



AROUND THE TABLE

January 15-February 26, 2017

Jesus was ridiculed by the religious folk of his day (the Pharisees) for being “a glutton and a drunkard.” He spent a lot of time eating with people, religious or otherwise. Shared meals were an important part of Jesus’ strategy for teaching and sharing the Good News, and proclaiming the nearness of God’s coming reign.

Eating with others can be an expression of God’s grace. It can provide a glimpse of what it’s like to live under God’s reign. It can express and reinforce community and be a foretaste of God’s coming kingdom. Coming together for a meal provides a great opportunity to invite those who have yet to know God, to experience God in our midst.

Each week, we’ll discuss what we find around the table. Below is the list of themes and readings for each week. You’re invited to read along through the Gospel of Luke, to bear witness to, and follow in the footsteps of the Human One (the “Son of Man”) who came eating and drinking (see Luke 7:34).

This series is based upon the book, *A Meal with Jesus: Discovering Grace, Community & Mission around the Table* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2011), by Tim Chester.

January 15

...there is Jesus.

Read Luke 7:31-36. Jesus is accused of being “a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners” (v.34). Jesus spent a great deal of time around the table as a way of enacting grace, living into community, and being in mission.

January 22

...there is Grace.

Read Luke 5:27-32. When the Pharisees question the appropriateness of Jesus’ dinner companions, he explains that he’s come not for the religious folk, but for those whom the religious call unholy, impious, unrighteous, sinner.

Jesus has come for the outcast. Sharing a meal with an outcast no longer makes them an outcast. It is an act of grace and inclusion.

January 29

...there is Community.

Read Luke 7:36-50. Jesus dines in the house of a Pharisee and the party is interrupted by an uninvited guest. Jesus uses the intrusion as an opportunity to talk about the importance of hospitality and welcoming one another.

February 5

...there is Hope.

Read Luke 9:7-20. As a day of teaching comes to a close, Jesus feeds a crowd of over 5,000 people with just five loaves of bread and two fish. There were even leftovers! Jesus is made known by his catering, by providing for the people.

February 12

...there is Mission.

Read Luke 14:1-24. Jesus is at the house of a Pharisee when he instructs the host on the appropriateness of his guest list. Next time you throw a party, he says, “invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed.” Invite the stranger—“do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors.”

February 19

...there is Salvation.

Read Luke 22:7-20. Jesus eats his last meal, before his death, with his disciples. He instructs them to remember him in the sharing of bread and wine as a means of living into and experiencing salvation.

February 26

...there is Promise.

Read Luke 24:13-35. The resurrected Jesus walks with travelers on the road to Emaus. He is recognized in the breaking of bread, the sharing of a meal. The promise of Jesus’ resurrection—of God’s presence—is realized in the meal.