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## Number 12 – Lesson 5

Moses had been leading the people of Israel through the Sinai Desert for over two years. He had endured a long series of bitter challenges to his leadership, but he also experienced God's affirmation of his leadership and faithful provision for the people, despite their unrealistic demands. His older siblings, Aaron and Miriam, served on his leadership team. Sometime during his travels, Moses had married a Cushite woman. Cush was a country south of Egypt, in the area known as Sudan today. Moses' wife was probably dark skinned.

### PERSONAL REFLECTION:

- *How welcoming is your community toward people who are different from yourselves (racially, ethnically or socio-economically)?*
- *List your five closest friends. What racial and ethnic groups do they represent? How have the differences enhanced your friendship? If all your close friends are from your own ethnic and racial heritage, ask God to show you ways to expand your relationships.*
- *Spend some time in confession asking God's forgiveness for your own prejudices. Ask God to show you how to become more caring and inclusive toward people who differ from you.*

### GROUP DISCUSSION:

- 1) Describe how Aaron and Miriam were reacting to their brother's wife.

- 2) How have you, or your friends, used similar arguments (at least in your own mind) against including diverse people in your group activities?
  
- 3) What else seemed to be at issue besides racial prejudice (v. 2)?
  
- 4) In what ways do you see similar mixed agendas in today's racial conflicts? What do you think people really fear?
  
- 5) Why do you think verse 3 makes such an issue of Moses' humility? How could this have been both an asset and a detriment to his leadership?
  
- 6) How did God deal with Miriam's and Aaron's prejudice and power-mongering? Why do you think God focused on Moses' character rather than his leadership style?

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- 7) What object lesson did God teach by making Miriam “like snow” with leprosy? What do you think she experienced during the next seven days of isolation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - 8) Think of a situation in which you felt different and out of place. What did you experience, and how did you feel?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - 9) What attitudes and practices in your fellowship might make new people feel uncomfortable or unwelcome?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - 10) How could you make people who are different from yourselves feel welcome and accepted?