

Lord, you have called us to your table of grace and mercy. Help us to make that a table that welcomes all people, particularly those who need that welcome. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Scripture and Jesus turns on its head who is invited to tables of grace.

Day 1 Read Leviticus 19:33-34

1a. Leviticus often gets quoted to hold people to moral codes and behaviors. How are aliens to be treated while in the lands of God's people?

b. Why should the people of Israel behave this way toward aliens?

2. While immigration reform is a complicated issue and cannot be fully resolved in two verses of scripture (that issue can be debated in other forums); nevertheless, as this issue is debated, what do people of Christian and Jewish faith need to keep in mind as we deal with aliens?

Day 2 Read Luke 14:1, 7-14

3. What instruction does he give at the house of the leader of the Pharisees regarding sitting in places of honor?

4a. Even at meals with friends, we do not have "places of honor" to speak of like they did at Jesus' time. However, there are "places of honor" all through our lives that we do still try to take for ourselves in our lives nonetheless. Specifically name what some of those "places" might be that we try to take for ourselves.

b. What can we do about the times when we find ourselves in this trap?

Day 3 Read Matthew 9:10-13

5. Jesus gets criticized for eating with sinners and tax collectors. If this scene was happening today, what kind of people might Jesus be eating with? Specifically name a few groups.

6a. In verse 12 Jesus gives his reasoning as to why it is important for him to eat with these folks. What is his reason?

b. What does Jesus mean by his response?

Day 4 Read Luke 7:36-50

7a. What does the woman do when she comes into the house of the Pharisee where Jesus is?

b. How does the Pharisee respond to her behavior?

8a. Explain the parable that Jesus tells.

b. This story contrasts the differences in how people respond to God's grace. The Pharisee and the woman respond differently to Jesus' coming into their lives. What lies at the heart of the differences in their responses?

9. Discuss why you believe you are more like Simon or more like the woman in your faith life.

Day 5 Read Mark 14:3-9

10. Jesus is at the house of Simon the Leper and the woman enters. What is significant about the fact that a leper is named, but the woman is not?

11a. In the story of Jesus' anointing at Bethany, name all the things that the chief priests and scribes would have objected to.

b. Why does Jesus say at the end of the story that "wherever the good news is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in remembrance of her"? What was so special about what she did?

Day 6 Re-read Mark 14:3-9

12a. How do you understand the objection of those who saw the woman's action that the ointment could have been sold for 300 denarii and the money given to the poor? After all, they are right, aren't they?

b. Was the woman's action "wasteful" as it is asserted?