

Virtual Lenten Study 2025
THE LAST SUPPER
Conversations That Led To The Cross by Will Willimon
February 11- March 18, 2026, Wednesdays, 6 pm – 7 pm
New Awakening UMC

Chapter 4 – CRUMBS FROM THE TABLE
SECTION 1: Two Tables – The Rich Man and Lazarus Luke
Summary for Discussion

Jesus tells a story of two men living side by side but in completely different realities. One feasts daily in luxury. The other lies starving at his gate, longing for crumbs. The rich man never crosses the short distance to show mercy. After death, their positions are reversed. The tragedy is not simply wealth, it is indifference. The rich man’s blindness to suffering becomes his spiritual downfall. (Pgs. 61-64)

Luke 16:19-23

19 "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and who feasted sumptuously every day.

20 And at his gate lay a poor man named Lazarus, covered with sores,
21 who longed to satisfy his hunger with what fell from the rich man's table; even the dogs would come and lick his sores.

22 The poor man died and was carried away by the angels to be with Abraham. The rich man also died and was buried.

23 In Hades, where he was being tormented, he looked up and saw Abraham far away with Lazarus by his side.

Discussion Questions:

Where might there be a “Lazarus at my gate” people or needs I see regularly but have grown accustomed to overlooking?

What does this passage reveal about the relationship between comfort and compassion in my own spiritual life?

What “crumbs” do we hold back — time, attention, generosity, advocacy?

How does Lent invite us to notice what we have stopped seeing?

SECTION 2: The Consequences of Indifference

Summary for Discussion

Abraham explains that a “great chasm” now separates the rich man and Lazarus, a divide that cannot be crossed. The separation in eternity reflects the separation that already existed in life. The rich man’s choices shaped his destiny. Lent reminds us that spiritual distance develops slowly through daily habits of neglect. (Pgs. 65-67)

Scripture: Luke 16:25–26

25 But Abraham said, "Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony.

26 Besides all this, between you and us a great chasm has been fixed, so that those who might want to pass from here to you cannot do so, and no one can cross from there to us.' (Pgs.68-82)

Discussion Questions:

What small habits of indifference in my life could be quietly creating spiritual distance between me and God’s heart for others?

If there were a “chasm” in my life right now, relational, spiritual, or communal, what might God be inviting me to repair before it becomes permanent?

How does repentance bridge chasms?

What does it mean that justice in God’s kingdom is not arbitrary but deeply connected to how we live now?

SECTION 3: Zacchaeus – A Different Table

Summary for Discussion

Unlike the rich man, Zacchaeus responds immediately to Jesus’ invitation. Though wealthy and socially rejected, he welcomes Christ with joy. His encounter produces transformation, generosity, restitution, and restored relationship. The difference is not wealth; it is response. Jesus creates a new kind of table, one where sinners are invited and lives are changed.

5 When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today." (Pgs. 76-82)

Scripture: Luke 19:5-9

6 So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him.

7 All who saw it began to grumble and said, "He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner."

8 Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much."

9 Then Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham.

How do I respond when Jesus calls my name, with hesitation, defensiveness, or joyful surrender?

What would visible transformation look like in my life if I truly welcomed Christ to "stay at my house" during this Lenten season?

What distinguishes guilt from true repentance?

How does generosity become evidence of transformation?

.Closing Prayer

Gracious God, Thank You for meeting us at Your table. Forgive us for the times we have ignored the needs at our gate. Open our eyes to see, soften our hearts to care, and move our hands to act. Jesus, call our names as You called Zacchaeus. Help us respond with joy, repentance, and generosity. Bridge every chasm in us and shape us into people of compassion. Holy Spirit, guide us through this Lenten season so that we choose mercy over comfort and live as faithful disciples of Christ. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Adapted by Rev. Monica Jefferson, For New Awakening UMC, The Last Supper, Conversations That Led to the Cross, by Will Willimon, A Lenten Study, Abingdon Press. Kindle Edition, with Permission 2026, for study and teaching purposes only.

NOTES

Topic: The Last Supper - Lenten Study 2026 - New Awakening UMC
Pastor Monica Jefferson - Facilitator
Time: Feb 11 – March 18, 2026, 6:00 PM Central Time
Every week on Wed, until Mar 18, 2026, 6 occurrence(s)

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