* **Series Slide**
* A couple of weeks ago, my family drove down to Orlando do visit Universal Studios theme park.
* No doubt, the Wizarding World of Harry Potter was the highlight of the trip, but there was a sweet moment that happened in the Jurassic Park section.
* We walked up to this ride called Pteranydon Flyers- all 5 of us. Now, Pteranydon Flyers is a kids ride- but with most kid rides- adults are welcome to ride. So we were all a little surprised when we stepped up and saw an employee with a measuring stick, that wasn’t there to see if you were tall enough to ride, but to see if you were short enough to ride.
* 4 out of 5 of us were over the limit. But the employee looked at Simon and said, “You have the golden ticket. You can ride as much as you want, but the only way any of your family can ride is if they are with you.”
* So now, Simon had a choice to make. Who was going to come with him?
* He turned around to face us, now with this unexpected choice in front of him. Then he pointed to his 14 year old brother and said “Isaac”.
* Now, I’m going to admit, as a parent, I can read things into my kids choices. I can spin them positively or negatively. That being true, still, as we sat and watched them soar above us on the ride, I thought I’d just seen something beautiful. Seemingly mundane, but extraordinarily beautiful.
* **A brother choosing a brother to fly with.**

I asked Simon on Friday, “Hey bud, remember the Pteranodon Flyers ride at Universal? Why do you think you chose Isaac…instead of me or Mom?”

He said- and I swear to you I’m not making this up- “Because I love him. And I didn’t want to fly by myself. And I had already ridden stuff with you and mom.”

* + As a father, watching my son showing signs that he loved and was attached to his brother was something that I celeberated.
  + Parents- don’t you love to see your kids loving and trusting each other with gentleness?
  + I was thanking God not only for Simon’s choice to ride with his brother, but also, for Isaac’s tenderness to ride.
  + He didn’t respond self-protectively or apathetically, trying to keep his cool points. He just rode with his brother.
  + I watched them walk away together up the path that I wasn’t allowed to walk with them…and I was grateful, proud.
  + These are the moments that make parenting so rewarding.
* John 3:16 used to be the bible verse I saw and heard quoted more than any other. So much so, that even non-Christians…or people who had little familiarity with the Bible, could quote it…or at least recognize it.
* I think it has been surpassed in that category by Matthew 7:1 “Do not judge, so that you won’t be judged.”
* **Pteranodon Flyers: Why Jesus Wants You to Take Your Emotions Seriously- Matt 7:1-6**
* The popularity of that quote from Jesus fits well with our idea of freedom. Live and let live. You let me do whatever I want to do, and I’ll let you do whatever you want to do. And whether or not I like it, or it fits with my ethics or morality is beside the point. As long as there is consent for anyone who is joining you…as long as no one is being forced to do whatever it is you are doing…as long as no one is “getting hurt”…then it sounds like Jesus wants me to just forget about it…or else someone will pick apart my choices.
* Strange, though, because if you read the next 5 verses that follow…Jesus actually makes the opposite point.
* In fact, when you consider the passage in the larger context where it falls in the Sermon on the Mount its actually a lot more like what happened with Simon at the Pteranodon Flyer ride at Universal studios.
* And with that…lets turn to the passage itself.
* **Matthew 7:1-6 (CSB)**
* **“Do not judge, so that you won’t be judged.**
* **2 For you will be judged by the same standard with which you judge others, and you will be measured by the same measure you use. 3 Why do you look at the splinter in your brother’s eye but don’t notice the beam of wood in your own eye? 4 Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the splinter out of your eye,’ and look, there’s a beam of wood in your own eye? 5 Hypocrite! First take the beam of wood out of your eye, and then you will see clearly to take the splinter out of your brother’s eye. 6 Don’t give what is holy to dogs or toss your pearls before pigs, or they will trample them under their feet, turn, and tear you to pieces**.
* **Transition:** In this series, we’re talking about what it means to be Deeply Rooted in Jesus…and then give off the fruit of a Good Life to others.
* This is a practice-based series, which mean every week I’m leading you to take up 2 new habits. We’ll do that in the second part of this message today.
* But to get there- to show you why its important, we need to understand what Jesus is talking about when he says “Do not judge” and “Logs and Specks”- Dogs and pigs.
* **1) Jesus wants you to judge to with attachment- like a sibling, not an employee.**
  + There were 2 points of judgment that happened just outside the Pteranodon Flyers ride at Universal.
  + One was an employee judging us by a standard. He had this stick that was 54” tall. If you were taller than that- you couldn’t ride.
  + That employee didn’t care who we were, he didn’t care about our past, or how much money we had, or what kind of people we were.
  + He had no relationship to us whatsoever.
  + He had a job to do. And that was to allow people under 54” onto the ride, and keep people over 54” off of it.
  + In that case- it was the 54” standard that was at the center of judgment.
  + The other point of judgment was what Simon had to do. He had, as the employee said, “The golden ticket”.
  + He had a judgment to make. He could ride alone. Or choose one of his family to come with him. Or- if he wanted to ride with each of us- he could keep making the loop one at a time, riding with a different person everytime. But he had to judge, to decide- who was coming with him.
  + And when Simon had to make his decision- it wasn’t cold and detached like an employee- Simon pondered relationally. He knew who we all were. He had a past with us. He knew he had ridden rides with me and Keva, and he knew what he had special with his brother. He made a decision not based on a standard, but on attachment. He made a decision as a member of a family, a brother, not an employee.
  + Now, in light of those 2 types of judging, lets look at what Jesus says.
  + **7:1-2**
  + When Jesus says, “Don’t judge or you’ll be judged the same way” he uses the word Krino. Which is to pass judgment based on a standard.
  + Its how an employee at an amusement park has to judge. Here’s the stick- you are too tall or too short- you can’t ride.
  + In other words, the kind of judging Jesus is commanding his disciples NOT to do- is detached condemnation.
  + Jesus is saying, “I don’t want all my followers walking around making the measuring stick the MAIN POINT. Citizens of my kingdom are family members, not park employees. We judge each other with attachment, not detachment. We consider the people standing in front of us to find a way in love for them to ride with us…not brandish a measuring stick to figure out how to keep people off the ride.”
  + Just take a look in your Bible at what surrounds this passage in the Sermon on the Mount. Just before this, Jesus teaches his disciples to pray saying “Our Father”.
  + Then he teaches them that God, their Father, knows their needs and will provide for them, so they don’t have to be anxious.
  + Just after this, Jesus tells them to ask God, their Father for things, because God loves giving good gifts to his children.
  + My point is, all the talk for 2 chapters is all family talk. Its all attachment talk. God has attached his joy- his happiness- to your well-being.
  + In fact, the only ones to whom Jesus is harsh in the sermon on the mount, are the Pharisees. The hypocrites. The ones who judge everyone like a Universal employee…and indeed…Jesus is now judging them in that way.
  + **7:5**
  + Jesus then says, “When you walk around with a moral or ethical measuring stick- here’s what is sure to happen. You will notice of speck of immorality in another person’s eye. And the more you zero in on their sin…the more you will miss huge sins in your own life.
  + That is the nature of cold, detached, critical judgments. Because they are devoid of love and attachment- we end up forgetting that we are in a family with the other person.
  + What family? Well, at the very least the human family. God’s image bearers.
  + But even more specifically, within the church, we are a family united to Christ and to each other.
  + But Jesus flips it. Look at the nature of judging like a sibling.
  + He is calling us to be the kind of person that judges others like a sibling, not an employee.
  + Jesus wants us to judge in love. He wants us to judge like Simon did. Ok, I need to figure out a way to have a person I love ride with me. Not how to get rid of them.
  + And that means intimacy. It means closeness. Do you realize how close you have to be to a person to SEE a speck in their eye and then remove it?
  + Ever had someone try to get an eyelash out of your eye. That’s an intimate moment.
  + Its like when you’re at the dentist. I always close my eyes because having someone that much up in my face feels too close for a stranger.
  + In love, removing specks from the eyes of our siblings.
  + You know what else is true of being that close. Its vulnerable for the person up close. You might accidentally touch the eyeball and reflexively get punched in the stomach.
  + When you are that close, removing specks- its hard to protect yourself.
  + But the concern is that your brother can see clearly. That he doesn’t develop an infection.
  + The judgment is so that you can keep on being siblings.
  + Do you love someone enough, are you attached enough, that you are willing to vulnerably get into their personal space, and allow them into yours…in order help one another see clearly?
  + Because you love them and you want them to go another round on the Pteranodon Flyers with you.
  + **7:6**
  + One more thing about judging as a sibling, instead of a theme-park employee.
  + Notice that Jesus at the end says, Don’t give to dogs what is holy or throw pearls before pigs….or they will turn on you and tear you to pieces.
  + This is the answer to the question, “Well, does this mean lowering the standard?”
  + In other words, if the only way to get someone to stick with me, is to lower the ethical or moral standard. To let them keep on sinning, as to avoid judging them.
  + Think about the metaphor for a minute.
  + This is a time before Ole Yeller and Charlotte’s web. Pigs were often wild and dangerous. Dogs were dirty rabid disease carrying scavengers, not human companions.
  + Jesus is saying, “Sometimes, you will experience reaching out in love…sincerely trying to remove specks- doing a holy thing…but the person will not recognize that love. And they will only see you as fresh meat to take advantage of. To consume.”
  + This is not necessarily a call to completely cut them off. Though that may eventually happen. It's a call rather to know where a person is, and what they are ready for.
  + Some people are not ready to hear about Jesus.
  + Some people are not ready to talk about God as Father.
  + Some people are not ready to receive love.
* **Back to 1)**
  + This is a call to discernment. It requires us asking the question, “What is my next step to care for this person?”
  + That step is never changing God or his standard to make him acceptable. But you may, at times, have to move slowly with a person…or sometimes…with a heavy heart…you have to let a person you are attached to walk away, because they won’t receive the holy love you are trying to give them.
  + Of course, your hope is not their condemnation- its their salvation. Its that they realize their foolishness and repent. And come back.
  + But, Jesus is saying- you aren’t in control of that. You just have to know that sometimes you have to withhold holy things, because a person is not ready for them.
  + This is why we are a church that is committed to counseling and helping people locate what the blockade is to receiving God’s love. Or living it out.
  + Our end game, is that we would all be close enough, and trust enough to lovingly remove specks in each other’s eyes.
  + That we would always come back around and say, “I love you. Lets ride the Pteranodons.”
* **Transition:** Now, let me show you how you can help make that kind of culture real here.
* **2) Attached judgment starts with emotional self-reflection in the presence of Jesus.**
  + Jesus’ aim here is to show a different way of noticing others’ sin than the one the Pharisees had shown.
  + He is trying to provoke us to think about some important things BEFORE we judge others.
  + The first thing he says is “Make sure the way you judge is the way you want to be judged.”
  + Ok, I want to be judged like Simon judged. A brother on the lookout for a way to ride with the ones he loves.
  + Where whoever points out my sin, I know is doing so because they care, not because they are trying to exclude me or make themselves feel better.
  + **7:3**
  + The second thing Jesus points out is this.
  + If you are going judge with attachment, you cannot possibly do it without first taking stock of yourself.
  + And that is where it can be really helpful to pick up on the 2 words Jesus uses here.
  + When he talks about the speck in your brother’s eye- he uses the word Greek word Blepo- or “see”.
  + But when he talks about looking at the log…he uses the greek word katanoeis. To Notice. It means to ponder. Or understand. To think about- contemplate.
  + The problem, Jesus is pointing out, is not that we don’t see our sin, or believe its there…its not that we might lack an awareness of it…
  + …the problem is we don’t katanoe it. We don’t think deeply about it to understand it.
  + WE don’t reflect on it.
  + Yes, we should identify and help remove sin in others’ lives, but only after carefully looking at and pondering our own.
  + That is the only way to prevent self-righteous judging like an employee.
  + Think about it.
  + How much more gentle are you, how much more motivated with empathy and care…with attachment…when you approach someone about their sin with a deep awareness of your own fallen nature and weakness.
  + By contrast, think about how you approach someone in a sin that you could never dream of doing. That we have no clue “How anybody could ever do such a thing”.
  + We tend to pull out the measuring stick to exclude them…instead of go in with a heart that says, “We want you to be a part of this.”
  + Again- Jesus’ comment about the dogs and pigs is saying- There is no guarantee that you will get the response you want from them…
  + …but that is the attitude he wants us to approach them with.
* **Back to 2)**
  + Now, lets talk about HOW to ponder and think about our sin.
  + 2 things.
  + The first is SOOOOOOO important.
  + It is this.
  + As you look at your sin, you must do it in the presence of God.
  + You look at your sin WITH GOD.
  + Here’s what I mean.
  + Jesus clearly wants attachment to be a part of how sin is noticed and removed.
  + Someone we can love and trust…that gets all up in our business…that places themselves in a vulnerable state in order to help us RIDE with them.
  + This is what God did for us.
  + We feel short of his standard.
  + For morality. For righteousness. For love.
  + But God moved toward us. In Jesus, God himself put on flesh, and on a cross- the ultimate act of vulnerability- Jesus died. He was “torn to pieces” by the pigs and dogs who weren’t ready for his holiness.
  + And in so doing- he traded places with us. He took our pain, our death…that we rightly deserved for our sin…and he gave us his righteousness.
  + Jesus was like Simon. He stood looking at people he loved- and he was the only one who fit the standard. But, in love, he died so that we could ride with him. He gave us his ticket to ride.
  + Listen, if you don’t keep that in mind when you look at your own sin- you will self condemn. You will go from being self-righteous to be being self-hating. Neither of which is God’s will for you.
  + Instead, knowing that Jesus has included me through his cross and resurrection in his family…I can now look at my own sin without anxiety that it excludes me from God.
  + Now, I can work on removing my own sin, for the sake of helping my other family members.
  + That’s the first thing- Keep the gospel at the forefront. This must be done in the presence of Jesus.
  + Here’s the second thing: To contemplate the depth of my sin, **you need to Notice your emotions- and then ask “Why?”**
  + Unfortunately, most of us are absolutely terrible at this and leave very little room in our life for it.
  + That’s why therapy is a booming business (and I’m not saying that's a bad thing). But it is largely because many of us can’t even NAME most of our emotions, much less get underneath them to figure out WHY me might be feeling them.
  + The reason I am calling you to take emotional stock, is because the vast majority of the sins we commit are motivated by how we feel. We feel something- then we respond outwardly from that feeling.
  + So, If I can notice and recognize what I feel and when and how I feel it…then I might actually be able to begin the process of repentance- turning from the way of death and living in God’s presence- before I even outwardly respond to that feeling in sin.
  + This is A HUGE part of the LOG IN MY OWN EYE removal process.
  + So let me give you 2 practices to help with this.
  + One inward…and one outward.
  + One to root you to Jesus…and one to be blessing to others.
* **ROOTED PRACTICE- Exploring the Iceberg**
  + You know icebergs are 90% under the surface of the water.
  + It's the same with your outward sin and surface emotions.
  + There is A LOT more to them than what ends up emerging from you.
  + So, like Jesus says, you have to NOTICE or ponder them.
  + This practice is a mixture of St. Ignatius Examen from the 1500s and Pete Scazzero’s Emotionally Healthy Spirituality (in fact that's where the “explore the iceberg” name comes from.
  + In your 30 minute time frame, (that was the very first homework assignment you had)…I want you to start by picking one day a week to do this. Think back to the previous day (maybe even the whole week)
* All on the app
  + **4 questions to Identify the Iceberg**
  + **What was I mad about?**
  + **What was I sad about?**
  + **What was I anxious about?**
  + **What was I glad about?**
  + **5 Questions to Explore the Iceberg**
  + **What happened?**
  + **What was I feeling?**
  + **What is the story I’m telling myself?**
  + **What does the gospel say?**
  + **What counter-instinctual action is needed?**
* Of course, when you do this, it starts to become instinct to you. You start asking these questions in the moment, as you feel your temperature rising.
* I would recommend to you the Enneagram (or some personality test as well). It helps give some parameters for understanding yourself. Its not everything, but it is something.
* BTW- its not the emotions that are bad. Emotions are gifts from God. Emotions are given to HELP us notice God. When I saw Simon walk off with his brother- I felt something Good. And when I explored that Iceberg- I found something beautiful under the surface…that I shared with you today. And that’s what I want you to do.
* **GOOD LIFE practice- Tell someone about your Iceberg.**
  + Probably not a good idea to make a forced habit of finding specks…BUT this can open up the kind of relationships and establish an environment and culture where attached judgments can happen.
  + Community Groups- I would recommend you try this, and share what you find in yourself.
* **Proverbs 20:5**
* **5 Counsel in a person’s heart is deep water;**
* **but a person of understanding draws it out.**

When you learn to do this, know your own icebergs- you can help others do the same.