REFLECTION GUIDE

8.13.23

INTRO

Many of the teachings of Jesus are shared in story form or with extreme examples. It is crucial to interpret them in light of the love and grace he demonstrated with his actions.

THOUGHTS

PRAYER

Eternal God, I long to know you more and more. Help me sense your presence as I seek to better understand your ways. I need your guidance because sometimes I am confused by what I am reading, but I trust your love for me. Thank you for sending Jesus to show just how deep your love is. Amen.

DIGGING DEEPER

- Think about a time when you made an extreme statement for the purpose of making a point, and someone took it the wrong way. What do you think caused the misinterpretation?

- Is there a particular saying of Jesus that you have struggled to make sense of or is troubling to you?

- Read Matthew 7:1-5. Is it possible to have a log stuck in your eye? Of course not!
  - Describe the point you think Jesus was trying to make by using this extreme example.
  - This is one of many examples of Jesus using hyperbole to make a point. Google it-- find one other example of Jesus using an exaggeration as an illustration and describe what you think might be the true meaning of the passage.
  - Why do you suppose this type of teaching was so effective with the followers of Jesus?
  - Knowing that Jesus often taught in this way, how might that change your approach to Bible study?

- In *Making Sense of the Bible*, Adam Hamilton says, "Here's the point: take Jesus's words very seriously but not always literally. He's trying to lead you away from things that can harm you." (Hamilton, 246).
  - Growing up, did your parents ever overstate something to try to keep you safe?
  - Why do you suppose they went to such lengths?
  - How does it make you feel to suggest that grasping the true meaning of scripture is more involved than a simple, word-for-word reading for every passage in the Bible?