



Don't you love a good dinner table? Table is where you tell stories; its where you share stories. And who you eat with tells me a lot about your story. The self-righteous and well-to-do tried to think up the worst thing they could say about Jesus. And here is what they came up with: "this man welcomes sinners and eats with them" (Luke 15:2).

These questions are intended to deepen your experience of the message. Use them for your personal or family study time, or with an open Bible as you share the good news with your neighbor.

Group Introduction: Watch Tony Campolo tell his birthday party story on YouTube.

Fast Fact: According to the 2010 Census Data, 42% of White County reported no church affiliation of any kind. (Source: Citydata.com)

THE TABLE. Talk about your dining table. What stories could it tell? What special moments or heartbreak events did you experience sharing your emotions with others at the table? Share who has frequented your table, and why.

WELCOMES & EATS? Read **Luke 15:1-2** and **Matthew 9:9-13**. Why do you think the leaders thought this was a serious flaw in Jesus? **Follow up:** Read **Matthew 11:19**. Why would it be considered a bad thing to be a "friend" to tax collectors and sinners?

WELCOMES THE WEAK. Go to **Biblegateway** and type in the word "**weak**" or "**weakness**." Can you find a Bible verse that belittles or degrades the weak? How do the vast majority of these verses speak of the weak? **Follow up:** Read **Romans 8:26**. Share in what ways you are weak, yet made strong in Christ.

WELCOMES SINNERS. Why do you think the immoral, non-church going outcasts wanted to hang around Jesus, the holiest man who ever lived, who hated sin and preached against it? How did Jesus make them feel? What did they see in him? **Follow up:** How can you and I model this?

EATS WITH THEM. Tony Campolo tells the story of throwing a birthday party for a prostitute at 3 AM in a Waffle House. Read **Matthew 21:31-32** & **Hebrews 11:31**. Rahab "welcomed" and prostitutes "believed", unlike the religious leaders. Share your thoughts on this story.

THE WAITING FATHER. Read **Luke 15:11-32**. Describe the Father. Now describe the Prodigal Son. Now describe the older brother. Where do you fit in this story? Where is Jesus in this story?