



BREAKING THE ICE

If you have to bring one thing to Thanksgiving dinner, what do you bring and why?

How did God show you the broken people around you this week? How did you reach out to them?

How have you invited other people to your table and gotten to know them through the last few weeks?

MAIN CONTENT

This week Pastor Kevin finished our series on the Table. When Pastor Kevin was sitting around the table with Pastor Dave and Pastor James they talked a lot about new people moving to Nashville, especially people from other countries and locations around the U.S.

All three pastors had some great takeaways from the table conversation. Pastor Kevin said, “We can all be that first friend”. Pastor Dave said, “New people are a gift to the city of Nashville”. Pastor James said, “When we see someone new, especially from another country, we should go meet them and ask them about themselves”.

1. Of the three pastor quotes above, which one is easiest for you to incorporate into your life? (Be the first friend, seeing people as a gift, getting to know someone from another country). Which one is challenging?

Throughout this series we see that hospitality is a window into the heart of God. We can live in a scarcity mindset of not knowing we will have a seat at the table or a seat in the inner circle. But God wants us to make room for others in the circle. The danger of wanting to be in the inner circle or inner ring is there's always another ring.

2. Are you one that is satisfied with your relationships or are you looking to find another ring of relationships that may be more influential? Explain.

Read Luke 14:1-6

Jesus was invited to a dinner by the pharisees. The pharisees were watching Jesus closely, because they

were judging Him. But Jesus knew what they were up to. He chose not to try and perform for the pharisees but to be himself. He chose to love and not ignore the human suffering in front of Him even though the pharisees were trying to get him to dismiss the suffering man.

3. Who are some relationships you feel like you can be 100% yourself in front of? Who do you feel like you have to perform in front of?

Jesus never wants us to feel like we have to perform. When we are present with Jesus we don't have to perform. We should chose being in His presence over performance.

God created us for relationship and presence with Him. When we are secure in knowing our relationship with Him is what matters the most, we realize we will always have a seat at the table with Him.

4. How do you experience sitting in Jesus' presence and being present with Him?

Read Luke 14: 7-11

When we are at the table with others, we can either try to promote ourselves or humbly wait to be promoted. God will never promote us beyond our capacity. He always gives grace to the humble who don't try to promote themselves. If we're not careful and we unhealthily long for our next seat, it can keep us from where God wants us to make an impact in our current situation. We should grow comfortable in the ring where God has us knowing He has a better plan for us.

5. How easy or hard is it for you to be comfortable where God has you currently planted? Do you long for another seat at the table?

For us to break the inner ring of where He wants us to be we need to focus on doing great work, do things we like with the people we like and don't play the game. Invite others into your circle and to your table. When we accept one another as Christ accepts us we are acting like Him.

6. Which do you need to focus more on: Do great work, Do things you like with the people you like or don't play the game?

7. How can you change your way of thinking and focus on doing great work, doing things you like with the people you like and not play the game?

God will fight for us to be at the right table and right circle at the right time. It's our responsibility to make room for others in the process.

CLOSING PRAYER

Thank you God for fighting for us. You know where we need to be and when. Will you help us hear your voice and gently remind us where we are trying to enter circles we aren't ready for. Will you give us the peace and humility to seek you above our place at the table and to be satisfied where you have us. Will you place us in relationships that help us enjoy what you've called us to do. In Jesus name, Amen.

ACTION STEP

+ Take note of where you are striving to enter circles you may not be ready for yet.

Pray and ask God to help you be satisfied where He has you.

+ As you celebrate Thanksgiving this week, be mindful as you accept those around you. Go out of your way to be kind and generous with those you are celebrating with.