HOMEROOM 2021 – **The Table - wk 4**

**A dining room table and 3 chairs**

**Food court, orange chicken - after I eat, go back for refill - man behind counter offers samples - but I’m full… I think how easy it would be to go 15-20 ft and hand out samples to those hungry…**

**That is the challenge of the church… we often feed the full.**

**Luke 14 - Jesus met some seekers for lunch one Sat - they fell over each other to sit next to him, he challenged them to serve each other & invite the forgotten, poor, crippled, lame, and blind - they can’t pay you back, that is real blessing!**

**A man sitting at the table said how great it would be to sit at the table with God… Jesus then shares this - Luke 14:16 Jesus replied: “A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. 17 At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ 18 “But they all alike began to make excuses.**

**18b The first said, ‘I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.’ (Foolish to buy it and then go see it) 19 “Another said, ‘I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I’m on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.’ (Foolish to test them after purchase)**

**\*\* Work and possessions kept them from God - excuses**

**20 “Still another said, ‘I just got married, so I can’t come.’ (Family before God)**

**\*\* Relationships kept them from God – excuses**

**Excuses we make: prosperity, pursuits, possessions, & people**

**21“The servant returned and told his master what they had said. His master was angry and said, `Go quickly into the streets and alleys of the city and invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.' 22 After the servant had done this, he reported, `There is still room for more.' 23 So his master said, `Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full. 24 For none of those I invited first (one w/ excuses - too full for Jesus) will get even the smallest taste of what I had prepared for them.' " (O)**

**The master is God / The banquet is the kingdom of God**

**The rejectors are Israel - Jesus then invites whosoever…**

**The servants sent to invite and serve are disciples of Jesus.**

**I think of the Panda Express guy feeding the full - if we could just walk 20ft to hand out samples & invite people to the table**

**\*\* CHRIST FOLLOWERS WE HAVE THE ULTIMATE MEAL – JESUS**

**John 6:35 - Jesus replied, "I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me will ever be hungry again. Those who believe in me will never thirst.**

**The ultimate food is Bread – it is full of complex carbohydrate**

**\* We have the ultimate bread of life – Jesus Christ**

**\*\* THE CHURCH IS THE TABLE WHERE PEOPLE COME TO GET FED**

**Where they can be fed the bread of life… Livingway is a table.**

**We are to go and share this meal at work and home (go and tell) AND to invite them to church (come and see) the table.**

**Here at the table, we are about - Building believers and serving seekers (explain) 3D Mission: Discover – Develop – Deploy.**

A Few Thoughts About the Ultimate bread **(from Luke 14)**

**If we are to bring people to the table (set table as you speak…)**

**Luke 14:16 A certain man (Jesus) was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. 17 At the time of the banquet (when it was ready) he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’**

**1. The Ultimate Bread (Jesus) deserves and desires guests**

**Jesus is wanting and calling people at the table.**

**For Jesus, his nourishment is to gather people to the table: John 4 - Jesus had a talk with a woman at a well and read her mail - She was in awe that God would want her - she ran back to invite everyone to meet Jesus (handing out samples - disciples returned with dinner and tried to get him to eat) But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.”**

**John 4:34 "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. (…to reach people like this woman - hurt and left out by others - and to draw them to the kingdom) 35 Do you not say, ‘There are still four months and *then* comes the harvest’? (Plenty of time) Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! (People like this woman are ready - His food was seeing them come to the table, it should be ours too! - The women returned with others) John 4:39 Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony…**

**The power of the invite… I see the people come weekly and so many come alone – I wonder if they are handing out samples…**

**Luke 14:21b (Jesus said) `Go quickly into the streets and alleys of the city and invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind.' 22 After the servant had done this, he reported, `There is still room for more.' 23 So his master said, `Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and urge anyone you find to come, so that the house will be full. (The least likely of guests! They are ready!)**

**\*\* This is why we do what we do – We grow so we can go…**

**I want to talk to Christians for a sec…Ask yourself - Who in your life is hungry? Who are you praying for – who are you inviting?**

**When we leave here it’s all about handing out samples of the bread of life (hand out samples of bread).**

**Luke 14:16 …a man prepared a great feast and sent out many invitations.**

**2. The Ultimate Bread deserves the Ultimate Preparation**

**Ever invite someone to dinner? How do you prepare? Clean home, prepare the meal early, serve it hot, candles, the talk to your kids: Guests are coming be on your best behavior - no burping, fighting, food throwing, chew with mouth closed…**

**When it’s just family we don’t do as much. Is that being fake? No, why? Because it’s about the serve. We’re still feeding the family, but we’re thinking about the chairs who will be there… (the guest)**

**When I think through the service I think about the chairs:**

**There should be three chairs at the table every week:**

* **Chair 1 – Mature believer – the sold-out**
* **Chair 2 – Young believers – the stumblers**
* **Chair 3 – Un-believers – the seekers**

**The Ecosystem of spiritual growth: Mature believers serve up samples, invite friends to the table, in turn come to know Christ who in turn…**

**How many of you love meat loaf? One bad meatloaf (un-cooked) can ruin it for all the good ones (my Aunt Mary…) Church is the same, we cannot bring a half-baked meal, sloppy efforts or halfhearted. Ultimate bread deserves ultimate prep!**

**\* Jesus always served up truth with power and conviction.**

**\* Jesus used the street language – did not talk over people.**

**As a teacher I am like the Iron chief (Making fish ice cream…)**

**My mission is to serve it up tasty – not too complex or bland… To present the food, give utensils, explain how to digest it.**

**First time I had Thai food I looked at the menu - asked a lot of question - I don’t talk Thai – please explain… if I am to actually want what is being served – I need to understand it.**

**I think most churches try – but for some it’s lost in translation.**

**The ultimate Preparation and Presentation for the ultimate meal**

**I want to apologize if you had had a bad experience at church – it is not the breads’ fault – we are imperfect people.**

**Every week we have an opportunity to serve the bread of life to a hungry world. How are we, how are you- preparing the table?**

**When my father actually came to a church, I was youth pastor - For the first times I saw church through his eyes – it changed me. They did what any church would do… but they spoke a different language - The Bread of Life was lost in translation - I began to wonder if church could build believers and serve seekers (soon after that that this church burned in my heart)**

**I still think about that moment… because I don’t think my dad had an interest in stepping into a church again…**

**You see when I prepare and present the table - I often think of him and others like him - your neighbor, your friends, family… will they get it?**

**Luke 14:17 At the time of the banquet he sent his servants to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’**

**3. The ultimate bread deserves faithful servers**

**When we plan out a service… 4 ingredients to keep in mind**

* **The table: The place – the tool (What’s the condition?)**
* **The chairs: The people (Who is coming, who is invited?)**
* **The food: The bread of life – Jesus (Is it served hot?)**
* **The servers: the dudes with the food (Are you prepared?)**

**People go back to restaurants for the food and service - If the food stinks - chairs will be empty. This is not about creating consumers but giving the ultimate bread the ultimate justice… the deserved care**

**Having guests takes work – it takes work to serve - the food, preparing, planning, set up, calls, clean up…**

**I think back to week 1 - Matthew 9**:**37 Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. 38 Pray the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”**

**Harvest ripe but – the workers are few – the servants are few**

**We have the 3 intentional chairs but unfortunately there are 2 others:**

**C1 – Mature believer – C2 – Young believers – C3 – Un-believers**

**\*\* The “I” Chair (highchair) mature babies who just want more and like to make a mess - I want this, want that, feed me, crying, want attention.**

**\*\* The Lounger –– They like to sit and watch – they like comfort**

**I am good to just watch as others do the serving.**

**So many here work hard to prepare the meal – we attempt to serve it up hot and fresh, ready to eat, but it is often just given to the full – A lot of churches, yet many still don’t know Christ**

**\*\* Dallas has more restaurants per capita (4 times more restaurants per person than New York City) – obesity issues**

**\*\* Dallas more spiritual restaurants (church) spiritual obesity…**

**What’s ironic, the me-istic mentality is the opposite of maturity**

**We have a lot of Diet Churches: Who focus on the menu.**

**But every healthy body to live long must, eat well and exercise**

**To have a healthy Church Body you must have diet and exercise**

**James 1:22, “Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”**

**Without exercise – we’re unhealthy.**

**Every church must be a diet and exercise church**

**To exercise we need to “push back” from the table**

**1 Pet 4:10 God has given gifts to each of you (ways we are wired) from His great variety of spiritual gifts. Manage them well so that God’s generosity can flow through you. (When we don’t manage (use) them they don’t flow through us)**

**Everything God gives us is to flow thru us.**

**An Eddy: A vortex in a creek that spins & sucks everything up building up junk & trash. Too often, we are an eddy – all about us. We forget God has given things to flow**

**What’s the meaning of life? To take up space, communicate, procreate, recreate, and then disintegrate? No, God has given you something unique that is to be managed and used by God to touch another’s life…**

**A cowboy who refuses to play after Jerry Jones says get on the field, gets fired. We have an owner who bought us w/ blood**

**If we’re not using our skills within the context of the kingdom - we’re just taking up grace and space and we’re missing it…**

**There are plenty of lazy boy loungers and I Chair Christians**

**I’m thankful we have people here who’ve done the push back.**

**I am blown away & humbled by those who exercise their faith each week by serving Christ and giving out samples…**

**Many of you who push back - will one day walk the streets of heaven: Thank you for greeting me with love, talking to me, you welcomed me - you paved the way for the seed of the word of God - Because you kept my child in the nursery, I had the comfort and the confidence to hear the truth while at Church – youth – small group – lead worship…**

**Jesus was teaching the disciples with-out miracles – until a very special event at a table in Cana – the guests were on his mind… (Set up story) John 2:5 Mary then said to the servants, “Do whatever Jesus tells you to do.” 6 At the feast there were six stone water jars that were used by the people for washing themselves in the way that their religion said they must. Each jar held about twenty or thirty gallons. 7 Jesus told the servants to fill them to the top with water. Then after the jars had been filled, 8 he said, “Now take some water and give it to the man in charge of the feast.”**

**Powerful principle… The miracle begins when we are poured out in service to others.**

**Paul says - 2 Corinthians 4:7 We are like clay jars in which this treasure is stored. The real power comes from God and not from us.**

**At this table (Livingway) - it’s all about the bread of Life… Jesus**

**Helping people discover Jesus, develop maturity in Jesus… and deploy people into the world to hand out samples of Jesus**

**And because we want to continue to discover – develop – deploy - we need some of you to step up. The stakes are high. We’re not playing monopoly; we’re talking heaven or hell – people are dying on the vine.**

**Opportunities: Areas of opportunities**

**Children’s Min / Outreach / Life Teams Leaders and hosts / Youth / Worship band / Sound & Tech**

**Matthew 9:37Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. 38 Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field."**

**The commission – the Disciple – the Body – The Table**

**Ask yourself:**

* **What chair are you sitting in?**
* **Who will you invite to the table?**
* **Are willing to step 20 ft and hand out samples – to the hungry?**
* **Will you push back from the table and serve the bread of life w/us?**

**\*\*\* Use the connection card – yes I am ready!!!**

Prayer

* **Invite you to come to the table…**

**Excuses we make: prosperity, pursuits, possessions, & people**

* **God us the boldness to hand out the samples…**