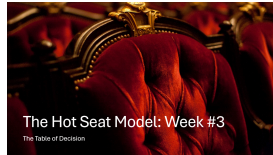


Hotseat Model #3

Table of Decision



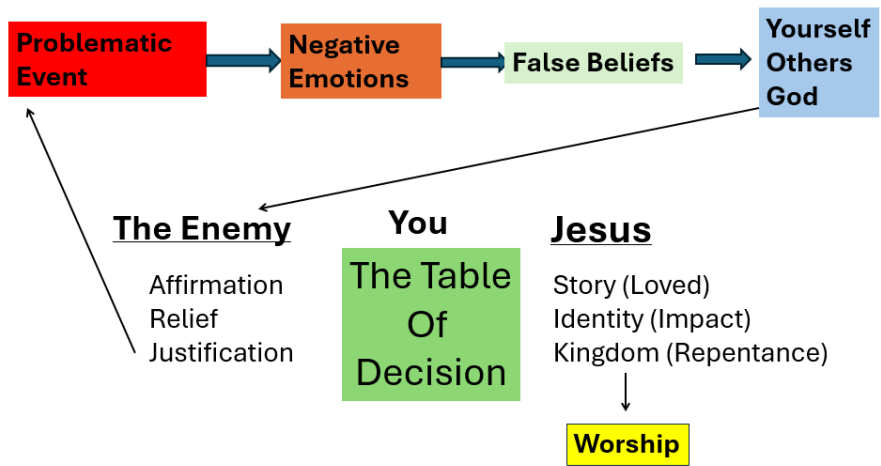
Mark Crawford
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Mark 2:1-5

A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

This is one of my favorite stories in the Gospels: Jesus came home to Capernaum and so many people gathered to see him that when some men brought their paralyzed friend they could not get close to Jesus. We don't know if this was a man they had known for years or had he just been injured? When the friends realized they could get close to Jesus, they took their friend to the roof, dug a hole, and lowered him down to the feet of Jesus.

This is reflective of the Hot Seat model: we are coming together to bring each other to the feet of Jesus. If you ask questions, you are lowering ropes so someone can come to the feet of Jesus. If you are being asked questions, you are being lowered down. The end goal is to be at the feet of Jesus so you can be healed. There is no pressure to ask the "right" questions because, in the end, all you are really doing is bringing your friend to the feet of Jesus. In fact, in the end all disciplines in this life are empty without Jesus!



In the chart above, we always begin with a **problematic event** which can be anything that elicits a negative emotion. Often, we ask each other canned questions such as “how are you?” that don’t elicit discovery of these kinds of events: Refer to the questions below that Eric gave us two weeks ago for some ideas of helping people identify such events.

On Any Given Sunday

- How’s your week been? Anything standing out as particularly frustrating or surprising?
- What’s been the best and worst part of your week?
- Have you had any interactions this week that left you thinking about them longer than you expected?
- You seem a little different today – has anything been weighing on you
- What’s something that has been harder than it should have been this week?

With a Close Friend/a Spouse/or Pilgrim Group

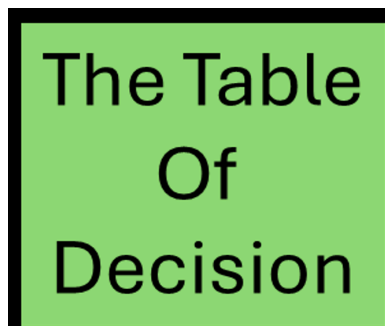
- Was there a moment in the past week or two when you felt unseen, misunderstood, or hurt by someone?
- Did you experience a situation that left you feeling frustrated, rejected, or ashamed?
- Have you had a moment recently where you withdrew from someone or avoided a conversation because something felt “off”?
- Is there a relationship that feels tense or distant compared to how it usually is?
- Did you have an experience where you expected something good but ended up feeling let down or disappointed?
- Have you been holding onto an interaction or event that you keep replaying in your mind?

Then come negative emotions: there are primary emotions of anger, sadness, fear, happiness and surprise. Any of these can lead us to false beliefs that are connected to statements about us, others, and God: “I am...”, “they are...” “God is...”. These are usually connected to character, the things that are essential to who a person is.

We take these events and emotions and then we come to YOU: Who are you as you come to the Table of Decision? In the model, there are two sides of the Table of Decision; to the left is the “enemy side” where the enemy offers affirmations of your false beliefs in the form of tapes that are played over and over. We are also offered relief from these negative emotions and justification for this numbing and selfish behavior. This loops us right back around to another problematic event!

Example: You’re driving and someone cuts you off and you yell at them. It feels like there is no time in between the event and the reaction but we want to expose that there **is** time to make a choice. The other side of the table is what Jesus offers: Story (I am loved), Identity (I have impact) and Kingdom (Repentance).

Today we are going to just talk about the Table of Decision by exploring who we are according to God, what happens when we come to the table, and how to slow the process down .



Often, when we come to the table, we often think it might look like this picture from Emperors New Groove where I am in the middle of an EVIL ME and a GOOD ME, both of these imaginary creatures inside of me arguing why I should do things their way.



However, this is not actually what happens! Let's look at a bigger understanding. First, we need to know who YOU are (a slide from last week). Look carefully at each of these components:



You

- Created for Relationship
- Longing for Love and Impact (security and significance)
- Brokenness – Distortion
- Seeking a false fulfillment
- In process

Jer 2:13 depicts what we do:

Jeremiah 2:13

“My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.”

You and I were created to be connected to God. We often think “Our **Father** who art in Heaven” is referring to “Abba” or “Dad” or “Daddy.” However, in the Lord’s Prayer, the word for “Father” is “**Giver of Life**.” Our Father, Giver of Life...we were created to be connected to The Spring of Living Water and we have walked away.



Here is me holding a baby (not in our family) with my sister in yellow. When I was young, we would often go to a ranch south of the Mexican border where I would run around and

help people and dig in the dirt and get dehydrated. There was a water spigot next to a mesquite tree that I would drink from a lot...I'm sure you know that water has flavor, depending on where you are. This water tasted like substantial, mineral-filled well water.

One day when I was 6, a girl who was about 8 invited me to go in the desert to find the older kids to play with. However, they weren't where she was expecting them to be and she went off looking for them but left me alone. I was lost. I was in the wash, too...lost, thirsty, and wandering around for a couple of hours. I was sunburned and dehydrated, walking along the road until I found the place where we were staying. I was so exhausted that I slept for a couple of hours afterwards: this is what it's like to be wandering: **we are trying to find our way back to the water spigot!** We are created to find life in The Spring of Life: our meaning and purpose are derived from God.

Jesus says he is the Spring of Life and we are meant to find life in him. BUT we wander and seek life from other places with broken cisterns that cannot hold what we really long for. We turn to rage and addictions, anything to help us satisfy this thirst.

John 4:10,13

"If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water...Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."

Psalms 23 brings us the Table; let's read it.

Psalm 23

1 The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters,

3 He restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, ^[1] I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

This shadow is ever-present: we know we will die but we don't know when. We live in the brokenness, shame, and sickness of this world. We live here! Yet David says we will fear no evil because The Lord is with us.

5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

We have been anointed by God and named as his children, given purpose and direction and commissioned to a work in Him

6 Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

This is what we look to: what we look forward to with the Good Shepherd. Even in the shadow of death, he has anointed us and given us purpose.

Psalm 23

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies.

A table has been prepared for us!

In John 21, Jesus prepares a meal of fish on the beach for his followers who had spent the night catching no fish. Three personal short stories about the provision of food come to mind for me:

1. I took a youth group trip in high school and stayed with a poor woman in a very tiny house. I don't know what or if I expected for breakfast, but this woman had made fried CHILAQUILES in a red sauce: she didn't have a lot and yet she provided all this food for five high school boys in her 2-room house.
2. My mom, my sister, and I stayed at a house where they had plated (crafted) the meal on separate plates and poured us wine and then offered us more...I didn't just get more chicken but another whole plated meal.
3. I was battling diabetes a few years ago and I wrestled with what I was going to eat. David and Lauren invited us over for dinner: I have a personal rule to eat whatever is placed before me. Much to my delight, Lauren had looked up how to make food for diabetics, even making cauliflower rice instead of rice. I was so happy to sit at a table that was prepared for me!

Jesus has prepared a table for us to sit and eat with him: he wants to sit with us and talk with us and yet we want to check the dry wells around us first. I'm going to look for some dirt to chew on instead of the meal Jesus has prepared. Yet Jesus walks with us and invites us to sit with him.

When we come to the Table of Decision, we are trying to do this:



The lines going by him are bullets. He is dodging out of the way: this is slow motion called "*bullet time*." The goal is to take this moment in front of us and come to the table in slow motion and watch the bullets go by and wonder what it would look like to sit with Jesus at the table. If we can sit at the table, we can worship and be filled with the richest fare and the best stories.

What story is Jesus telling you as you think about all the stuff you carry with you as he invites you to sit at his table?

