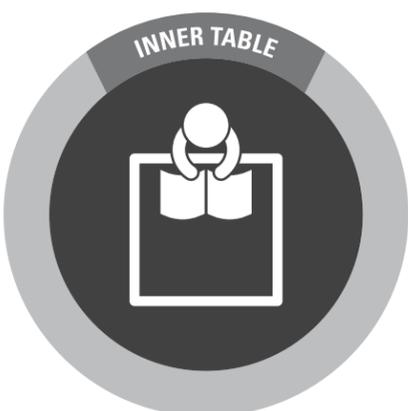


# Sermon Notes

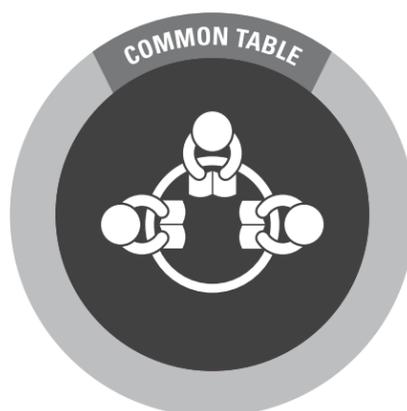
“I’m With You”  
March 17th, 2019



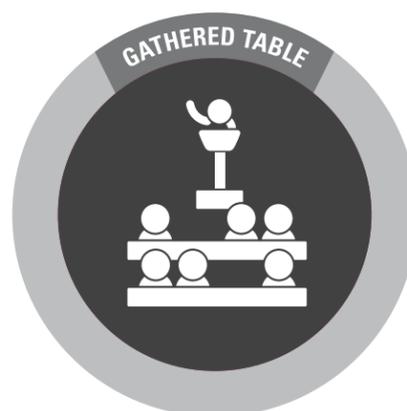
**First  
Friends**  
Church



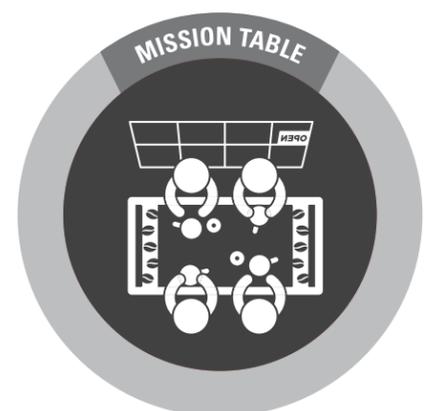
*Seeking God*  
in Solitude



*Finding God*  
in Friendship



*Celebrating God*  
in Community



*Reflecting God*  
in Relationships

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

### Sermon Questions:

1. Thank God for the people who have loved you, been "for" you, and been willing to sacrifice for you. Is there someone in particular who stands out? Is there a way to reach out and thank them this week?
2. Is there a person in your life who is in need of the kind of loving, giving presence that you can provide as you model the heart of Jesus to him/her? Someone who feels like no one is "for him/her" because of his/her mistakes?
3. Have you been hiding from God, and/or hiding yourself from others, because of guilt or shame? Will you open your heart to the God who is with you and for you, even in your imperfections?

### Additional Questions:

4. What does it mean to you that even when we try to hide from God, God still desires to be present among us? What would it look like for you to come out of your hiding?
5. In what areas in your life is God calling you to be more fully present? Is there something you need to sacrifice for the sake of being "incarnational" with others? Do you intentionally make space for others in your life?

## Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **Genesis 1:26-27** | What would it look like for you to spend time with other image bearers who think differently than you? Do you feel like you are "hiding" from these people? What might you be able to learn from them?
- **Matthew 1:20-23** | Is there an area in your life where you need God's presence to reveal itself to you? Ask God to reveal himself and talk to someone about this.
- **John 3:1-21** | Nicodemus risked a great deal to talk with Jesus who spoke the words of life over him. Does your faith require you to risk anything? Is there a costliness to your faith?
- **Revelation 21:1-4** | What do dream that the full presence of God will be like? Do you believe you can start leaning into that reality now by being in God's presence?

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

### March Discipline: Submission | Neighbors (p.122)

Submission and service function concurrently. Hence, much of the practical outflow of submission will come in the next month (service). There are, however, seven acts of submission that we should draw attention to. There will be one or two mentioned each week in the month of March.

The fourth act of submission is to our neighbors and those we meet in the course of our daily lives. The life of simple goodness is lived before them. If they are in need, we help them. We perform small acts of kindness and ordinary neighborliness: sharing our food, baby-sitting their children, mowing their lawn, visiting over important and unimportant matters, sharing our tools. No task is too small, too trifling, for each one is an opportunity to live in submission.

**Note: Don't let these burden you each week. Please engage only if you feel it would be beneficial in caring for yourself. Sometimes self-care involves giving yourself a break, even from self care disciplines.**