

REFLECTION GUIDE

2.4.24

INTRO

The phrase, “love the sinner, hate the sin,” is often said in an attempt to convey a loving message. The reality is that it can set up a judgmental attitude that causes us to focus on the sins of others rather than on our own.

THOUGHTS

PRAYER

Loving God, I am grateful you came to offer mercy to sinners like me. Help me to be the type of person who always lives in a loving way toward everyone. Forgive me when I begin to see myself as better than someone else or justify my judgment of them. Amen.

DIGGING DEEPER

- Have you ever been angered by someone else’s actions that you deemed to be sin only later to find out information that changed your view of the situation?
- Describe a time when your motives or intentions were misjudged. How did you feel?
- Are there certain people you regularly encounter whom you tend to be critical of? Can you identify why?
- Read 1 Corinthians 4:3-5 and Romans 14:4-13. One problem with thinking about “hating” someone’s sin is that it requires us to believe we are qualified to judge what a person is doing to *be* a sin.
 - Who does Paul imply is the only qualified one to judge what is in a person’s heart?
 - Why do you suppose we are so tempted to take on the role of judge?
 - In what way might Christians inadvertently put “stumbling blocks” in front of people who have not yet decided to follow Jesus?
- Jesus called us to love our neighbors and even our enemies but never said the phrase, “love the sinner.” Why do you think Jesus didn’t categorize certain neighbors as *sinners*?

