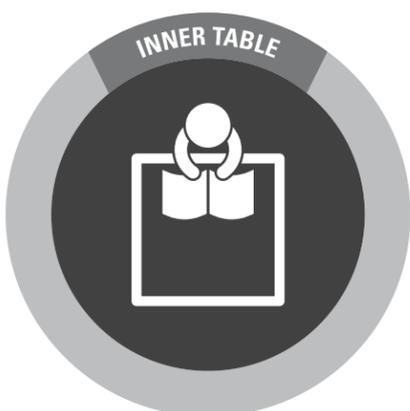


Sermon Notes

“Exposed or Exonerated”
July 14th, 2019



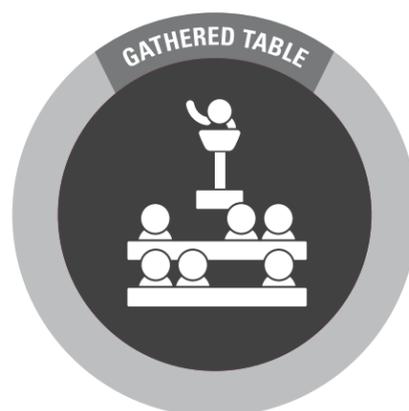
**First
Friends**
Church



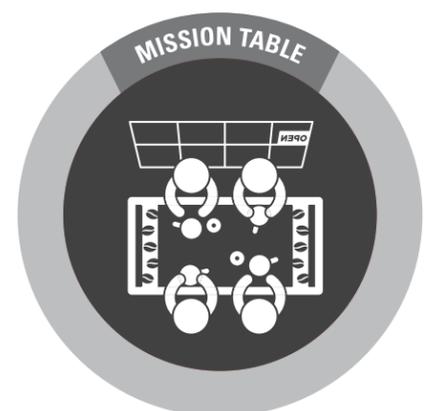
Seeking God
in Solitude



Finding God
in Friendship



Celebrating God
in Community



Reflecting God
in Relationships

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

Sermon Questions:

1. Are you living in the "middle ground," thankful for the freedom that God gives, but willing to live in compromise for the sake of convenience instead of following him further in the journey of discipleship?
2. How deeply and consistently are you engaged with your fellow Christians? Are you in the midst of the community, or on the margins?
3. Is there something you've been hiding from others, and maybe attempting to hide from God? Have you been deceiving yourself about an area of disobedience? Confess those things to God knowing that you can find mercy and forgiveness!

Additional Questions:

4. Why do you think humans attempt to cover or conceal negative things about ourselves? Do you cultivate an atmosphere with those around you that would invite vulnerability?
5. Do you tend to live in fear of what "God might do to you," if God found out about your wrongdoings? Remember, God is not out to get you, God is out to help walk you through your struggles.

Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **Numbers 32:1-23** | Have you ever been in a situation where you could have helped someone but chose not to because of the risk involved? Why are we so quick to look out for ourselves but are hesitant to stand up for others?
- **Hebrews 4:12-13** | What is there to be gained in hiding from God? God knows us better than we know ourselves. Have you ever been completely honest with God? Have you ever wrestled with God?
- **Proverbs 28:13** | What mercy might you be missing out on because you have withdrawn from God's presence?
- **1 John 1:8-10** | Do you practice confession? How does a regular act of confession keep us more humble?

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

July Discipline: Corporate Guidance | "Spiritual Direction" (p.185-186)

A personal experience of the Emmanuel presence of Jesus, that he has come to guide his people himself, leading them in definite and immediate ways, is a deeply profound thing. But, it is not sufficient. Individual guidance must yield to corporate guidance. There must also come a knowledge of the direct, active, immediate leading of the Spirit *together*. Perhaps the preoccupation with private guidance alone in Western cultures is the product of their emphasis on individualism. The people of God have not always been so.

Spiritual direction is an ancient practice that is not seen in many church circles today. But the process is invaluable. What is the purpose of a spiritual director? To lead us to our real Director. He or she is the means of God to open the path to the inward teaching of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual direction does not deal only with a small corner of our lives. We do not visit one to take care of our spirit like we would go to a heart doctor to take care of our heart. Spiritual direction is concerned with the whole person and the interrelationship with all of life. Consider if a spiritual director would be beneficial for you.

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.