**Table Talk**

**Sermon Series: Table Manners – Invite Over**

**April 5, 2020**

**Introduction (7 min)**

Begin by watching the video and sharing the story below, then open up the discussion with the questions provided. You can use online tools like ZOOM to host a small group! On ZOOM, use screen sharing to show the video or questions to the group.

**Table Talk Video: Table Manners – Invite Over**

When my younger brother was in High School, he played on the football and baseball teams. He was good at both, but truly loved playing baseball. He is a lefty and alternated between first base and the pitcher’s mound.

Around that same time, he went for an eye exam and found out he needed glasses. After receiving them, he exclaimed joyfully how much easier it was to keep up with the ball now that he could see! No more struggling to see signals. No more losing the ball in the lights. He has since worn glasses or contacts for the last 20 years.

Just before the quarantine went into effect, my brother had Lasik surgery on his eyes. Again, he called and excitedly told me how well he could see and how big of a difference it was already making just hours after the surgery. He was so excited about the results, he was trying to talk me into Lasik and inviting me to call his doctor to set it up!

The passage we are going to read today plays around with the idea of what it really means to see. We are invited to see an overlooked man, who wanted to see Jesus, but whose character and stature were both inadequate to see him, whom Jesus saw, who asked Jesus to see his acts of mercy, whom Jesus saw as a child of Abraham. Did you “see” all that?

Jesus sees all of us with crystal clarity. He never loses sight of us. He sees in us more than we can see ourselves. Jesus invited himself over to Zacchaeus’ house to help him see, and he invites himself into our lives as well. Who are you excitedly inviting to “see” Jesus?

- Pastor Reggie Phillips

**Prayer (2 minutes)**

Lord, help us to see the scripture with your eyes today. We may be separated by distance, but we are invited to gather together in your presence and we have accepted the invitation. Speak to us Father, and increase our faith through this time of fellowship and study. In Jesus’ name, amen.

**Starting the Discussion (3 minutes)**

1. What is something new about yourself of your family that God has allowed you to see during this extra time at home?

**Unfolding the Biblical Story (30 minutes)**

**Read Luke 19:1-3**

1. Luke sets up an encounter that should not have happened. List all the reasons that Jesus and Zacchaeus should have never met according to this introduction.
2. There is nothing wrong with wealth. Money is a tool not a moral indicator. However, why is it a scathing review of Zacchaeus’ character that he is wealthy?
3. This story follows the healing of a blind man in Luke 18. Zacchaeus wants to see, but his eyes are OK. In what ways might he have been “blind” to who Jesus was?
4. Luke says Zacchaeus wanted to see who Jesus was but the crowd stood in his way. In what ways might Christians today get in the way of others seeing Jesus’ character?

**Read Luke 19:4-6**

1. What risks did Zacchaeus take in running ahead and climbing a tree to see Jesus?
2. Jesus could have walked on by and let Zacchaeus watch from the tree. Why do you think Jesus stopped and invited himself over for dinner?
3. Luke says Jesus was passing through, but he told Zacchaeus he must stay at his house. Have you ever assumed something of God only to have him surprise you?

**Read Luke 19:7-8**

1. Compare Zacchaeus’ attitude at the end of verse 6 with the crowd’s in verse 7. What might have been the motive for their muttering?
2. The crowd calls Zacchaeus a sinner but how does Jesus’ presence transform Zacchaeus in verse 8?

**Read Luke 19:9-10**

1. Jesus invited himself to dinner but declared “salvation has come.” What does the welcomed presence of Jesus equal in this passage?
2. “A son of Abraham” is used in the Bible to describe one who responds to God’s Word with immediate, faith-filled action. How does this fit Zacchaeus?

**Making Scripture Personal (8 minutes)**

1. What are you doing to intentionally put yourself in proximity to Jesus?
2. What public shortcomings (sins, habits, attitudes, failures) do you have that the Lord wants to work through for his glory? (If you are brave enough to try, give at least one person permission to speak honestly to you about this without fear of retaliation.)
3. Under quarantine we can’t invite people over for dinner around our table, but we can invite them into a conversation to see who Jesus really is. Who are you inviting?

**Prayer (2 minutes)**

Dear God, thank you for seeing us. Thank you for inviting us to see who you really are and who we can be in your presence. This week, allow us to invite others to see you too. Help us to not get distracted by the noise of the crowd around us and to focus on your presence. In Jesus’ name, amen.

**Wrapping Up (2 minutes)**

See if anyone has lingering questions or insights to share from your time of study and prayer. Summarize the group discussion as a reminder of what you learned together.

**Scripture Challenge (3 minutes)**

For your scripture challenge this week, memorize Luke 19:9. In a world gone crazy, this passage reminds us that one simple encounter with Jesus can change everything!

**A Note from Southside Church (3 minute)**

God sees our present situation. None of this caught him by surprise. You are loved. If you need any help during this time, please reach out to your small group or to the pastors at Southside Church, Remember, the world is finally realizing how much they need God. This is our chance to invite them to see who Jesus really is!