

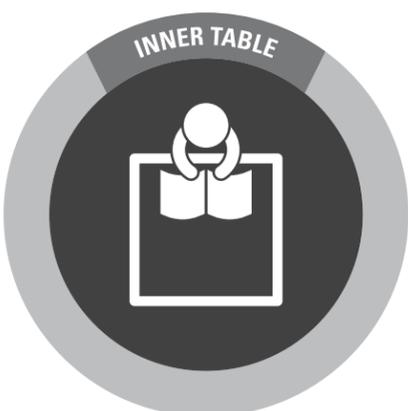
Sermon Notes



**First
Friends
Church**

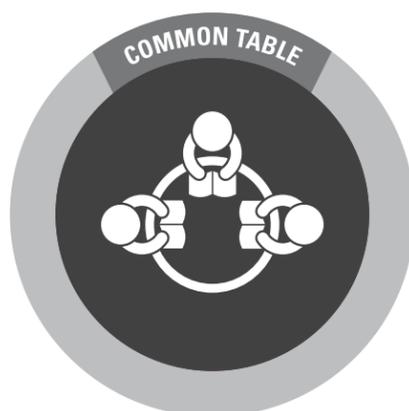
“Masks”

November 10th, 2019



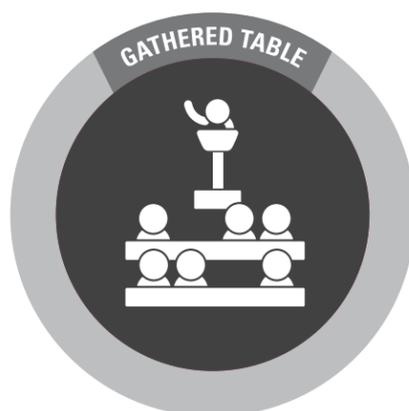
INNER TABLE

Seeking God
in Solitude



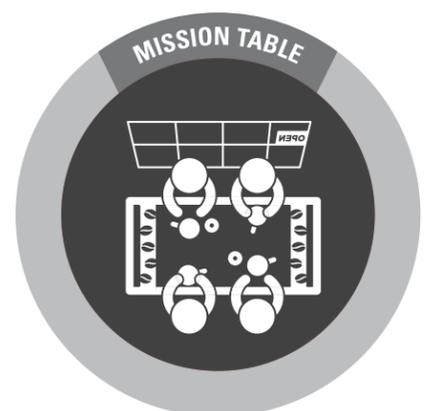
COMMON TABLE

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)*

Discussion Questions:

1. Are you "wearing a mask" in any of your current relationships, hiding part of who you are? Why?
2. Have any harmless, or even attractive, opportunities, circumstances or relationships come into your life lately? Are any of them in danger of leading you away from sincere devotion to Christ?
3. Think of a Christian leader, or a person of influence, who you suspect might be proclaiming or endorsing a dangerously "different" Jesus, Spirit or Gospel and pray for him/her, that he/she might sense conviction and seek repentance.

Additional Questions:

4. Satan's best tactic is to be an "inside man." Do you think it is possible you have missed people in "masks" who are proclaiming a "different gospel" because they are not on the "opposing side" politically, religiously, culturally, etc.?
5. Is the gospel you follow one that is rooted in love, forgiveness, and freedom or one that is rooted in fear, suspicion, guilt, and conformity? What's the difference?

Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15** | What are some of the best ways to decipher whether someone is preaching the "true gospel" or not?
- **Philippians 2:5-8** | Is it possible that those who inflate themselves with ego and status have already disqualified themselves as true prophets/apostles? Why or why not? What qualities do true prophets/apostles have?
- **Galatians 5:22-26** | In what ways does your life look like the fruit of the Spirit? In what ways does it not? Pray that God would continue to grow your character.
- **1 Corinthians 15** | How has grace changed your life? Is this something you allow yourself time to reflect on?

Self-Care Disciplines

November Discipline: Fasting | Food or Drink Fast

Fasting is an excellent spiritual practice to determine the areas in our lives where we have too much excess. In our current cultural climate, we have been conditioned to become consumers. If you think about it, consider everything you "consume" in a week. It's a lot! We have also been trained to live without "margins" in our lives. Margins are those spaces where we have nothing planned and have time in between stuff or at the beginning and ending of each day. It's no wonder we are so stressed when we consistently go right from one thing to the next. We have created a false good that busyness = success. But consider all the times Jesus retreated to spend time in rest and prayer.

This week, we are going to focus on fasting from food or drink. It is no secret that within our culture we are exposed to limitless options of unhealthy foods and drinks. We live in a very "supersized" culture where we always want more. Try to identify one food or drink item in your life that you consume too much and is not the best for you. This is not meant to shame you, but to help you consider areas of excess. We all have them. Consider fasting from this item, or cutting back from it, this week. Remember, our physical, spiritual, and emotional health all tie together and when one is suffering, they all suffer. Maybe going without this one thing can help you regain a sense of wholeness.

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