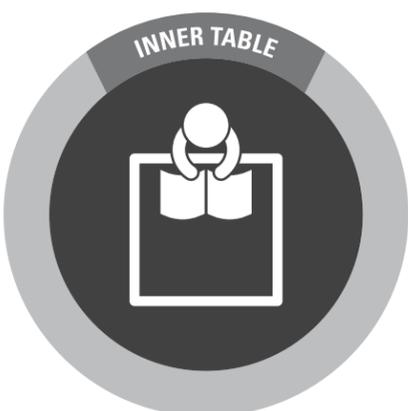


# Sermon Notes

“Clear Vision”  
August 18th, 2019

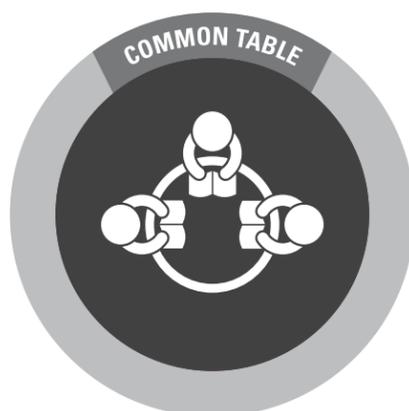


**First  
Friends**  
Church



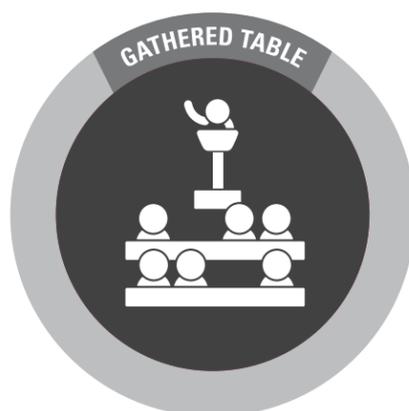
INNER TABLE

*Seeking God*  
in Solitude



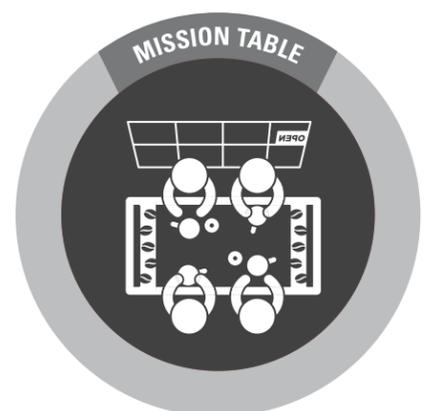
COMMON TABLE

*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. If the guest speaker presents questions, feel free to write a couple down or take a picture of the screen with your phone.

### Additional Questions:

2. Do you find yourself as one who is only willing to give when you have an excess of resources (time, money, etc.)? What would it look like for you to give and sacrifice when it actually costs you something? Is it possible that the act of giving is just as beneficial to our own faith formation as it is to those receiving from us?
3. Why does Jesus find it not so honorable to make a public spectacle of our Christian faith? Does the church (local & global) struggle with this?

## Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **Mark 12:38-44** | The people who threw in large amounts into treasury probably received all the recognition. The woman would have either gone unnoticed or possibly even mocked. Is it enough for you to know that God sees your efforts?
- **Matthew 20:1-16** | What does this passage say about the generosity of God? Do you give in the same manner?
- **2 Corinthians 9:6-8** | How will living more generously open up possibilities in your life to be blessed by others?
- **Leviticus 25:35-38** | Are there people around you, in your neighborhoods or communities, that could use your help? What holds you back from lending a hand to them in their time of need?

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

August Discipline: Celebration | “Creativity” (p.190 & 198)

Celebration is at the heart of the way of Christ. He entered the world on a high note of jubilation: “I bring you good news of a great joy,” cried the angel, “which shall come to all the people” (Luke 2:10). He left the world bequeathing his joy to the disciples: “These things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full” (John 15:11).

A third way to encourage celebration is to accent the creative gifts of fantasy and imagination. We who follow Christ can risk going against the cultural tide. Let us with abandon relish the fantasy games of children. Let’s see visions and dream dreams. Let’s play, sing, laugh. The imagination can release a flood of creative ideas, and it can be lots of fun. Only those who are insecure about their own maturity will fear such a delightful form of celebration.

Let us also relish the creativity of others. Those who create paintings, plays, and music are a great gift to us. Find ways in which you can support your local artists! It is great fun *and* builds community.

**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.**