



GOSPEL FLUENCY AROUND THE TABLE

April 2, 2023

The Big Idea

Best Practice

Seek Jesus' presence and influence in your normal everyday rhythms and practices.

Passages:

Psalm 1:1-3, Jeremiah 17:7-8, Colossians 3:23; Matthew 9:10-13

Group Goal:

Simple things can often become big things. Regular little practices can become habits that turn into priorities that end up shaping our character over time.

The Gospel can make its biggest impact in the simple ordinary events and actions we frequently do throughout the day. We spend a lot of time with others in two areas: working and eating. And they are just two prime ways we can invite Jesus into that moment, to walk with him in it, see the scene through his eyes, and perhaps have a different outlook in the process. We can end up living out Gospel grace and truth to others when they need it most. We can "be" Jesus to others who need to know and receive His love for them.

Group Talk

For Starters

When have you planted something: a tree, garden, or even grass? Did it turn out well? What did you learn in the process?

To Discuss

Connected = thriving (Read Ps. 1:1-3, Jer. 17:7-8)

What's appealing to you about that imagery of a thriving tree in both passages?

Have you ever immersed yourself in something so much that you mastered it over time? What was the investment part like on the front end?

What was that like when you realized you were mastering it successfully?

What would it look like to immerse Jesus more into your daily rhythms?

Does that seem too complicated or overwhelming to try? What makes it feel like a challenge?

Prayer Focus

Jesus in the warehouse or office (Col 3:23)

What would it be like having Jesus as your immediate supervisor or CEO? Can you envision that scenario right now? How would things be the same? Different?

I heard a great way to record and pass around prayer requests. A group has a journal where everyone writes their requests in it as they arrive. Everyone then takes pictures of it, and it expedites sharing needs when they go to prayer later in the evening. Try it!

What is your most common mindset as you do your daily work?

Leadership Tip

How is your group serving those outside the four walls of the church? If your group is unsure what to do, one way to begin is to sign up for an activity that some or all of you can do locally. Contact Ned or John Hilliard about things your group can do to begin blessing others in need.

Do you see a connection between the work for your job and God inviting you into it as an opportunity to discover more about Him? In what ways?

(13) What makes mercy a more powerful expression than sacrifice?

Where do you struggle to see that connection?

When have you had to admit you were wrong on something or someone. How tough was that to acknowledge it?

How might you see Jesus meeting you in your work?

How can we 'humanize' our perspective of people to match how Jesus sees them?

What would you like him to supply you with?

Jesus at dinner (Matthew 9:10-13)

(10) Who might fit into the category of 'disreputable' in our world today?

Next Steps

"Practicing the presence of God" - a simple practice that will need a little humility and dependency, and lots of repetition!

(11) What stands out to you about the Pharisees reaction to this invitation? Why was it such a problem for them?

- **Goal:** Keep God's loving presence in the conscious forefront of your mind throughout the day
- Have a continual, ongoing conversation with Jesus all day long.
- When your mind wanders – simply refocus it.
- When you're distracted or stressed, don't wallow in guilt. Simply refocus.