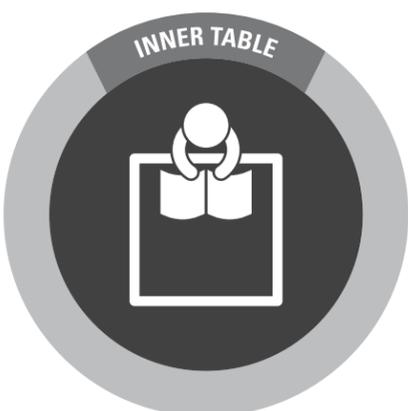


# Sermon Notes

“Return of the Prophet”  
May 12th, 2019

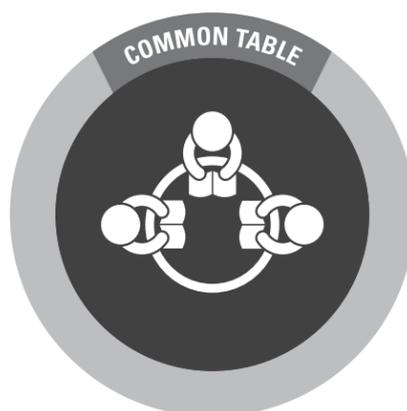


**First  
Friends**  
Church



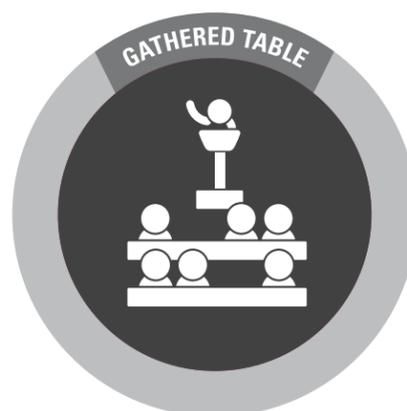
INNER TABLE

*Seeking God*  
in Solitude



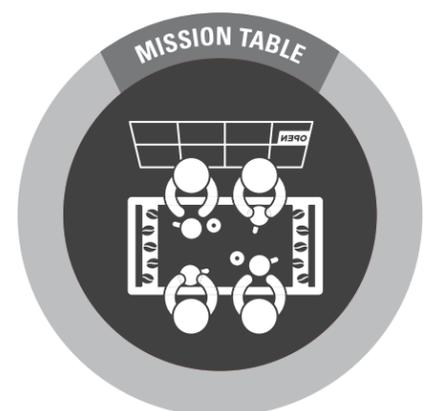
COMMON TABLE

*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. Have you ever experienced a moment where you could sense God's presence more powerfully than nearly any other time? Did you vow to make sweeping changes? Consider that growth in the kingdom of God happens little by little, one plant at a time.
2. What sorts of "violence" do you inflict upon others? Is this a common character trait? Is that how you would want to be treated? How can you partner with the Spirit to grow better fruit?
3. Be thankful that no matter what you do, God does not want to destroy you. God wants to use you, grow you, and change you to be a prophetic witness to this world.

### Additional Questions:

4. Have you ever experienced a fear in the midst of following God's calling? Jonah surely did, a few times actually. What do you think holds you back from leaning into what God has called you to be?
5. What's the difference between saying your sorry and repentance? Which one brings actual transformation? Why?

## Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **Jonah 3:1-10** | What parallels do you see between chapters 1 & 3 in the book of Jonah? Do some of the characters seem to have similar traits? Who do you think Jonah aligns with in chapter 3? (Hint: It's not a singular character\*\*).
- **1 Chronicles 21:14-17** | Have you ever made a mistake where the results hurt other people more than yourself? How did you or might you go about seeking reconciliation?
- **Matthew 4:1-11** | What do you think about the idea that God in the form of Jesus, as fully human, also went through a 40 day "testing period?"
- **2 Peter 3:8-18** | Do you find yourself putting in the effort to be a faithful disciple for your life on earth? What does that look like on a daily basis?

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

### May Discipline: Essentials for Confession | "Sorrow" (p.145 & 152)

Confession is a difficult discipline for us because we all too often view the believing community as a fellowship of saints before we see it as a fellowship of sinners. We feel that everyone else has advanced so far into holiness that we are isolated and alone in our sin. We cannot bear to reveal our failures to others. We imagine that we are the only ones who have not stepped onto the high road to heaven. Therefore, we hide ourselves.

The first essential is "sorrow." Sorrow is necessary to a good confession. Sorrow as it relates to confession is not primarily an emotion, though emotion may be involved. It is an abhorrence at having committed the sin, a deep regret at having offended the heart of God. Sorrow is an issue of the will before it is an issue of the emotions. In fact, being sorrowful in the emotions without a godly sorrow in the will destroys the confession.

Sorrow is a way of taking the confession seriously. It is the opposite of the priest, and undoubtedly the penitent.

**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.**

\*\*Nineveh