



Table Guide Introduction

What is a Table Guide?

Here at The Vail Church, we want to see organic, disciple-making movements begin to take root in the lives of our people, meaning, we want to be a church full of movement makers. In the New Testament, Jesus used the table and a meal as a primary method of showing hospitality and engaging those He was training.

In story after story, we read of Jesus eating and drinking with the lost and his disciples. In doing so, he set a timeless practice into motion - community around a table. This practice is what the New Testament writers go on to call "hospitality." And while the practice of hospitality is directed at those inside and outside the church, the Greek word literally means "*the love of a guest.*" Hospitality is expressing the welcome of God the Father to all through tangible acts of love, ideally through giving food, shelter, and relationship.

This guide is to help facilitate and inspire discussion. Here are some weekly gathering ideas:

- Dinner with your immediate family
- One-on-one with your spouse
- A small group of friends
- One-on-one coffee meetings

Important to note: This is not a 'small group program'. We are looking to join in Jesus' Kingdom movement, not just manage ministry programs. We are empowering the people of The Vail Church to take ownership of their discipleship to Jesus. It may be scary at first, but as Pastor Craig said, "We set the sail, and God sends the wind." Set the table, and then be open to what God wants to do and who He wants to bring to your table.

How much prep is needed?

Keep it simple above all. Think less content and more discussion and relationship. The goal is to create a welcoming atmosphere, have an honest conversation about the principle, and apply practically the principle that week. It would be good to have listened to the sermon for the week and downloaded both the sermon notes and the Table Guide before meeting as a group.

What should a gathering look like?

We believe the best context includes a meal. Have dinner or coffee, get into some honest discussion, talk about practically following Jesus, pray for one another, and go home. Your gathering doesn't always have to be just your family or friends. Consider inviting your neighbors, people you work with, or people in the community you have a connection with.

Further Resources For Study:

Check out the website below to get a better idea of what this weekly table gathering could look like:

<https://practictheway.org/eating-drinking/part-one>

Need more guidance? Email Leo Loughmiller at leo@thevailchurch.com

Table Discussion Guide

Week 2 - Expose

Discipleship Principle: Expose - *Be good news to help you share the Good News*

Scripture Focus: 1 Peter 2:12; James 2:8

Discussion Opener

Last week, our practice was prayer and specifically praying for two things: an open heart to the movement and mission that is around you, and for specific people God has put around you to influence. Did God move in your heart in any specific way? If you struggled with this, what was your biggest hurdle?

Discussion Questions

1. Read out loud 1 Peter 2:12. Here's some context: Christians were falsely accused of great crimes in the early church. People said that Christians were antisocial because they did not participate in society's immoral entertainment. They were accused of being 'atheists' because they didn't worship the idols of the time. But over time, it was clear that Christians were not immoral people — and it was shown by their lives. What are the similarities of the culture the early church was in compared to today? How would you apply 1 Peter 2:12 to life today as well?

2. To be a disciple of Jesus is to adopt the lifestyle of Jesus, especially when it comes to how He loves. Jesus displayed love through action not just words. Brainstorm some ideas on how you can practically love these groups of people:

- Your family
- Your neighbors
- Your co-workers
- Your classmates

3. Luke 6:32, 35-36 makes it clear that just loving people in general is not enough, and makes a point that even people who don't know God or Jesus show love to each other. The idea of 'loving your enemies' though is one way that love as a Christian is different. Be honest, who are the people that you would call 'enemies'? What's your struggle with loving them? Why do you think Jesus calls us to this kind of love?

Practice/Discipline For the Week: Expose - Let's move these ideas from our hearts and into our hands. This week, go and 'expose' someone to the love of Jesus. Maybe through an act of service. Maybe it's a kind word or encouragement. Maybe it's taking time to listen to someone's story. Come back next week ready to talk about what you did.

"The more our culture begins to look like Rome, the more our discipleship needs to look like Acts."

- **Dallas Willard**