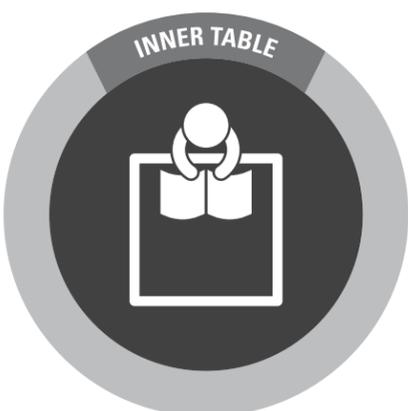


Sermon Notes

“Evil Is...”
October 20th, 2019



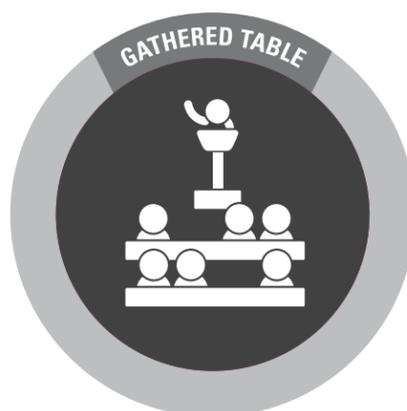
**First
Friends**
Church



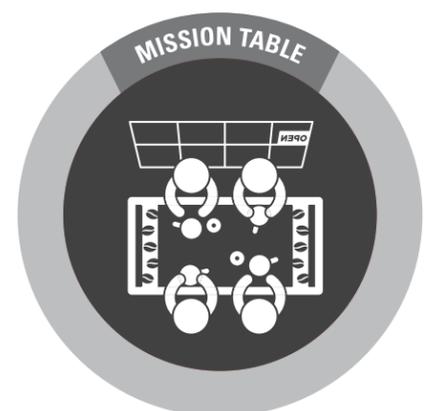
Seeking God
in Solitude



Finding God
in Friendship



Celebrating God
in Community



Reflecting God
in Relationships

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

Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever experienced either, "accusing someone," or, "being accused by someone?" What causes us to do this to one another?
2. Do you currently feel that your life is more centered around comfort or growth? What is so attractive about comfort?
3. Why is power so alluring? What draws us to power?
4. Where do you see the "spirit of accusation" still in the world today? Reflect on the empty tomb and be grateful that all the evil we still experience is temporary.

Additional Questions:

5. What are some things you can implement in your life so that you do not become complacent and comfortable? Does participating in this faith journey with others help?

Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **Matthew 4:1-11** | What does it say about God that he would experience, in the flesh, what it is like to be tempted?
- **Matthew 16:21-28** | Is there something that you have a great desire for but would likely not bring you any true joy? Consider letting go of it.
- **Matthew 19:16-22** | Is it possible we sometimes hide behind the "rules" we do keep so that we can ignore the other distinctions of discipleship?
- **John 8:1-11** | Do you see "the accuser" at work within those who brought this woman to trial? Do you ever find yourself "accusing others" even though you are unworthy to hold one of the stones?

Self-Care Disciplines *(Excerpts from A Guidebook to Prayer by Mary Kate Morse)*

October Discipline: Prayer | Contemplative Prayer (p. 52-55)

Contemplative prayer, a prayer of rest, is a way to "sleep" in God for his provision of perspective, direction or simple connection. Contemplative prayer is the absence of conversation and control. Contemplative prayer releases us from the constant stress and self-judgment. Contemplative prayer is a prayer without words or activity. Instead of asking for things or saying things or doing things, we are simply silent. We believe God is present and God invites us to rest in him. It's as if we are sitting on the porch after a busy day just to be with God. Usually a specific amount of time is set so that we are not always wondering if we are done. We still out thoughts to be more aware of God with us. We put God at the center and we rest on the side.

1. Find a time when you are most alert and relaxed.
2. Begin with a small amount of time, even five minutes. Slowly increase your time each time you practice this prayer until you get to a set time that works for you (usually no more than 20 minutes - it's different for every person).
3. Set a timer for how long you will sit and eliminate all other distractions (especially your phone). Keep a pad and pen next to you so that if something comes up that you need to do, you can write it down and return to prayer.
4. During this time there is no "goal" it is simply a time to sit and rest in God. Imagine God affirming you, loving you, and treating you as his child.

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 discipline