

AT THE
TABLE



GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Introduction

The table – it's the place where food is served and breaking bread can happen in community. The table is the place where bonds are built, love & laughter happen, ideas are deliberated, lessons are shared, burdens are laid down, and stories are heard. The table is a place for personal challenge and spiritual growth. In the scriptures, the table is a place where Jesus brought people into deeper relationship with Himself, and deeper awareness of His truth. Few acts are more expressive of companionship than the shared meal... When Jesus came to seek and save the lost, he came to eat and drink with sinners. From notorious tax collectors to the marginalized and broken, those who gathered at the table with Jesus found hope, forgiveness, and a new purpose. This series, AT THE TABLE, will focus on those moments from the scriptures where Jesus is at the table and lives are being changed. AT THE TABLE will help you discover Jesus in a new way, and will help you to foster a healthy spiritual life of your own.

Making the Most of your Time Together

For the next 7 weeks of your group getting together you will watch a 5-10 minute teaching video from Pastor John and use the questions in the *Talk About It!* section as a guide for group discussion. By engaging in God's word we are bound to experience transformation, but we also experience healthy change through relationships with others. The friendship and insights of those in your group will enrich your small group experience. To help make the most of your time together, here are some guidelines to keep in mind for a healthy group discussion:

BE INVOLVED – Jump in and share your thoughts. Your ideas are important, and you have a perspective that is unique and can benefit the other group members.

BE A GOOD LISTENER – Value what others are sharing. Seek to really understand the perspective of others in your group and don't be afraid to ask follow-up questions.

BE COURTEOUS – People hold strong opinions about the greatest needs in our world. Your Holy Ambition may vary greatly from someone else's, but that's ok. We were not all designed in the same way or to accomplish the same things. Spirited discussion is great. Disrespect and attack are not. When there is disagreement, focus on the issue and never allow the discussion to turn into a personal attack.

BE FOCUSED – Stay on topic. Help the group explore the subject at hand, and try to save unrelated questions or stories for afterward.

BE CAREFUL NOT TO DOMINATE – Be aware of the amount of talking you are doing in proportion to the rest of the group, and make space for others to speak.

BE A LEARNER – Stay sensitive to what God might want to teach you through each lesson, as well as through what others have to say. Focus more on your own growth rather than making a point or winning an argument.

How to Use this Guide

For each week of this guide there are three sections – *Take It In*, *Talk About It!*, and *Take it Home*. Here's how to use them:

TAKE IT IN

Before we dive into discussion, there will be a video of Pastor John providing teaching for each week of this study. Use this section to jot down key points and take notes! If you hear something that resonates with you, whether in the video or something that another group member shared, use this space to write it down.

TALK ABOUT IT!

This section has scriptures and questions to prompt conversation. Feel free to read through these questions ahead of time as you prepare for your group meeting, but don't feel the need to answer every question during the discussion. Allow these questions to serve as a foundation for good conversation around the topic of the week.

TAKE IT HOME

At the end of each week's discussion, there will be a question with space provided to write down your response. As group discussion happens, you may feel the Holy Spirit prompting you to make changes in your life as you grow in reflecting the love of Jesus. Use this section to write down the action or change you're deciding to make as you experience the life transformation that comes through God's empowering grace.



WEEK 1: HOSPITALITY

1 PETER 4:9 “OFFER HOSPITALITY TO ONE ANOTHER WITHOUT GRUMBLING.”

When Jesus came on the scene, what He did was unconventional. People expected the Messiah to be a Holy Man of God, and Jesus was that, but not in the ways that people anticipated. Part of the experience of following Jesus is giving a place at your table and practicing hospitality to those around you. True hospitality is openly receiving and loving friends or strangers in a gracious, generous way. It is to treat outsiders like insiders, to embrace rather than to exclude, to pursue and invite others into moments where community and relationship can grow. Jesus practiced this kind of hospitality – we should follow his example and do likewise.

Take It In

Talk About It!

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word 'hospitality'?
2. Share about a favorite hospitality experience that you were the recipient of and how it affected you.

» 1 Peter 4:9 NIV

"Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling."

As mentioned, true hospitality is openly receiving and loving friends or strangers in a gracious, generous way. It is to treat outsiders like insiders, to embrace rather than to exclude, to pursue and invite others into moments where community and relationship can grow.

3. What might keep you from wanting to or being able to practice true hospitality, as described above?

» Luke 5:27-32 NIV

"After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. 'Follow me,' Jesus said to him, and Levi got up, left everything and followed him. Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, 'Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?' Jesus answered them, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.'"

4. How does it affect you to see Jesus described this way? What do you think about His openness to people? Does your life reflect that kind of openness?

» **Luke 15:1-7 NIV**

Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear Jesus. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.” Then Jesus told them this parable: “Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn’t he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders and goes home. Then he calls his friends and neighbors together and says, ‘Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep.’ I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent.

» **Luke 7:33-35 NIV**

For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, ‘He has a demon.’ The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, ‘Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.’ But wisdom is proved right by all her children.”

» **Mark 1:14-16 NIV**

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.

5. Based on what you know about the broader gospel message, how do you think Jesus felt about the choices and pathways of the people he was at the table with? What does the approach of Jesus show us about how to engage with people who are on different pathways? How are you doing with this?

Take It Home

» **Hebrews 13:2 NIV**

Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.

» **Romans 12:13 NIV**

Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.



WHAT ARE SOME STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO MOVE TOWARD ENGAGING IN MORE HOSPITALITY? WHAT ABOUT THE THREE PRINCIPLES OF HOSPITALITY WE HEARD IN THIS TEACHING? WHICH ONE WILL YOU COMMIT TO ENGAGING IN? HOW WILL YOU PRACTICE GROWING IN HOSPITALITY THIS WEEK?

WEEK 2: DEALING WITH BETRAYAL

**ROMANS 12:18 “IF IT IS POSSIBLE, AS FAR AS IT DEPENDS
ON YOU, LIVE AT PEACE WITH EVERYONE.”**

Some people that you invite to your table can end up breaking your heart. When we experience this kind of heartbreak, it can be difficult to know how to deal with it or know if it could ever be resolved. Even Jesus had experience with deep, personal betrayal by some of the closest people to him. This week we will take a look at how Jesus dealt with this type of pain in relationships and what we can learn from his example

Take It In

Talk About It!

» Mark 14:12-26 NLT

On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover lamb is sacrificed, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to go to prepare the Passover meal for you?" So Jesus sent two of them into Jerusalem with these instructions: "As you go into the city, a man carrying a pitcher of water will meet you. Follow him. At the house he enters, say to the owner, 'The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?' He will take you upstairs to a large room that is already set up. That is where you should prepare our meal." So the two disciples went into the city and found everything just as Jesus had said, and they prepared the Passover meal there. In the evening Jesus arrived with the Twelve. As they were at the table eating, Jesus said, "I tell you the truth, one of you eating with me here will betray me." Greatly distressed, each one asked in turn, "Am I the one?" He replied, "It is one of you twelve who is eating from this bowl with me. For the Son of Man must die, as the Scriptures declared long ago. But how terrible it will be for the one who betrays him. It would be far better for that man if he had never been born!" As they were eating, Jesus took some bread and blessed it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "Take it, for this is my body." And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them, and they all drank from it. And he said to them, "This is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people. It is poured out as a sacrifice for many. I tell you the truth, I will not drink wine again until the day I drink it new in the Kingdom of God." Then they sang a hymn and went out to the Mount of Olives.

» 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 NLT

For I pass on to you what I received from the Lord himself. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it." For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord's death until he comes again.

1. What is the value of communion, and what does it accomplish? What did Jesus specifically envision it would include?

» Acts of the Apostles 2:42 NLT

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.



» **Acts of the Apostles 20:7 NLT**

On the first day of the week, we gathered with the local believers to share in the Lord's Supper. Paul was preaching to them, and since he was leaving the next day, he kept talking until midnight.

» **1 Corinthians 10:16-17 NLT**

When we bless the cup at the Lord's Table, aren't we sharing in the blood of Christ? And when we break the bread, aren't we sharing in the body of Christ? And though we are many, we all eat from one loaf of bread, showing that we are one body.

2. How does our current approach to communion compare with the early church approach? What's the same, what's different? What adjustments can we make?

» **Romans 12:18 NIV**

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

3. What do we do with the trouble at the table? What do you think Paul meant in Romans 18:15 when we said "as far as it depends on you"? When have you had to practice this?

» **Matthew 5:23-24 NLT**

"So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God."

4. What is your natural reaction when thinking about someone 'having something against you'? What is the supernatural direction Jesus calls for in Matthew 5:23-24 and what gets in the way of doing this? What has your experience been in living this out?



» **Matthew 18:15 NLT**

“If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back.”

- 5. Do you find it difficult to do what is said in Matthew 18:5? What are the benefits if we live this out?

Take It Home

IS THERE SOMEONE YOU NEED TO GO TO AND OFFER A “GOOD APOLOGY”? WHAT ABOUT SOMEONE WHO HAS HURT YOU, EVEN UNKNOWINGLY, THAT YOU NEED TO APPROACH AND ADDRESS THE PAIN WITH? WHAT STEPS CAN YOU TAKE THIS WEEK TO DO THAT?

NEXT STEPS

FREEDOM PRAYER <https://mycenterpoint.tv/Ministry/freedomprayer>

Centerpoint’s Freedom Prayer Ministry is dedicated to equipping and connecting people to intimacy with God and to experience His love, freedom, healing, and deliverance in Christ. If you have struggled with emotional wounds, spiritual darkness, distortions about God, or other internal hang-ups that are holding you back, scan the QR code to learn more about how Freedom Prayer can help bring the healing that God has for you.



WEEK 3: HUMILITY AS A HABIT OF THE HEART

JAMES 4:10 “HUMBLE YOURSELVES BEFORE THE LORD,
AND HE WILL LIFT YOU UP IN HONOR.”

Jesus invites us all to come into His Kingdom – that includes learning the ways and values of His Kingdom, which is ‘not of this world’. This week we’ll talk about how Jesus wants his followers to walk with a humble disposition, and to have a heart of such true hospitality that we’d make a place at our table for those who just might really need it.

Take It In

Talk About It!

1. What is the relationship between honor and humility? Who do you think of as a good example of living out that tension well?
-
-
-

» **Luke 14:1-11 NLT**

One Sabbath day Jesus went to eat dinner in the home of a leader of the Pharisees, and the people were watching him closely. There was a man there whose arms and legs were swollen. Jesus asked the Pharisees and experts in religious law, "Is it permitted in the law to heal people on the Sabbath day, or not?" When they refused to answer, Jesus touched the sick man and healed him and sent him away. Then he turned to them and said, "Which of you doesn't work on the Sabbath? If your son or your cow falls into a pit, don't you rush to get him out?" Again they could not answer. When Jesus noticed that all who had come to the dinner were trying to sit in the seats of honor near the head of the table, he gave them this advice: "When you are invited to a wedding feast, don't sit in the seat of honor. What if someone who is more distinguished than you has also been invited? The host will come and say, 'Give this person your seat.' Then you will be embarrassed, and you will have to take whatever seat is left at the foot of the table! "Instead, take the lowest place at the foot of the table. Then when your host sees you, he will come and say, 'Friend, we have a better place for you!' Then you will be honored in front of all the other guests. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

2. Describe a time when you were honored by someone else. How has receiving honor been for you? Are you more likely to accept when it's given or resist it? Why?
-
-
-

» **Philippians 2:3-11 NLT**

Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as

something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

3. How can following the example of Jesus, as outlined in Philippians 2, help us cultivate a culture of honor?

» **Matthew 23:11-12 NLT**

The greatest among you must be a servant. But those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

» **James 4:10 NLT**

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up in honor.

4. Why do you think humility leads to honor in the kingdom of God? What is honorable about humility? Share an example that you have seen or experienced of James 4:10 actually happening.

» **Proverbs 15:33 NLT**

Fear of the LORD teaches wisdom; humility precedes honor.

» **Proverbs 18:12 NLT**

Haughtiness goes before destruction; humility precedes honor.

» **Proverbs 29:23 NLT**

Pride ends in humiliation, while humility brings honor.

» **Proverbs 22:4 NLT**

True humility and fear of the LORD lead to riches, honor, and long life.



5. What are the attributes of a humble heart? What misconceptions have you had about humility, and what new perception do you have about humility?

» **Romans 13:7 NLT**

Give to everyone what you owe them: Pay your taxes and government fees to those who collect them, and give respect and honor to those who are in authority.

» **Romans 12:3 NIV**

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

6. What does honor or lack of honor display about what's going on in our heart? How can we bring honor back to the society we live in?

Take It Home

WHAT STEP DO YOU NEED TO TAKE TO KEEP OR DEEPEN THE HUMBLENESS OF HEART GOD CALLS YOU INTO? WHAT CAN YOU DO THIS WEEK TO PRACTICE OR GROW IN HUMILITY?

WEEK 4: GENEROSITY TO JESUS

MATTHEW 6:21 *“WHEREVER YOUR TREASURE IS, THERE THE DESIRES OF YOUR HEART WILL ALSO BE.”*

Jesus welcomed all kinds of people into fellowship, and made room for their lives to change. His mercy created wells of gratitude - the kind that can't just go unexpressed. So much so that a woman once poured out a generous gift of love at the feet of Jesus, literally. It was such an extravagant expression of love that most people around her didn't understand it. But Jesus spoke highly of her act of love expressed through generosity. This week we'll be talking about what it looks like for us to practice generosity to Jesus in our own lives.

Take It In

Talk About It!

1. What is one of the nicest gifts or gestures of generosity you've ever received?

» Luke 7:36-50 NLT

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to have dinner with him, so Jesus went to his home and sat down to eat. When a certain immoral woman from that city heard he was eating there, she brought a beautiful alabaster jar filled with expensive perfume. Then she knelt behind him at his feet, weeping. Her tears fell on his feet, and she wiped them off with her hair. Then she kept kissing his feet and putting perfume on them. When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know what kind of woman is touching him. She's a sinner!" Then Jesus answered his thoughts. "Simon," he said to the Pharisee, "I have something to say to you." "Go ahead, Teacher," Simon replied. Then Jesus told him this story: "A man loaned money to two people—500 pieces of silver to one and 50 pieces to the other. But neither of them could repay him, so he kindly forgave them both, canceling their debts. Who do you suppose loved him more after that?" Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the larger debt." "That's right," Jesus said. Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Look at this woman kneeling here. When I entered your home, you didn't offer me water to wash the dust from my feet, but she has washed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You didn't greet me with a kiss, but from the time I first came in, she has not stopped kissing my feet. You neglected the courtesy of olive oil to anoint my head, but she has anointed my feet with rare perfume. "I tell you, her sins—and they are many—have been forgiven, so she has shown me much love. But a person who is forgiven little shows only little love." Then Jesus said to the woman, "Your sins are forgiven." The men at the table said among themselves, "Who is this man, that he goes around forgiving sins?" And Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

2. What is your impression of this scene – the woman's actions, and how Jesus responds to it?

3. How would you rate your own current 'generosity to Jesus', where 10 is fully tithing and more, and giving offerings, and caring for the poor, and supporting missionaries - and a 0 is not giving financially at all. No judgment! This is a journey! And if you are a 10, say so! It's not to boast, but to share how God's grace has grown you!



» **Psalms 24:1 NLT**

The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him.

4. How does the mindset of a manager differ from the mindset of an owner when it comes to resources?

What might it look like if you managed your resources the way God would manage your resources? What might change? What might stay the same?

» **Acts 20:35 NLT**

And I have been a constant example of how you can help those in need by working hard. You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

» **Malachi 3:8-10 NLT**

"Should people cheat God? Yet you have cheated me! "But you ask, 'What do you mean? When did we ever cheat you?' "You have cheated me of the tithes and offerings due to me. You are under a curse, for your whole nation has been cheating me. Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies, "I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Put me to the test!"

» **Proverbs 3:9-10 NLT**

Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce. Then he will fill your barns with grain, and your vats will overflow with good wine.

5. How have you experienced the blessing of giving and generosity as a giver? How have you seen God's faithfulness in making good on His Word in this regard?
-
-
-



» **2 Corinthians 8:7 NLT**

Since you excel in so many ways—in your faith, your gifted speakers, your knowledge, your enthusiasm, and your love from us—I want you to excel also in this gracious act of giving.

» **2 Corinthians 9:7 NIV**

Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

6. What do you think of the experience and mission of the church you are part of? What would it look like for you to take a step toward ‘excelling’ in this grace of giving in some way – to do your part to see the church’s mission thrive? What obstacles are in the way of taking such a step?

Take It Home

PASTOR JOHN MENTIONED SIX REASONS WHY HE CHOOSES TO PRACTICE GENEROSITY TO JESUS. IF YOU GIVE IN THIS WAY, WHY? IF YOU DON’T GIVE IN THIS WAY, WHY NOT? EITHER WAY, WHAT CAN YOU DO THIS WEEK TO PRACTICE OR GROW IN GENEROSITY TO JESUS?

NEXT STEPS

To learn more about how you can invest in God’s Kingdom work at Centerpoint Church through your giving, go to mycenterpoint.tv/give



WEEK 5: PRACTICES OF SPIRITUAL VITALITY

COLOSSIANS 3:1 “SINCE YOU HAVE BEEN RAISED TO NEW LIFE WITH CHRIST, SET YOUR SIGHTS ON THE REALITIES OF HEAVEN, WHERE CHRIST SITS IN THE PLACE OF HONOR AT GOD’S RIGHT HAND.”

Throughout our lives we develop a variety of habits, routines, and disciplines that make up our day-to-day experiences and priorities. And if we’re not careful, sometimes those habits and routine start to take shape without us even noticing! When it comes to being disciples of Jesus, there are choices we can make to establish healthy patterns in our lives. This week we will talk about seven different spiritual disciplines that help us cultivate a lifestyle of lingering at the table with Jesus and growing in our relationship with him.

Take It In

Talk About It!

1. Name one good habit you had as a kid. Did you have a habit that was hard to break when you were young?

2. Give yourself a grade on each of the seven disciplines listed below. Which one are you most eager to improve? Why?

1 – Prayer _____

2 – Scripture Reading _____

3 – Service _____

4 – Giving _____

5 – Worship _____

6 – Confession _____

7 – Fasting _____

» Luke 10:38-42 NLT

As Jesus and the disciples continued on their way to Jerusalem, they came to a certain village where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. Her sister, Mary, sat at the Lord's feet, listening to what he taught. But Martha was distracted by the big dinner she was preparing. She came to Jesus and said, "Lord, doesn't it seem unfair to you that my sister just sits here while I do all the work? Tell her to come and help me." But the Lord said to her, "My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her."

» Colossians 3:1-4 NLT

Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth. For you died to this life, and your real life is hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ, who is your life, is revealed to the whole world, you will share in all his glory.

3. What was one thing you learned in the message this week – from the scriptures above – that could affect how you approach time with God?



» **2 Timothy 1:7 NLT**

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline.

» **Galatians 6:9 NLT**

So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up.

4. How has self-discipline and faithful pursuit of good spiritual habits helped you in your life?

» **1 Thessalonians 5:17 NLT**

Never stop praying.

5. What does prayer look like in your life? What have you learned about the purpose and power of prayer?

» **Hebrews 10:25 NLT**

And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.

6. How does community help us in our pursuit of God and practice of spiritual disciplines?
-
-



Take It Home

WHICH OF THE SEVEN SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES ARE YOU GOING TO IMPROVE YOUR ENGAGEMENT WITH THIS WEEK AND HOW?



WEEK 6: ACCOUNTABILITY

**HEBREWS 10:24-25 “AND LET US CONSIDER HOW WE MAY SPUR
ONE ANOTHER ON TOWARD LOVE AND GOOD DEEDS.”**

Jesus is thought of as a ‘religious figure’, but he actually spent a good deal of time demoting empty religiosity and promoting real spiritual life. In our journey of sanctification, there will always be tension between a true desire for holiness, and a superficial sanctimonious pretense. This week will call us to confront that fake veneer and the spirit of religion and make our table a place for authentic encounter.

Take It In

Talk About It!

» Luke 7:37-44 NLT

When a certain immoral woman from that city heard he was eating there, she brought a beautiful alabaster jar filled with expensive perfume. Then she knelt behind him at his feet, weeping. Her tears fell on his feet, and she wiped them off with her hair. Then she kept kissing his feet and putting perfume on them. When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know what kind of woman is touching him. She's a sinner!" Then Jesus answered his thoughts. "Simon," he said to the Pharisee, "I have something to say to you." "Go ahead, Teacher," Simon replied. Then Jesus told him this story: "A man loaned money to two people—500 pieces of silver to one and 50 pieces to the other. But neither of them could repay him, so he kindly forgave them both, canceling their debts. Who do you suppose loved him more after that?" Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the larger debt." "That's right," Jesus said. Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Look at this woman kneeling here. When I entered your home, you didn't offer me water to wash the dust from my feet, but she has washed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair."

1. Why do you think Jesus spoke so harshly about the Pharisees? Do any of Jesus' words to the Pharisees hit home to you in any particular way?
-
-
-

» 2 Timothy 3:1-5 NLT

You should know this, Timothy, that in the last days there will be very difficult times. For people will love only themselves and their money. They will be boastful and proud, scoffing at God, disobedient to their parents, and ungrateful. They will consider nothing sacred. They will be unloving and unforgiving; they will slander others and have no self-control. They will be cruel and hate what is good. They will betray their friends, be reckless, be puffed up with pride, and love pleasure rather than God. They will act religious, but they will reject the power that could make them godly. Stay away from people like that!

2. How does a spirit of religion create a toxic experience for or among God's people? Without bashing or naming any congregation or group, how have you observed or experienced a spirit of religion and what were its effects?
-
-
-

» Titus 2:11-12 NLT

For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people. And we are instructed



to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with wisdom, righteousness, and devotion to God

3. How is God's grace the solution to the problem of hypocrisy?

» **Proverbs 27:17 NLT**

As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.

» **James 5:16 NLT**

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces wonderful results.

4. Have you ever practiced James 5:16? What good came from it?

5. Do you have a few trusted friends that you have given permission to ask you "the hard questions"? If so, how have these friendships helped you grow? If not, think about one or two people who can be that for you.

If you have time, break into subgroups of the same gender, then, take turns responding to the questions below:

» **Accountability Questions (aka Friendship Questions for Maximizing Life)**

1. What are you doing to enjoy life?
2. What new stressors are entering your life?
3. Have you taken care of yourself physically (or not) with diet and exercise?
4. What sin do you need to confess, or temptation you need to admit to?
5. Have you given priority time to prayer, bible, & connecting with God?

6. Have any of your financial dealings lacked integrity?
7. Have you allowed any person or circumstance to rob you of your joy?
8. Have you pursued the hearts of your spouse and kids?
9. Have you done wrong to any person, through words or actions, either to their face or behind their back?
10. What question do you hope I won't really ask?

Take It Home

WHAT STEPS WILL YOU TAKE THIS WEEK TO GROW IN YOUR ENGAGEMENT WITH ACCOUNTABILITY AND THE ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS?

Next Week is Serve Sunday and we will all have an opportunity to take the next step in our discipleship journey by joining a team to serve! Come to church ready to hear about what Jesus' take on serving and be prepared to participate after service in the Serve Sunday experience. One suggestion would be to attend Serve Sunday as group, and consider finding a way to serve together as a group!

WEEK 7: SERVING IN THE CHURCH

GALATIANS 5:13 “FOR YOU HAVE BEEN CALLED TO LIVE IN FREEDOM, MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS. BUT DON’T USE YOUR FREEDOM TO SATISFY YOUR SINFUL NATURE. INSTEAD, USE YOUR FREEDOM TO SERVE ONE ANOTHER IN LOVE.”

At the table where a dinner happened which we call ‘the Last Supper’, Jesus shared his vision for the way his people would engage with each other and with the world around them. By washing his disciples feet and teaching them to do the same, Jesus showed that what he desires in his followers is humility, willingness, availability, can-do spirit, and a heart to serve!

Take It In

Talk About It!

1. Share about a time when you volunteered/served and how it affected (or affects) you?

» John 13:1-17 NLT

Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end. It was time for supper, and the devil had already prompted Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him. When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You don't understand now what I am doing, but someday you will." "No," Peter protested, "you will never ever wash my feet!" Jesus replied, "Unless I wash you, you won't belong to me." Simon Peter exclaimed, "Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!" Jesus replied, "A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you disciples are clean, but not all of you." For Jesus knew who would betray him. That is what he meant when he said, "Not all of you are clean." After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I was doing? You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right, because that's what I am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them.

2. Why do you think Jesus did what he did? How do Jesus' words in this moment affect you?

3. What's one way Jesus' example challenges you in regards to serving?



» **Matthew 20:26 NLT**

But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant

4. How does it make you feel when someone serves you? What is one way you are serving right now in the Body of Christ? What motivates you to serve in this capacity?

» **Galatians 5:13 NLT**

For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love.

5. How would you rate yourself, 1-10, in terms of the level of volunteer you are?

10 = committed – never flakes out – shows up on time with great attitude – recruits others – joyfully serves

0 = barely serves – flakes out if on schedule – doesn't show up – or doesn't serve at all in the church

Be honest! If you are a 10, say so! We need to learn from you! If you are a 0, say so, no judgment, just truth and opportunity to grow!

6. Hopefully, you were able to participate last weekend in the Serve Sunday experience. If so, can you share about which team you took steps to join and why you chose that team?

Take It Home

» **1 Peter 4:10-11 NLT**

God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies.



Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

7. If you are already using your gifts to serve in the Body, what is a step you could take this week to elevate the quality, depth, and impact of your service? If you are not yet serving in the Body, what is a step you could take this week toward serving in the church?
-
-
-

NEXT STEPS

If you missed Serve Sunday but acknowledge that your next step as a disciple of Jesus involves serving others, sign up for the next session of **GrowTrack** to discover how your God-given design is meant to add value to



If you've already attended GrowTrack and you're ready to jump into a team, go to mycenterpoint.tv/SERVE to sign up for a CP Team!

