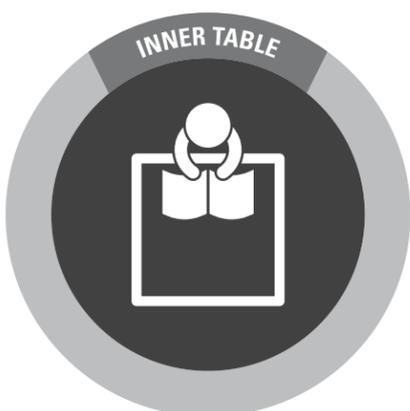


Sermon Notes



**First
Friends
Church**

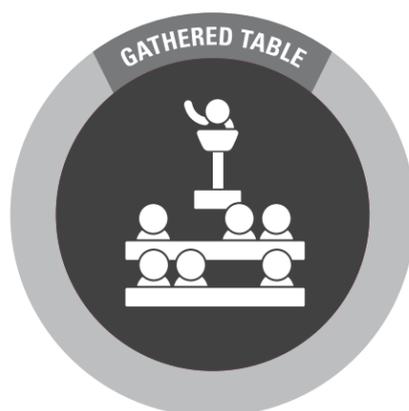
“Relocate”
December 15th, 2019



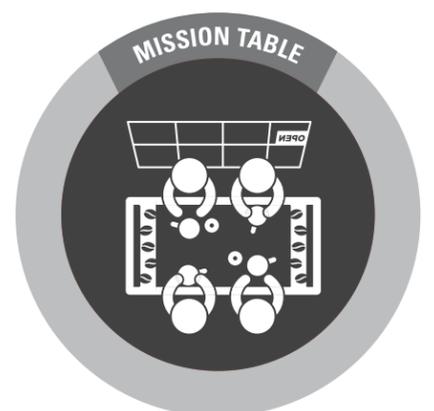
Seeking God
in Solitude



Finding God
in Friendship



Celebrating God
in Community



Reflecting God
in Relationships

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

Discussion Questions:

1. Are you in a toxic relationship or situation right now that you know is dangerous for you? Ask God to show you the wisest way to get out and seek safety and refuge elsewhere.
2. Do you know a child who is being abused, neglected, mistreated, or ignored? How can you reach out to him/her during the Christmas season?
3. Pray for the women who will be encouraged and supported by the Sophia Women's Center in Salem to "choose life" in 2020.
4. Are you following the example of Jesus and growing in "wisdom and in favor with God and man?"

Additional Questions:

5. Have you ever parsed out the difference between guilt and shame? What are the key differences? How do you handle each of these when they pop up in your life?
6. Are there any "Herods" in your life that abuse their power over you? What is a good way to address this situation?

Devotional Reading & Inward Reflection

- **Matthew 2:13-18** | Jesus is a refugee, fleeing persecution. Are you open and hospitable to the "least of these" who are in a similar situation? (Matthew 25:31-40)
- **Luke 4:24-30** | Jesus certainly isn't toxic nor did he create toxic relationships. So why do you think the people were so angry with Jesus? What is it about Jesus' character and message that infuriated people?
- **Hebrews 3:1-6** | How is Jesus similar to Moses? How is he different? What makes Jesus "new and better?"
- **Luke 2:41-52** | Do you find it interesting that even Jesus, the son of God, still chose the path of learning and growth? How can you imitate this model?

Self-Care Disciplines *(Excerpts from Celebration of Discipline by Richard Foster)* December Discipline: Study | Comprehension (p.64-65)

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. When we not only repeatedly focus the mind in a particular direction, centering our attention on the subject, but understand what we are studying, we reach a new level.

Comprehension then is the third step in the discipline of study. Jesus, as you remember, reminds us that it is not just the truth but the *knowledge* of the truth that sets us free (John 8:32). Comprehension focuses on the knowledge of the truth. All of us have had the experience of reading something over and over and then, all of a sudden, we understand what it means. This "eureka" experience of understanding catapults us onto a new level of growth and freedom. It leads to insight and discernment. It provides the basis for a true perception of reality.

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