**Table Talk**

**Sermon Series: Table Manners – Listen Well**

**March 22, 2020**

**Introduction (7 min)**

Many of you may be sharing this devotional with your family or a small group. Begin by watching the video and sharing the story below, then open up the discussion with the questions provided. You are loved and prayed for! May the Lord speak truth and hope through your time in His Word!

Please remember you can use online tools like ZOOM and Facebook Messenger to host a small group through your phone or computer!

**Table Talk Video: Table Manners – Listen Well**

Like many other families in these days, we have been quickly thrust into homeschool mode. As we have tried to figure out this new rhythm, we have had some successes and some challenges.

One of the things that Ashley started with our kids is a morning Bible reading time. We have a lot to accomplish, and the list from the school seems to keep getting longer. But we are trying to instill in our kids the truth that the most important thing we need to do each day is to spend some time in God’s presence listening.

The kids are too small to read very much, but they flip through the familiar pages of their story Bibles and retell the stories. They sit quietly and ponder what God might want to say to them today for about 20 minutes.

When Ashley proposed the idea, I loved it! But honestly, I wasn’t sure how the kids would do with it. They are doing great! It has actually challenged me. How much time am I spending not studying for a sermon or Bible study, but just listening to God speak as I enjoy the Bible?

Our Bible passage for today’s study is Jesus sitting at the table of familiar friends when stress and anxiety tried to take over the scene. Jesus responds in loving wisdom, batting back the harsh words of worry and showing that value of listening well.

In these days where our normal has been disrupted with worry and anxiety, may you pause and listen for the voice of God, Make it a part of your new daily routine. May you hear hope, truth, and joy as God speaks. Good news – God is always speaking! Are you listening?

- Pastor Reggie Phillips

**Prayer (2 minutes)**

God who speaks, speak to us. Open our ears to hear and our minds to understand. Open our hearts to receive the encouragement and joy You desire to give. Help us to listen well as you speak and to ponder Your Truth. We live in a world full of interruptions. Guard our minds so that nothing distracts us from You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

**Starting the Discussion (3 minutes)**

1. What is one avenue through which God has spoken to you this week?

**Unfolding the Biblical Story (30 minutes)**

**Read Luke 10:38**

1. Jesus is on his way. To where is he going and why? (Luke 9:51)
2. Often repetition in the Bible is a clue signaling that we need to pay attention. It is used 3 times in this story. The first is here. In Greek Martha is introduced as a “certain woman,” and a few verses earlier in Luke 10:30 the Samaritan is introduced as a “certain man.” What might this repetitious phrase clue us into?
3. Several people live in Martha’s house but she is the one that opens the home and invites Jesus over. What might this tell us about Martha?

**Read Luke 10:39**

1. Mary’s place at Jesus’ feet would have been highly unusual. Why do you think she chose this position instead of listening from further away?
2. Why do you think Jesus allowed her to sit there?

**Read Luke 10:40**

1. Martha was “distracted.” From what? By what? Was Martha’s work important?
2. Jesus was the honored guest in the home Martha ran. Why would she come to Jesus to ask him to send Mary to the kitchen?
3. Martha’s public question, “Don’t you care?” could have been seen as a challenge to Jesus’ honor or an insult. Why would she open her home to him and then speak to him that way?
4. Martha abruptly tells Jesus what to do instead of addressing Mary directly. What might cause her to be so rude and assuming to Jesus?

**Read Luke 10:41**

1. Jesus uses repetition for the second time in this story, repeating Martha’s name. What might this clue reveal in how Jesus desires to respond to the chaos?
2. The third instance of repetition is in the intentional use of Lord in this passage. In Greek, Jesus’ name is not used at all. Just Lord. Why do you think did this? What extra detail does that clue us into?
3. Martha started off distracted and ended up worried and upset. How did her decisions escalate her emotions?
4. Jesus never addresses the problem as Martha saw it. What does he address?

**Read Luke 10:42**

1. Does Jesus condemn or belittle Martha’s actions at any point?
2. What is the “one thing” that Jesus says is needed?

**Making Scripture Personal (8 minutes)**

1. Mary chose a posture and position that made it easy for her to focus and listen. How are you being intentional about listening as God speaks to you?
2. The “preparations” that Martha was distracted by is the same Greek word for ministry. Have you ever allowed your work for God to get in the way of your relationship with Him?
3. Martha allows her emotions to override her tongue and she lashes out at Jesus. Have you ever allowed emotions to guide your decisions during a critical moment?
4. Jesus said only “one thing” is needed. What are you doing to practice this one thing?

**Prayer (2 minutes)**

Gracious Lord, thank You for patiently speaking even when we allow our busyness, emotions, and expectations of others to distract us from what matters most. Please help us to choose, as Mary did, the one thing that matters. May we enter Your presence and listen well as You speak in these days. We seek to be close to You Father, help us to not miss anything You are saying to us! In Jesus’ name we pray, amen.

**Wrapping Up (2 minutes)**

See if anyone has lingering questions or insights to share from your time of study and prayer. Summarize the group discussion as a reminder of what you learned together.

**Scripture Challenge (3 minutes)**

For your scripture challenge this week, work with your group to try and memorize Luke 10:41-42. May the truth of these verses challenge you to listen well!

**A Note from Southside Church (3 minute)**

We love you and we are praying for you! We are trying new methods and tools to minister well in unprecedented days. Take a minute to discuss what is working well and how we as a church could minister effectively and creatively through these challenging days. Feel free to pass suggestions or notes of encouragement from your small group on to the pastoral staff!