

CONNECT GROUP NOTES

Speck of Salt

THE GOSPEL OF COMMUNITY

WEEK 2

**TABLE OF
RECONCILIATION**

FOR THE FACILITATOR

Encourage the group to take turns reading and answering questions. It is best to ask the questions as they appear instead of waiting till the end.

TOPIC : Peck of Salt Week 2 - Table of Reconciliation

Sermon audio: www.outlookchurch.co.za/sermons/324

READER 1

In this journey we are exploring how we can use our dining room tables as an offering to the Lord to be used as an instrument of worship, friendship, community building, discipleship and spiritual growth.

Jesus used the dining room table for many different aspects of His ministry. Let's focus on one such example:

Luke 7:36-50

³⁶ When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table.

³⁷ A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee's house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. ³⁸ As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

³⁹ When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.”⁴⁰ Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to tell you.” “Tell me, teacher,” he said. ⁴¹ “Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. ⁴² Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?”

⁴³ Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.” “You have judged correctly,” Jesus said. ⁴⁴ Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. ⁴⁶ You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. ⁴⁷ Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.” ⁴⁸ Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” ⁴⁹ The other guests began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” ⁵⁰ Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

What we see here is that Jesus used the dining room table as a place to reconcile two people that would have otherwise despised each other. Jesus shows us that we can use our

dining room tables as tables of reconciliation, this is the focus of our journey, this week.

READER 2

Jesus was the ultimate reconciler. When He died on the cross He reconciled all of humanity to God on the cross. The separation of sin was destroyed when the curtain was torn in two making a relationship with God accessible.

Ephesians 2:14-18

¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

Jesus is our peace. He destroyed the barrier of sin between us and God and made peace between Jews and Gentiles by fulfilling the law on behalf of both. We all have equal access

through the body of Jesus to the same Father by the same Spirit

READER 3

2 Corinthians 5:18-20

¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Jesus reconciled all of mankind to God, but He also commissioned us to be reconcilers as well.

We have been called to be reconcilers as well, and Jesus showed us how. When we bring different people together around the table, under the authority of the name of Jesus, reconciliation happens, and peace can be made.

QUESTION 1: How often do you reconcile with others, are you a peacemaker or peacekeeper?

READER 4

We have seen in the life of Jesus that we are called to be reconcilers, and Jesus has shown us that we can use our dining room tables as tools of reconciliation. So what then is our job as a reconciler?

- We should resolve conflict
- We break down walls of hostility
- We make peace
- We bring people together, who were far apart

Matthew 5:9

*⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.*

For Jesus, the cross was the ultimate tool of reconciliation, but the dinner table was His daily tool of reconciliation.

If Jesus showed us that the dinner table should be our daily tool for reconciliation, then how can we practically prepare ourselves to be ready to reconcile others in this way?

- We should be comfortable around the table with all kinds of people, even those who are very different from us.
- We should set an example of being relaxed around the table.
- We should demonstrate a spirit of hospitality to our guests.

QUESTION 2: Which of these three factors do you think you struggle the most with? How might you be able to improve on them?

READER 5

We should be comfortable around the table with people who are different to us.

Jesus sat around the table in between two people who were both very unlike Him. A prostitute who lived a sinful life, and a pharisee who would have been an enemy to Him and opposed His ministry.

This however, did not stop Jesus from being comfortable meeting with them and sitting around the table with them, which led Jesus to be able to reconcile the two together.

We should set an example of being relaxed around the table.

When Jesus sat around the table, Jesus would recline. This speaks of a posture of relaxation and being laid back. Jesus did not find it necessary to have formal and elaborate dinner plans, instead Jesus chose to recline.

We should see this and try to do the same. People feel most welcome and at ease when the environment is more relaxed. This does not mean that we should be informal and disregard our manners, instead this means that we should be well mannered and respectful, while staying comfortable and at ease with our guests.

We should demonstrate a spirit of hospitality to our guests.

We should be welcoming and hospitable to our guests. NO person around the dinner table should ever feel as though they are unwelcome or unwanted.

Jesus rebuked Simon for his lack of hospitality towards Him:

Luke 7:44

⁴⁴ Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. ⁴⁵ You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing

my feet. 46 You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet.

READER 6

Hospitality is extremely important when we are welcoming someone into our home. What signs of hospitality did Jesus point out in the woman who was at His feet?

Jesus pointed out that she had first washed His feet. This speaks into ensuring that your guest is comfortable. In that time people would walk for long periods of time on dusty roads in open sandals. It would be a great discomfort to sit at the table with dirty and dusty feet. For this reason Jesus found it a very pleasing and hospitable act for the woman to wash His feet.

John 13:14

¹⁴ “Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. “

Secondly Jesus showed Simon that the woman had kissed him, when Simon had not when he greeted Jesus.

This does not mean that we are expected to kiss every guest, that isn't always appropriate. What this does mean is that we

should have a spirit of welcoming. In that time a kiss represents a welcome greeting, and we should also greet our guests with sincere hearts of welcoming.

READER 7

Lastly, Jesus commented that Simon had not poured any oil on Him, but the woman had emptied her jar of perfume onto His feet. Oil was a very significant sign of respect in the culture of Jesus' time. This shows us that we should welcome our guests with signs of respectfulness. This doesn't have to be any grand gesture, but it does mean that we should respect our guests and we should respect their culture, which may be different from our own.

This can often just mean very practical things, such as ensuring that they have something to drink, it could mean offering the guests the best seat, it could be waiting for everyone to sit before you start eating, or making sure that your guests are served before you are.

This is how we should be hospitable to our guests.

QUESTION 3: How can you improve your hospitality towards your guests?

SHARE YOUR HIGHLIGHT

Take turns sharing what stood out to you the most from what we read and why?

ACTION STEP

What action step can you take to Ensure that you dedicate your dining room table to the lord.

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