

Series: Neighboring Where You Live

Message: A Meal with Your Neighbor

Scripture: Matthew 11:19a; Luke 5:27-33

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“Busyness rapes relationships. It substitutes shallow frenzy for deep relationships. It promises satisfying dreams but delivers hollow nightmares. It feeds the ego, but starves the inner man. It fills a calendar but fractures a family. It cultivates a program, but plows under priorities.”

Chuck Swindoll, *Killing Giants, Pulling Thorns*

George Gallup Jr., referring to American isolationism writes:

“We are physically detached from each other. We change places of residence frequently. Our survey revealed that seven in ten do not know their neighbors. As many as one-third of Americans admit to frequent periods of loneliness, which is a key factor in the high suicide rate among the elderly.”

Engaging Trends in Randy Frazee’s book The Connecting Church

Lyle Schaller quoted in The Connecting Church by Randy Frazee

“The biggest challenge for the church at the opening of the twenty-first century is to develop a solution to the discontinuity and fragmentation of the American lifestyle.”

Matthews 11:19a

¹⁹The Son of Man came eating and drinking

Romans 12:13

¹³Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

1 Peter 4:9

⁹Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.

Matthew 10:40

⁴⁰Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.

Hebrews 13:2

²Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.

Acts 2:46

⁴⁶Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts,

Luke 5:27-33

²⁷ After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me," Jesus said to him,

²⁸ and Levi got up, left everything and followed him.

²⁹ Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them.

³⁰ But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

³¹ Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.

³² I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

³³ They said to him, "John's disciples often fast and pray, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours go on eating and drinking."

Dr. Scott Bartchy quoted in [A Meal with Jesus](#) by Tim Chester

"It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of table fellowship for the cultures of the Mediterranean basin in the first century of our era. Mealtimes were far more than occasions for individuals to consume nourishment. Being welcomed at a table for the purpose of eating food with another person had become a ceremony richly symbolic of friendship, intimacy, and unity. Thus betrayal or unfaithfulness toward anyone with whom one had shared the table was viewed as particularly reprehensible. On the other hand, when persons were estranged, a meal invitation opened the way to reconciliation."

“Jesus rejected the superficial grounds upon which the Pharisees distinguished between the ‘righteous’ and the ‘sinners’. They based it on such things as descent from Abraham, circumcision, purification rites, food laws, and sabbath observance. Jesus based the distinction upon what one through repentance and faith had let God do in the innermost self. Jesus looked upon the Pharisee and publican as sinners, both under the same judgement and requiring the same salvation. It was for this principle that he set about to create a ‘new Israel,’ a new people of God, without regard for nationality, race, or other distinctions of the world.”

Studies in Luke's Gospel by Dr. Frank Stagg

“The parties of Jesus are celebrations. The Pharisees are mourning over the absence of God and his kingdom. But in Jesus God has come to his people, and his kingdom is dawning. So fasting gives way to feasting. Their meals are eaten with joy. They must be.

Compare the old way with the new way. The new way is gracious rather than religious, inclusive rather than exclusive, welcoming rather than unwelcoming. It is characterized by feasting rather than fasting, rejoicing rather than grumbling. It recognizes its need and finds hope in the Savior rather than feeling self-righteous and therefore rejecting the Savior.”

A Meal with Jesus by Tim Chester

1. At the heart of God's Kingdom are relationships– authentic, genuine and compassionate. And nothing fuels relationships like meals together.

“Radically ordinary hospitality is this: using your Christian home in a daily way that seeks to make strangers neighbors, and neighbors family of God.... When our Christian homes are open, we make transparent to a watching world what Christ is doing with our bodies, our families, and our world... Invest in your neighbors for the long haul, the hundreds of conversations that make up a neighborhood, and stop thinking of conversations with neighbors as sneaky evangelistic raids into their sinful lives. Maybe our own lives are actually more sinful... Stop treating your neighbor as a caricature of an alien worldview.”

The Gospel Comes with a House Key by Rosaria Butterfield

2. At the culmination of God's Kingdom is a meal— a banquet that celebrates God's grace. And this banquet has been purchased at a great price.

Rev. 19:6-9

⁶Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns.

⁷Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory!

For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

⁸Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear."

(Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)

⁹Then the angel said to me, "Write: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" And he added, "These are the true words of God."

Is. 25:6-9

⁶On this mountain the LORD Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine — the best of meats and the finest of wines.

⁷On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations;

⁸ he will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth. The LORD has spoken.

⁹In that day they will say, "Surely this is our God; we trusted in him, and he saved us. This is the LORD, we trusted in him let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation."

Is. 55:1-2, 6-8

¹ "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

² Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.

⁶ Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on them, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

⁸ "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD.