

EAT

There are three ways that the New Testament completes the sentence: "The Son of Man came...". Two are well known:

- The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45).
- The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10).

But the third is somewhat surprising: The Son of Man came eating and drinking...(Luke 7:34)

The first two passages tell us what Jesus came to achieve - they outline His mission. The third tells us the manner in which he did it. **Jesus lived on mission around the table**. One of the ways we can surprise the world is by how we use our table.

Jesus ate with everyone

Think about who Jesus ate with - everyone! Jesus broke down barriers. If we look briefly at Luke's Gospel, we can see how often Jesus used the table to surprise his guests. At the table...

- Jesus accepted the worship of a sinful woman and criticized the self-righteousness of Simon the Pharisee (Luke 7:36-50).
- Jesus dispensed advice for how to welcome the poor into your lives (Luke 14:7-14).
- Jesus revealed himself as the risen Lord in Emmaus (Luke 24:28-32).
- Jesus shared the table with tax collectors, sinners, and prostitutes.

Use your table to break down the walls that separate people in our society. This is **missional hospitality**.

In their book *Right Here Right Now*, Alan Hirsch and Lance Ford wrote: "Sharing meals together on a regular basis is one of the most sacred practices we can engage in as believers. Missional hospitality is a tremendous opportunity to extend the kingdom of God. We can literally eat our way into the kingdom of God! If every Christian household regularly invited a stranger or a poor person into their home for a meal once a week, we would literally change the world by eating!"

Surprise the world by who you invite to share your table.

The table fosters community

Sometimes as Christians, we can be victims of the "holy huddle". We only invite other Christians to our tables, because we feel comfortable with each other. But Jesus calls us to foster community with unbelievers as well. Again - Jesus turned the social norm on its head. He ate with the sinners. And it's worth noting - he ate with them **FIRST**, and then **LATER** asked them for repentance.

Conversation flows from communion. The table is a forum for conversation and comradery. It's a forum for rest and reconciliation. It's great to invite an unbeliever to church - we should

be doing that! But there's something special about sitting in a circle, rather than in rows. We accomplish this at the table.

It's not a coincidence that when Jesus gave his disciples a practice to remember him by it was the breaking of bread and the drinking of wine.

We're called to live questionable lives. We're called to live lives that intrigue our neighbors and evoke questions about their faith. The way we eat and share the table can be intriguing. We model the character of God, we foster community, and we surprise the world at the table.