



John 17
ALL BE ONE

Etiquette of Love

Setting Tables for Unity

john17movement.com



“I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us so that the world will believe you sent me.”

John 17:21 NLT

Purpose of the Tables

This prayer of Jesus can be understood in one word: relationship. This prayer was offered at a table, (the last supper). It was at that table Jesus explained what is needed to sustain our eternal life. The table represents the common grace all of us must partake to sustain and nourish our natural life.

In honoring this prayer in John 17 we seek to help create environments around tables where each of us can receive the needed nourishment relationships provide. When asked questions pertaining to the happiest, the most satisfying, and the most devastating moments of life, almost without exception those moments are centered on relationships.

At the table Christian unity is promoted through the building of relationships and friendships with each other over a simple meal, a cup of coffee, or a gelato, with prayer and sharing.

We were and are not created to be members of religions. We are members of one another like the parts of our physical body. Unity is not uniformity: being one does not mean being the same. We can honor our differences around the table.

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Table Etiquette: For Table Hosts

- All of this can start with your family!
- You can also invite a small group of 6-10 to gather around a table.
- Welcome diversity of faiths, of beliefs...

Start with a question. The point of questions is to give opportunity for everyone to participate in sharing their story. Everyone has a story of how they got to be who they are, how they were raised, how they discovered their particular interest, etc.

- Potential questions: (To have each person share)
 - What is the difference between unity and uniformity?
 - Where do you see love displayed most?
 - When you read the prayer of Jesus in John 17, what does it mean to you?
 - How were you introduced to your faith tradition?
 - What do you find most beautiful about your faith tradition?
 - How have you seen God move in your life?

1.

It starts with Presence.

Jesus is a welcomed guest, and we acknowledge His Presence at the table.

We must each be fully present and available to what God is doing at the table.

“For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.”

Matt 18:20 NIV

Practicing Presence:

Suspend Prejudgment:



Before passing judgment or assuming the intent of others, set aside any biases and preconceived notions you might have about others.

Practice Active Listening:

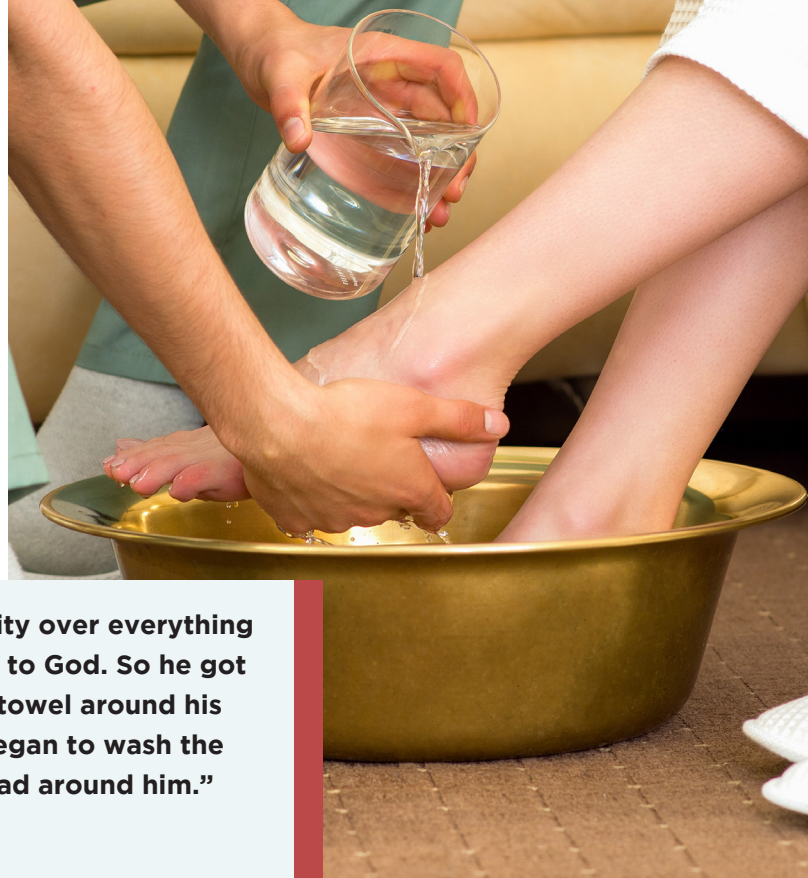


As you share and listen, embrace the art of active listening. Instead of formulating responses in your mind, give each person your full attention, truly hearing their thoughts and feelings without interruption.

Ask Respectful/Thoughtful Questions:



To encourage deeper and more meaningful discussions, ask thoughtful questions that demonstrate your sincere interest in understanding each another's viewpoints and experiences.



“Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel he had around him.”

John 13:3-5 NLT

2.

It starts at the Feet.

With a posture of Humility, we lay aside our position, role, power, to grab a towel and serve others. The table is not a place for domination but for service and surrender and esteeming of others. We lay aside who we are to become more of who God is calling us to be – like Him!

Practicing Humility:

Serve Others with a Servant’s Heart:



Embrace a posture of humility by willingly setting aside your position, role, and power. Approach the table with a servant’s heart, ready to serve others rather than seeking dominance. Just as Jesus humbly washed the feet of His disciples, seek opportunities to serve and uplift those around you.

Practice Surrender and Esteem for Others:



Cultivate humility by surrendering your ego and self-centeredness. Instead, focus on esteeming others and valuing their contributions. Recognize that each person has inherent worth and deserves respect. Let go of the need to be right or to have all the answers, allowing others to shine and contribute their unique perspectives.

Seek Personal Growth and Transformation:



Humility involves a willingness to lay aside who you are in order to become more who God intends you to be. Embrace personal growth and transformation as you open yourself to learning from others and from God’s guidance. Recognize that there is always room for improvement and that your journey of growth is ongoing.

3.

All are welcome!

The table is an inclusive place. It is not about how much we know but how well we love. It is not about who is in and who is out, who is right or who is wrong. Everyone has a place at the table.

“And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.”

Ephesians 3:17-19

Practicing being a welcoming table:

Create a Welcoming Environment:



Ensure that the table discussions are conducted in a warm and inviting atmosphere. Make each person feel valued and accepted from the moment they join the conversation.

Emphasize Love Over Knowledge:



Shift the focus from intellectual expertise to the power of love. Encourage participants to express their thoughts and experiences with compassion and empathy, rather than prioritizing who is right or wrong.

Celebrate Diverse Perspectives:



Acknowledge and appreciate the richness of diverse viewpoints. Foster an atmosphere where everyone’s voice is heard and respected, recognizing that each person brings a unique and valuable contribution to the table. Create unity in diversity!



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4.

It's about relationships!

Reconciliation happens through Relationships.

We gather for conversation, centered on Jesus, anchored in love. We don't lead with theology and doctrine, we lead with love and understanding. It is unity we seek. We get more of Jesus by being in relationship with each other. The table puts us in proximity to listen with our hearts not just our heads.

We seek personal and collective reconciliation.
Forgiveness and Repentance.

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth."

1 John 3:16-18

Practicing and focusing on relationships::

Center Conversations on Jesus and Love:



Prioritize building authentic relationships by centering discussions around Jesus and His teachings of love and compassion. Let the focus be on understanding one another rather than engaging in theological debates or doctrinal disagreements.

Listen with Empathy and an Open Heart:



When engaging in conversation, actively listen with empathy and an open heart. Seek to understand the feelings and perspectives behind others' words, putting aside preconceived notions and judgments.

Practice Forgiveness and Repentance: :



Embrace the principles of forgiveness and repentance to foster reconciliation in relationships. Be willing to forgive and seek forgiveness when necessary, showing genuine remorse and a commitment to positive change.

5.

Love is the Answer.

Love is a Person (Jesus) - Love is not a program, a method, or a procedure.

So that the world will know . . . and want to know and follow the originator of Love.

Through love we will usher in the Shalom/Peace of God which is a blessing from Heaven.

Practicing and bringing love to the forefront in our conversations and relationships::

Embody Love in All Actions:



Let love be the driving force behind everything you do. In your interactions with others, prioritize kindness, empathy, and compassion. Choose words and actions that uplift and encourage, reflecting the love of Jesus in your daily life.

Share the Message of Love:



Recognize that love is not just a concept but a person - Jesus. Share His message of love with others through your words and deeds. Let your life be a testament to the transformative power of love, inspiring others to seek the source of love in Jesus.

Cultivate Love for God and Others:



As Jesus taught, prioritize loving God with all your heart, soul, and mind. Seek a deep and intimate relationship with God, allowing His love to flow through you to others. Love your neighbors as yourself, treating them with the same care and respect you desire for yourself.

Embracing the prayer of Jesus for unity and allowing love to be the guiding principle, you play a pivotal role in creating a world where the love of Jesus is known, embraced, and followed by all. Together, united by love, we work towards a harmonious and inclusive world, demonstrating the transformative impact of love as we live out the prayer of Jesus in John 17:21 - "May they all be one, as you, Father, are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."

"Dear friends, let's love each other, because love is from God, and everyone who loves is born from God and knows God. The person who doesn't love does not know God, because God is love."

1 John 4:7-8

"Everything should be done in love."

1 Corinthians 16:14

"Teacher, what is the greatest commandment in the Law?" He replied, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: You must love your neighbor as you love yourself. All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands."

Matthew 22:36-40

We'd love to hear and share with others your stories from around your tables!

Share with us [here](#).

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