

## Week 4: Table Talk

There is work involved in providing a place for someone at our table. We prepare our homes, prepare a meal, and prepare ourselves. The atmosphere created and the food served can be memorable, hopefully in the best way. However, it is the relational transaction that will leave the strongest impression. So how do we prepare for the relational aspect?

*As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"*

*"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her." Luke 10:38-42*

Martha welcomed Jesus into her home and worked hard to give Him her best. Mary on the other hand doesn't seem to try at all. We can understand Martha's frustration that Mary didn't have to try because she knew Martha was taking care of it. Jesus could have affirmed Martha's hard work and validated her frustration, motivating Mary to get up and help. Instead, He reminds Martha of the better thing, to know someone and be known by them. Martha's best intentions had quickly become a distraction from the very reason she invited Jesus in the first place, to be with Him.

Valuing the right thing can shift how much work we put into the lesser things. Sometimes we can't do it all! So we worry less about the many things and value the better thing, that we would know the one we are giving a place to at our table.

A kind gesture from someone who shows little value in knowing us can feel lacking. A lacking meal with someone who took the time to hear us and know us can make for a great evening!

1. What part of the work of having someone in your home for dinner is the most stressful to you?

2. What do you think is the main reason someone accepts an invitation to someone's home for a meal?

When we invite someone to our table we have already opened our heart to serve and tend to them. But to most effectively serve or tend to someone there is usually groundwork that has to be laid in getting to know them. Similar to how Jesus does not desire our works apart from us knowing Him, we typically don't want advice or people's hands in our lives without them having relationship with us.

Knowing someone involves hearing someone. Start by hearing. Asking questions is often the easiest way to open up conversation where we can hear the other person. In addition to questions that naturally come out of conversation, we can be prepared with questions for intentional table talk.

As we prepare for our guest, let's prepare for the conversation around our table.

<p>3. Question Options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- What are areas of interest or passion in your life?</li><li>- What are some defining or significant points in your life (highs, hurdles, hopes, healings)?</li><li>- What things currently bring you the most joy?</li></ul> <p>What other questions could you ask?</p>	<p>4. Have you ever felt hurt by someone who was nice to you but showed no interest in knowing you?</p>
<p>5. Who has shown interest recently (even if a small amount) in knowing you?</p>	<p>6. Why has God put in us a desire to be known?</p>

Practical Convo: What are easy meals most people enjoy?