

REFLECTION GUIDE

1.28.24

INTRO

The phrase, “God said it; I believe it; that settles it,” holds a half-truth. It sounds logical but it is an over-simplification of the way we read and understand the Bible.

We must do the hard work of reading scripture in light of the historical context and in light of Jesus’ teachings.

THOUGHTS

PRAYER

Loving God, thank you for promising that your presence will be with me always. Please help me respond to your guiding love as I grow in my understanding of the Bible. Help me to keep Jesus’ example of love in mind at all times as I respond to the people you have placed in my life. Amen.

DIGGING DEEPER

- Reflect on a viewpoint or value you have previously held about which you have since changed your mind.
 - What prompted the change?
 - Was it difficult or easy to change your way of thinking?
- Read Leviticus 20:10 and John 8:2-11. The Pharisees quoted scripture, almost correctly, in a “God said it” way, implying that Jesus must endorse stoning the woman. Their self-righteousness had turned vicious. They brought only the woman to be stoned when the law said to stone the man *and* the woman.
 - Why do you think the Pharisees selectively quoted the law?
 - How did Jesus reply to the Pharisees?
 - What did he imply about the law with his response?
 - Who are the people you sometimes feel tempted to judge with your “stones”? Share your feelings with Jesus and reflect on Jesus’ standard for those who should throw stones.
- Jesus gave a supreme command to love God and love each other. This lens can be used to evaluate and apply scripture.
 - How does that change your method of reading and understanding the Bible?
 - Is there a particular portion of scripture that you are currently wrestling to understand? Take a moment to ask for God’s help.

