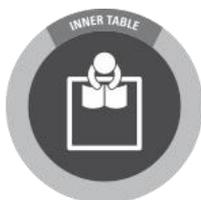
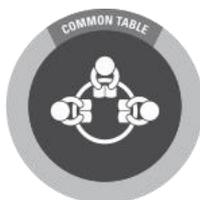


Sermon Notes

“Selfless”
December 29, 2019



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 Reflections:

1. What have you received from Christ that you can extend to others this week? Encouragement? Comfort? Fellowship? Compassion?
2. Do you feel trapped by, or enslaved to, something? What area of your life still needs to feel the touch of "release" present in the Gospel of Christ?
3. Is your life characterized by disorder or instability? Ask God to reveal if any selfish ambition is to blame.
4. Is there something in your life that, while not "wrong," isn't beneficial or constructive, and might be harmful to others or to your witness?

Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **Mark 10:35-45 | What incident sparked Jesus statement about his life being a "ransom?" What do we learn from James and John?**
- **James 3:13-18 | What is the most challenging part of a life that evidences "wisdom that comes from heaven" (v. 17)?**
- **Romans 5:6-8 | What is a modern-day example of someone willing to die for a "righteous" person? How is Jesus' sacrifice different?**
- **Psalms 119:33-36 | How can we avoid being steered toward selfish gain?**
- **Esther 4:1-16 | In what ways is Esther a foreshadowing of Jesus?**

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

December Discipline: Study | Reflection (p.66)

Study is a specific kind of experience in which through careful attention to reality the mind is enabled to move in a certain direction. The mind will always take on an order conforming to the order upon which it concentrates. Perhaps we observe a tree or read a book. We see it, feel it, understand it, draw conclusions from it. And as we do, our thought processes take on an order conforming to the order in the tree or book. When this is done with concentration, perception and repetition, ingrained habits of thought are formed.

Study involves four steps. Repetition, concentration, comprehension, reflection. It soon becomes obvious that study demands one more step: humility. Study simply cannot happen until we are willing to be subject to the subject matter. We must submit to the system. We must come as a student, not a teacher. Not only is study directly dependent upon humility, but it is conducive to it. Arrogance and a teachable spirit are mutually exclusive.

We will use the story of Jesus' birth in Luke 2 as a case study. As you read through Luke 2:8-20 this week, try to recall what you once didn't know about this passage. How has this new discovery shaped you for the better?

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.