

# THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

GROUP GUIDE: WEEK 27

## CONVERSATION STARTER

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What's the weirdest or worst meal you've ever eaten?

## THE PASSOVER MEAL WITH THE DISCIPLES

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On the night of Passover, a Thursday evening in Jerusalem, Jesus shares a meal with his disciples gathered around a table. To his right, in the position of highest honor, sits Judas Iscariot, the one who would betray Jesus. Across the table sits Peter, the disciple Jesus says will deny him three times before the morning comes.

During the meal, Jesus announces to the entire group that someone present would betray him. *Who could it be?* They wonder. Jesus tells them it will be the one who dips the bread with him. His announcement comes at the traditional moment during the Passover meal when everyone dips their bread into the *maror*, the bitter herbs. Eating the *maror* literally would bring tears to your eyes, recalling the bitter toil of God's people in Egypt and the sin and rebellion that brought them there. Who would be the one to betray Jesus? In some ways, *all of them* would, just as all of them would eat of the *maror*.

Jesus dines at the table with betrayers, sinners, the rebellious, and deniers. Not only that, he washes their feet! He humbles himself before them, and not long after this meal, he will also die for them. Each of us are deniers or betrayers or sinners in our own right. But yet, Jesus welcomes us to the same table, to dine with him. It doesn't matter what your circumstance are or what you've done, Jesus invites you to share the meal with him. Jesus wants to wash your feet, too. He laid down his life for you.

And Jesus calls us to do the same for one another. "Love one another," he says. Like Jesus, we must adopt the open table, where no one person is greater than the other and all are welcome. *This* is how the world will know the truth of God's love. Not by what we teach, but what we do.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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1. What stuck out to you about the reading from this week? Was there a verse or idea that was particularly meaningful or challenging for you?
2. Jesus tells the disciples to love one another. What do you think he means by this? How are we called to love one another today?
3. How does our love for one another reveal God's character to the world? How has our failure to do this impacted how others view Christianity in our culture?
4. Jesus humbled himself by washing the feet of his disciples and told them to follow his example. How are we called to humble ourselves today by serving others? Are there people you have a difficult time serving?
5. Have there ever been times or seasons when you denied Jesus? What does it mean to you to know that Jesus still invites you to the table to share a meal with him?

## WEEKLY PRACTICE

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For the next few weeks, we'll follow along with the Lenten Companion Guide as our weekly practice. Each week, we'll encourage you to either give something up or take on something new in hopes of simplifying our lives, standing in solidarity with those who are suffering, and becoming people who love God and love others well.

### **Week Two: Gratitude**

Gratitude has the power to reshape the way we think and perceive the world. This week, start each day by listing five things you are thankful for. Write them down. Be specific. No repeats! At the end of the week, reflect on your experience: How did beginning your day with gratitude change your outlook?