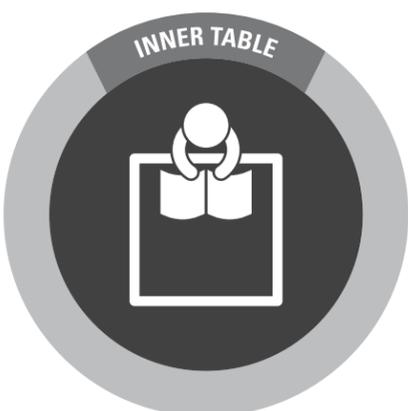


Sermon Notes

“Praying in the Dark”
May 5th, 2019



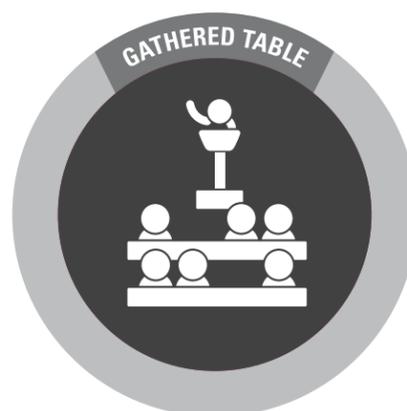
**First
Friends**
Church



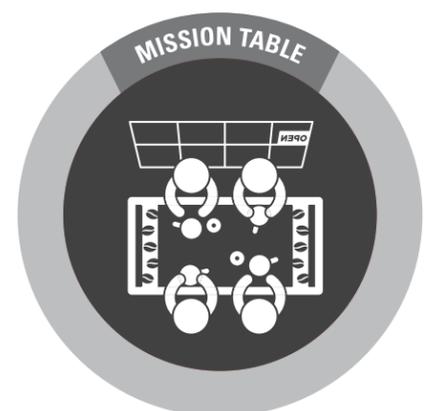
Seeking God
in Solitude



Finding God
in Friendship



Celebrating God
in Community



Reflecting God
in Relationships

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

Sermon Questions:

1. In what ways has God been providing for you? Thank him for his provision, whatever form it might be taking. How might God be sending you to Nineveh?
2. Are you going through a season of life in which it feels like "the water has come up to your neck?" Or, do you know someone who is? Don't be afraid to pray a prayer of panic for yourself or someone else.
3. How many (conscious) minutes in your typical week are spent in a still silence? Make a plan now for how to fit in some of that kind of time this week, so that you might prayerfully reflect on any needed change in perspective.

Additional Questions:

4. Is it possible you have missed out on a time of provision because it didn't look like "prosperity?" Is it possible for provision to come in ways that we cannot see the full picture? (example: manna in the wilderness)
5. Do you think it was a coincidence that the further Jonah tried to run from God, the "louder" his life got? Do you ever attempt to make your life louder and full of distractions in order to avoid the silence and stillness where God resides?

Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **Jonah 1:17-2:10** | In this prayer, Jonah poetically speaks of how he has wrestled with God and himself. There is a great deal of honesty and vulnerability displayed here. Are you willing to be honest and vulnerable with God?
- **Psalms 69:1-18** | Have you ever experienced a moment of shame in your life like the psalter had here? How does God speak to your shame? What's is God's first response to our moments of weakness? (Luke 15:11-24)
- **Matthew 14:22-32** | Have you ever tried to take a step of great faith and it didn't quite work out the way you thought it would? Is it possible Jesus was still there, pulling you from the depths?
- **1 Corinthians 6:19** | In what ways can you honor God with your temple (body)?

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

May Discipline: Essentials for Confession | (p.145,151-152) "Definite Sins"

Confession is a difficult discipline for us because we all too often view the believing community as a fellowship of saints before we see it as a fellowship of sinners. We feel that everyone else has advanced so far into holiness that we are isolated and alone in our sin. We cannot bear to reveal our failures to others. We imagine that we are the only ones who have not stepped onto the high road to heaven. Therefore, we hide ourselves. The first essential is opening ourselves up to the "gaze of God." In doing so, we must be prepared to deal with definite sins. A generalized confession may save us from humiliation and shame, but it will not ignite inner healing. The people who came to Jesus came with obvious, specific sins, and they were forgiven for each one. It is far too easy to avoid our real guilt in a general confession. In our confession we bring concrete sins. By calling them concrete does not only mean outward sins. It means definite sins, including the sins of the heart. As we come to God with these sins, we know that God is ready, already knowing our sins, and waiting for us to confess and move towards a path of healing.

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.