

## Sharing a Meal

There are many places in the Bible that talk about people eating and sharing meals. Abraham entertained the Lord and angels with food and drink. (Genesis 18)

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah described a future time when the Lord would prepare a banquet for all peoples. "On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined." Isaiah 25:6

The Old Testament records seven different feasts that God's people celebrated and shared together. (See Leviticus 23). These feasts foreshadowed Christ's work and care for people.

Even in Psalm 23 there is a reference to a table: *"You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You have anointed and refreshed my head with oil; My cup overflows."*  
*Psalms 23:5 AMP*

There are various benefits in sharing meals.

### **Sharing meals can be a way to show people they are welcome and belong.**

Jesus used food and drink in his mission efforts. During his earthly ministry, Jesus lovingly shared meals with people, including people who had been rejected by others. He was criticized by the religious leaders of his day for eating with tax collectors and social outcasts.

*"As Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth, and he said to him, 'Follow me.' And he rose and followed him. And as Jesus reclined at table in the house, behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and were reclining with Jesus and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?' But when he heard it, he said, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.' For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.'"* Matthew 9:9-13 ESV

### **Sharing meals is a compelling way to reach out to others.**

Most everyone enjoys various foods and drinks with thousands of taste buds. Considering this, it is interesting to note how often the Bible records Jesus eating with others and the miracles he performed which included food or drink such as when he turned the water into wine for a wedding (See John 2) or miraculously fed 5000 hungry people starting out with only five loaves of bread and two fish. (See Matthew 14:13-21) Is food one of the languages God uses to show his love or to communicate care? (Reference: The Dinner Table as a Place of Connection, Brokenness and Blessing – DTS Voice)

### **Sharing meals with others can be a special way to bless friends with hospitality**

Martha, Mary and Lazarus hosted a dinner for Jesus. *"Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they gave a dinner for him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table. Mary therefore took a*

*pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.” John 12:1-3 ESV*

**Sharing a meal can begin a pathway to deeply connect with others.**

Right before his death, Jesus shared a special Passover meal with his disciples which he transformed into what we now call the Lord’s supper or communion which foreshadowed his sacrifice for the sins of the world. See Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Cor. 11: 23-27

**Sharing meals together is a way to promote joy, love, and fellowship**

First century Christians broke bread and shared meals with generous hearts.

*“Day after day they met in the temple [area] continuing with one mind, and breaking bread in various private homes. They were eating their meals together with joy and generous hearts,” Acts 2:46 AMP*

Some of the early Christian meals became known as love feasts probably because of the care and sweet fellowship. (See Jude 1:12)