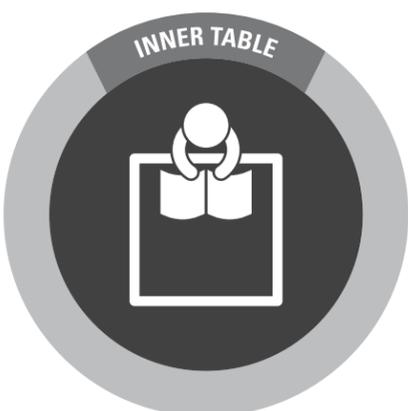


# Sermon Notes

“Forgive and Don’t Forget”  
April 14th, 2019



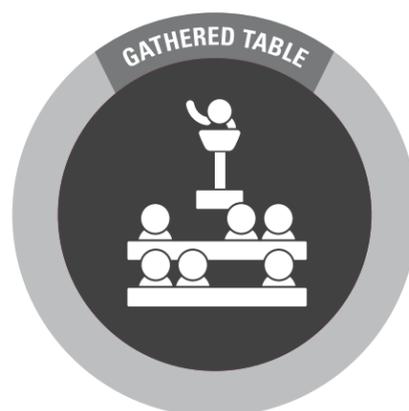
**First  
Friends**  
Church



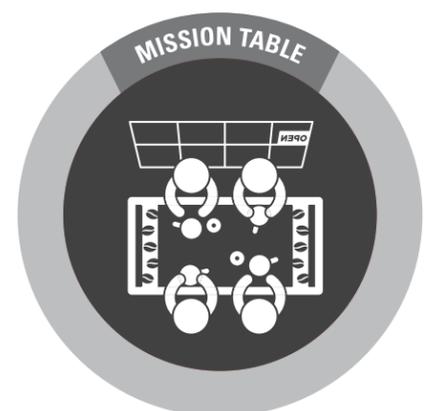
*Seeking God*  
in Solitude



*Finding God*  
in Friendship



*Celebrating God*  
in Community



*Reflecting God*  
in Relationships

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

### Sermon Questions:

1. Celebrate the immensity of God's gift of forgiveness that is offered to all of us!
2. Have you placed "limits" on your forgiveness in your past? Is there a person from whom you've withheld forgiveness for far too long?
3. Are you open, through the ongoing work of the Spirit, to be transformed by the grace and mercy you have received from God?
4. Ask God to stir in your mind, heart, and soul how you might lovingly stand with, and for, a person (or group of people) who might be broken, hurting, lost, forgotten or invisible.

### Additional Questions:

5. Do you ever find yourself more willing to receive forgiveness than give it? Why do we have such a difficult time extending forgiveness?
6. When you forgive someone is it more healing for the other person or yourself? Or is it maybe equal for both? Why?
7. Are you allowed to forgive someone but still keep boundaries with that person because their actions were so egregious towards you?

## Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **Matthew 18:21-35** | Is the forgiveness of God compelling you to be a forgiving person? Do forgiveness, love, and kindness "bleed through" in all areas of your life? Where is there room for growth?
- **Matthew 25:31-46** | What do you think about the idea that God would separate the "sheep" from the "goats" not based on what doctrines we believe or the systems we uphold, but by how we treat those who are disenfranchised?
- **James 2:14-19** | Do you think that Christianity has a negative reputation in today's culture due to our "deeds" not matching our "faith"? How can we change this?
- **Colossians 3:12-17** | Does the level in which you allow Christ to "rule in your heart" translate to your ability to forgive others? How so?

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

April Discipline: True Service | (p.128) "Rewards & Results"

If true service is to be understood and practiced, it must be distinguished clearly from "self-righteous service." This month, we will look at several of these differences. Pray that God would allow you to find opportunities for "true service" in your life.

Self-righteous service requires external rewards. It needs to know that people see and appreciate the effort. It seeks human applause. True service rests contented in hiddenness. It does not fear the lights and glare of attention, but it does not seek them either. Since it is living out of a new Center of reference, the divine nod of approval is completely sufficient.

Self-righteous service is highly concerned about results. It eagerly awaits if the person served will reciprocate in kind. It becomes bitter when the results fall below expectations. True service is free of the need to calculate results. It delights only in the service. It can serve enemies as freely as friends.

**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.**