

## **Discussion and Reflection Questions**

### **1<sup>st</sup> of October 2023 - Formed for the benefit of others**

#### **Read: Matthew 21.23-32**

<sup>23</sup> When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?' <sup>24</sup> Jesus said to them, 'I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. <sup>25</sup> Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' And they argued with one another, 'If we say, "From heaven", he will say to us, "Why then did you not believe him?" <sup>26</sup> But if we say, "Of human origin", we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.' <sup>27</sup> So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things. <sup>28</sup> 'What do you think? A man had two sons; he went to the first and said, "Son, go and work in the vineyard today." <sup>29</sup> He answered, "I will not"; but later he changed his mind and went. <sup>30</sup> The father went to the second and said the same; and he answered, "I go, sir"; but he did not go. <sup>31</sup> Which of the two did the will of his father?' They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax-collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God ahead of you. <sup>32</sup> For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him, but the tax-collectors and the prostitutes believed him; and even after you saw it, you did not change your minds and believe him.

#### **Discussion & Reflection Questions**

1. Why do you think the Chief Priests & Elders asked Jesus the question in verse 23?
2. Do you think it was a reasonable question or where the motivated by something else? (It might be helpful to read the opening to chapter 21 to answer this)
3. How do you think John The Baptist was seen by the Chief Priests & Elders & how was he seen by Jesus?
4. In the parable aren't both sons in the wrong? Why do you think they answered the first son was "better"?
5. What themes or questions arise from this parable for you?
6. How do you think the Chief Priests & Elders were formed in the opinions and views? What were they blind to? How have you been formed? What are you blind to?
7. Why does Jesus not answer directly & leaves them with questions? What questions are you left with? Is it ok to still have questions?

## **Prayer**

Loving and righteous God,  
your boundless generosity exceeds  
all that we can desire or deserve,  
and you give to the last worker all you promised to the first.:  
liberate us from all jealousy and greed,  
that we may be free to love and serve others,  
and in your service may find our true reward;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**