



An Invitation to:
the **Table**

*You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
You have anointed my head with oil;
My cup overflows.*

*Surely goodness and lovingkindness
will follow me all the days of my life,
And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*

Psalm 23:5-6

week **03**

welcome

An Invitation to Goodness

The story of all creation begins in goodness. God makes light, and it is good. He makes sky, and it is good. He makes land and sea and animals and plants and humankind, and all of it is good.

In the gospel of John, the first sign of Jesus is his miracle at the wedding in Cana: turning water into really good wine. This sign, “revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him” (John 2:11). His goodness – overflowing in the wine glasses of wedding guests – revealed his glory and drew his people to belief. When you spend time in this story in the coming days, allow your heart to marvel with the servants, the disciples, and the steward of the wedding. Sit with the wonder of his goodness. Rest in the abundance of his goodness. Notice the playfulness of his goodness.

As we gather at the Lord’s table this week, may we begin again in goodness. May we see the goodness of the Lord and everything he creates. May we see the way goodness surrounds and holds us. May we find peace in knowing goodness follows us all the days of our lives.

Meditation

We encourage you to start or end your days this week by spending a few slow, quiet moments reading this verse. Invite the Lord to speak to you anew each day through this scripture, and allow your heart and mind to rest in the faithfulness of his word.

**“O taste and see that the Lord is good;
happy are those who take refuge in him.”
(Psalm 34:8 NRSV)**

slow down

John 2

In the Word

As you contemplate the idea of goodness this week, we encourage you to spend time in the story of Jesus at the wedding in Cana in John 2:1-11. On your own or with others, use the questions from Every Home's Be Fruitful and Multiply discipleship curriculum to help guide your study:

- Read the story once to get familiar with it. Who are the characters in the story? What are their actions? What other details does the text provide? Allow the story to “come to life” in your imagination. (What role does Jesus’s mother play in the story? How does the wine taste? How do the disciples respond?) Pause to invite the Lord to make your heart attentive to his voice as you spend time in his word.
- Read the story a second time. This time, try to put yourself in the story by “stepping into the shoes” of each character. For each character, ask: What emotions might the character be experiencing? What choices does the character make? What motives might the character have for each choice?

(Consider all the ways Jesus could respond to his mother. What does he choose? Why might he do this? What might the servants expect and feel as they watch the interaction unfold? What other ways could Jesus express his goodness in this situation, and why does he choose this way? Why is the wine good?)

- Consider what truth the story speaks to you about loving God, others, and yourself (Luke 10:27). Reflect on any ways the Lord might invite you to respond to this truth. How does the goodness of Jesus and the things he creates compare to your expectations of how he will act and create? In your life, where do you need to taste of his goodness? What emptiness or lack do you need him to transform? Where might he invite you to acknowledge his goodness? In what ways does this story pull apart the connection between power and goodness? How might Jesus want to challenge your understanding of his goodness in your life? How might he invite you to respond?

In Your Journal

As you feel led, engage this prompt in your journal this week. If you are able, discuss the questions with your spouse or a trusted friend.

- Try keeping a gratitude journal this week. Each day, list your five senses – hearing, sight, smell, touch, and taste – and notice something good from your day with each sense. What sparks gratitude for you? Invite the Spirit to help you connect your senses of gratitude with the goodness of the Lord. (For example, does the smell of dinner cooking remind you of the Lord’s provision? Does the taste of a familiar food remind you of his nourishment and comfort?)
- Psalm 27:13 says, “I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.” Prayerfully write about what it would mean for you to “see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.” As you feel comfortable, share the longings of your heart with the Lord. Wait before him, and allow him to speak to you about with way his “goodness and lovingkindness” will follow you all the days of your life.

At Your Table

During a meal with family or friends this week, make a game of noticing the goodness that surrounds you. Take turns choosing a sense and noticing something good with that sense. See how long you can list good things. Celebrate this goodness with a prayer of gratitude – or by dancing together to a favorite song!

*May the Lord restore your soul
as you spend time at his table
this week.*

