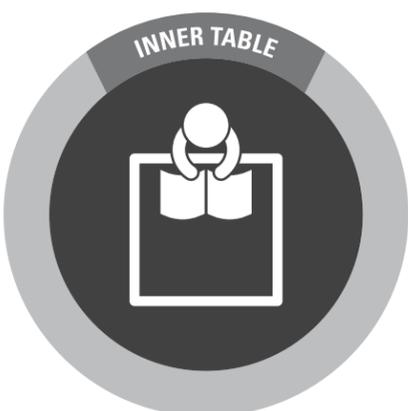


# Sermon Notes

“Audacious Love”  
March 31st, 2019

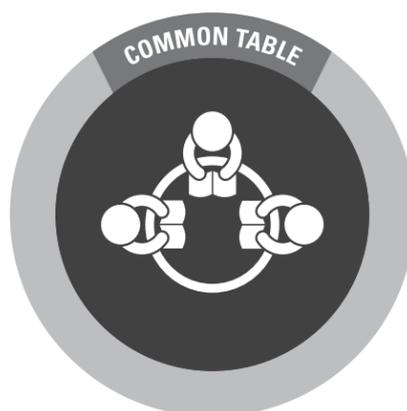


**First  
Friends**  
Church



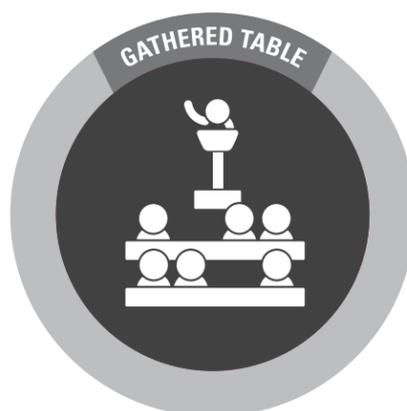
INNER TABLE

*Seeking God*  
in Solitude



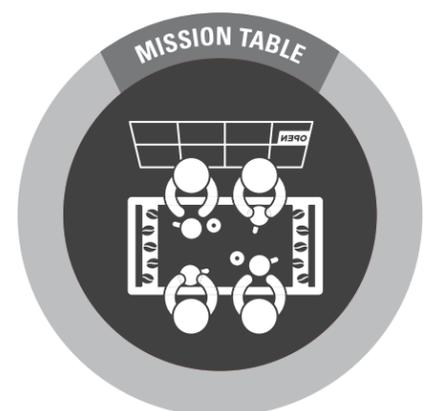
COMMON TABLE

*Finding God*  
in Friendship



GATHERED TABLE

*Celebrating God*  
in Community



MISSION TABLE

*Reflecting God*  
in Relationships

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

### Sermon Questions:

1. Celebrate with gratitude that you have been made holy and radiant, without wrinkle, spot or stain!
2. Is there a need or desire in your life that should be laid down for the sake of someone you love?
3. When you think about sharing Christ with the world, what kinds of ideas or strategies come to mind? Is love at the top of the list?
4. Are there any good things, like hard work or doctrinal purity, that are distracting you from putting love in its proper, primary place?

### Additional Questions:

5. Are you living in the freedom that Jesus has already proclaimed you clean? How does this change who you are and how you approach life?
6. Do you think the church today still gets caught up in a bunch of rules and regulations to define itself rather than pursuing love?
7. Where do you need to find the balance between hard work and rest? Is it possible to lose your “first love” if you are burdened by working hard?

## Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **Ephesians 5:25-27** | What does it look like to “give yourself up” for the sake of a friend? Are you willing to sacrifice your time and resources so that someone else can experience the love Jesus has for them?
- **John 13:34-35** | Why do you think Christians struggle to take Jesus’ message of loving one another seriously? How can love be a subversive act and challenge the status quo in our ruthless culture?
- **Luke 18:9-14** | Do you see yourself as the tax collector or the pharisee in this story? What role does humility play in loving others?
- **Revelation 2:2-4** | Is it possible to be persevering and yet miss out on love? Are there times where it feels like your “wells of love” are empty?

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

### March Discipline: Submission | The Broken & The World (p.123)

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 sixth act of submission is to the broken and despised. In every culture there are the “widows and orphans”; that is, the helpless, the undefended (James 1:27). Our first responsibility is to be among them. Like St. Francis in the thirteenth century and Kagawa in the twentieth, we must discover ways to identify genuinely with the downtrodden, the rejected. There we must live the cross-life.

The seventh act of submission is to the world. We live in an interdependent, international community. We cannot live in isolation. Our environmental responsibility, or the lack of it, affects not only the people around the world but generations yet to be born. Starving affects us. Our act of submission is a determination to live as a responsible member of an increasingly irresponsible world.

**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.**