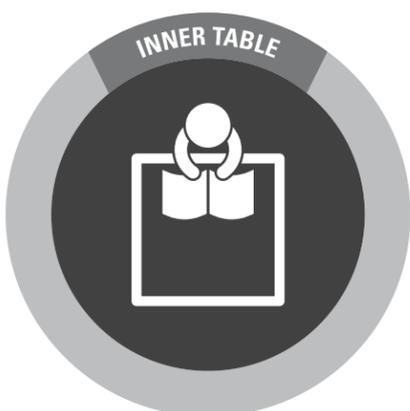


Sermon Notes

“God Sees Our Grief”
August 25th, 2019



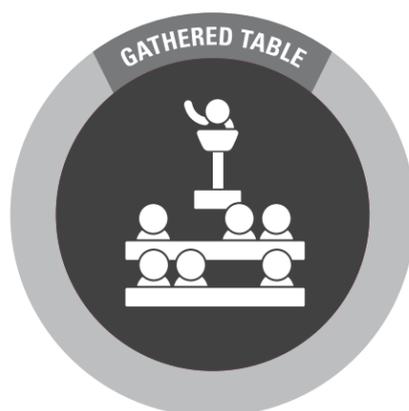
**First
Friends**
Church



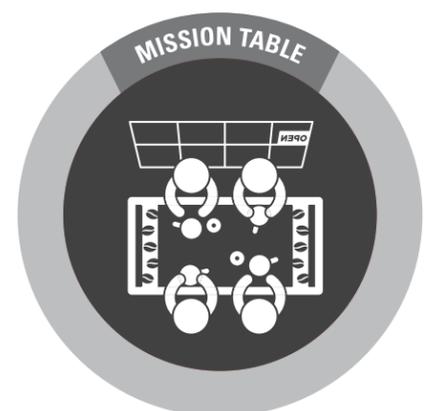
Seeking God
in Solitude



Finding God
in Friendship



Celebrating God
in Community



Reflecting God
in Relationships

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

Sermon Questions:

1. If the guest speaker presents questions, feel free to write a couple down or take a picture of the screen with your phone.

Additional Questions:

2. Do you ever feel as if God is distant from you? Do you wonder where God is in your suffering? Is it possible that you struggle to find God because you are searching for God in the wrong places? Is it possible God is suffering right alongside of you?
3. What does it mean *for* you that God is one who suffers *with* you? That God even sees you?

Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **John 19:23-27** | Not only does Jesus “see” his mother, but through his disciples, gives her support in her grief. Are you taking advantage of the support of your church family around you, especially when times are hard?
- **Psalms 34:17-20** | Even the righteous person may have many troubles. Do you equate bad things happening to bad behavior or good things to good behavior? Why might this mindset be problematic?
- **Matthew 5:4** | God comforts those who can see the world as it is and imagine a better one. What causes you to mourn?
- **Matthew 11:28-30** | How is suffering made easier when you cast your yoke upon Jesus? Do you allow him to help you carry the load?

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

August Discipline: Celebration | “Creativity” (p.190 & 199)

Celebration is at the heart of the way of Christ. He entered the world on a high note of jubilation: “I bring you good news of a great joy,” cried the angel, “which shall come to all the people” (Luke 2:10). He left the world bequeathing his joy to the disciples: “These things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full” (John 15:11).

A final way to make celebration a regular practice is to truly get excited about even the small things. Make family events into times of celebration and thanksgiving. This is particularly true of the various rites of passage in our culture like birthdays, graduations, marriages, and anniversaries. But milestones like these aren't the only causes for celebration. Celebrate when you do well on an exam, complete a project at work, learn how to play a new song, complete a puzzle at home. When you learn to get excited over the little things, it creates a posture of celebration in your life!

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.