

# Every Table Has a Story

## MAUNDY THURSDAY: A DEVOTION

Early in Catherine and I's marriage and about the time we purchased our first home, I began to have a desire for the perfect dining room table. I think Catherine and I both had this idealistic picture of family and friends sitting together at the table, eating together and sharing stories, laughing. That was the thought, and so the searching and shopping began.

I hate shopping. I can run a 5k with ease, but I can't walk from one end of the mall to the other without needing an Auntie Anne's pretzel and two rest breaks. And that's when I am shopping for myself, by myself! Bring the kids along to "look around for some things" and you might as well leave me in the car. Increase the amount or cost of the desired items and the shopping takes longer and gets harder...and more frustrating.

So as I steeled myself for the quest Catherine and I were to begin (the kids weren't in the picture yet), and as I heroically ventured into store after store and - new and used, near and far - and saw more and more tables, I began to realize this fact - every table has a story.

You may not think of your dining table this way, but I have found it to be true - every table has a story. A table's story is, amongst other things, comprised of where it was made, who made it, whether it is new or used, the type and color of wood, the scratches and imperfections, whether it has been passed down as a family heirloom or whether it was purchased at a garage sale. Each table's story is a little different.

A table's story is also built by the many memories and experiences shared with others around the table. Holiday meals, birthday cake smashes, date nights, D-Group gatherings, late-night board game campaigns - the dining table has seen it all. And it is these memories that, figuratively speaking, soak into the table itself and make it much more than the wood it is made of. To others your dining room table looks like any other table, but to you, it is so much more.

Every table has a story.

I've been thinking about tables and their stories of late, and I think it's because of the role they play in the last days of the life of Jesus. When Jesus invited his disciples to sit around a table to share in his last meal (what we call the Last Supper and what we celebrate this Thursday evening as Maundy Thursday), I wonder what it would have been like to share in that experience. What memories, what emotions, do you think, soaked into its wood? Eating the Passover meal with Jesus (the Passover lamb!), Jesus washing my feet, the news of a betrayer, the institution of communion, the call to remember. Every table has a story, and how I wish I could hear (nay, experience?) the table's story from that night.

And I can.

When Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper (or communion as we more often call it), he did so in order that the disciples then (and us now) would never forget what Jesus came to do - live a perfect life to both pay our debt and institute his kingdom. When Jesus is our Servant-King, the taking of communion ushers us into God's presence and to His table - and into His story. And even though Jesus shared the Last Supper with his disciples many years ago, and even though the table used that night is long decayed and gone, we have the opportunity to share in a communion meal with Jesus at our own tables this Thursday. Talk about a dinner party!

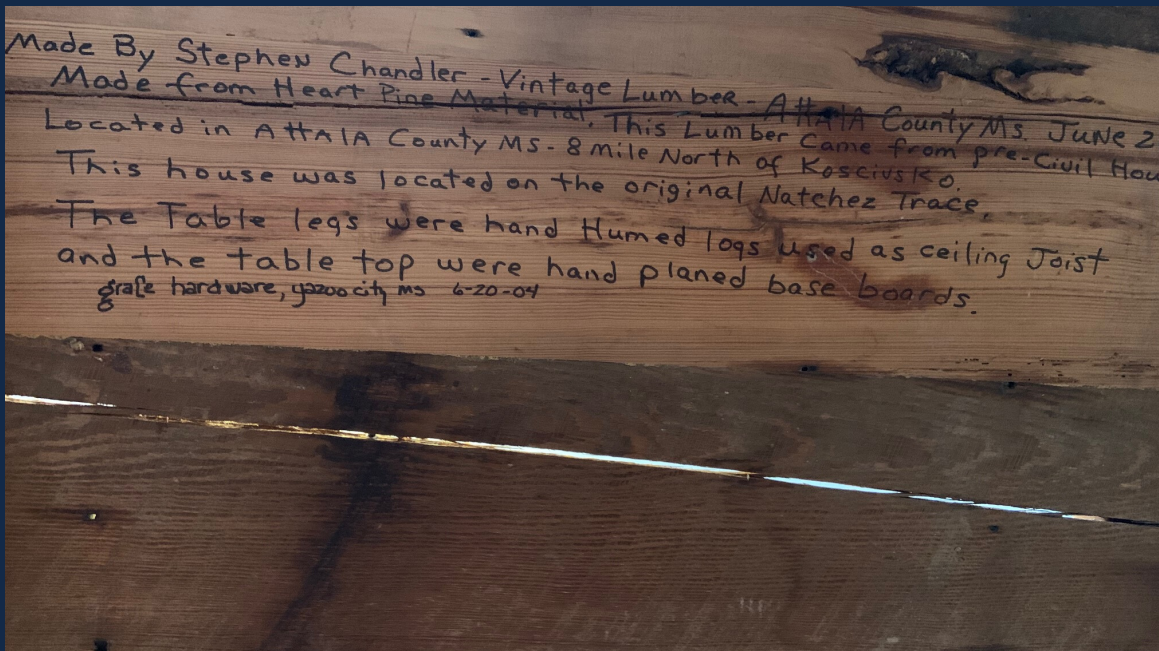
In the end, Catherine and I eventually found the dining room table we were looking for (it ended up coming with our first house purchase) - a handmade 8-seat farmhouse table - and ever since we have been sharing experiences and making memories around that table. We have added our own scratches, and with Baby King #3 on the way, I'm sure we will add many more. Scratches and all, I hope that this table has more King family to soak up, more story to tell.

But what I find most interesting about our table is that its designer and creator left a note on its underside telling of its origin- who made it, where the wood came from, when it was made. You would never know at first glance, but the creator left his mark because he didn't want us to forget where it came from. I love that my family's table tells the story of its maker.

My prayer for you this week is that your table may tell the story of your Maker and His love for you in Jesus. Beginning with this Thursday and every day after, let us remember that our Creator wrote His story on our hearts so that we would not forget where we came from - or where we are going.

For every table has a story.

**RYAN KING**  
**STUDENT MINISTER**



**The full text says:**

**"Made by Stephen Chandler - Vintage Lumber - Attala County MS. June 2004  
Made from heart pine material. This lumber came from pre-civil [war] house  
Located in Attala County MS - 8 mile north of Kosciusko  
This house was located on the original Natchez Trace  
The table legs were hand hewed logs used as ceiling joist  
and the table top were hand planed base boards.  
grace hardware, yazoo, city, MS 6-20-04"**



Sharing communion with your family at home can be hard to do, especially if you have young kids and want to make the moment authentic and intentional. Sharing communion will look different for different families (before the meal, after the meal but before dessert, etc) but here are some suggestions for how you can add structure to the night:

- Read the Gospels' description of the communion meal in Matthew 26, Mark 14, or Luke 22.
- If you have the time (and your kids have the patience), consider reading John 13-17. In this passage, John takes more time showing us what else Jesus said on that Thursday night (beyond instituting the communion meal). It is in this section that Jesus states (among many other things) that no one comes to the Father except through him (14:6), that greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends (15:13), that this is eternal life, that they (that would be us!) know that you are the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent (17:3).
- Have each person at the table reflect on how he/she tries to remember Jesus during Holy Week. Each of us does this differently (through music or being outside, for example), and sharing these methods helps deepen our love for God and for one another.
- Take some time to ask each other these questions:
  - What is your favorite story about Jesus? Why?
  - If you could ask Jesus one question, what would you ask him?
  - What is your favorite Easter memory (personal, family, or other)?
- Pray together! You can have a specific person pray for the meal or pray together as a group. Consider praying the Lord's Prayer as paraphrased in The Message:

Our Father in heaven,  
Reveal who you are.  
Set the world right;  
Do what's best—  
as above, so below.  
Keep us alive with three square meals.  
Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others.  
Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil.  
You're in charge!  
You can do anything you want!  
You're ablaze in beauty!  
Yes. Yes. Yes.