**Sermon for**

**Sunday, May 24th, 2020**

**Isaiah 55:6-9**

Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

Let the wicked forsake their ways, and the unrighteous their thoughts.

Let them turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on them,

            and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,"

declares the Lord.

"As the heavens are higher than the earth,

            so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts."

The Word of the Lord.           **Thanks be to God.**

Picture the wilderness of the desert.

Parched ground. Sharp rocks. Shifting sand. Burning sun. Thorns which cut.

A miraging oasis. Wavy horizons ever beyond reach.

This is the wilderness of the desert.

Consider the wilderness of the soul.

Parched promises. Sharp words. Shifting commitments. Burning anger.

Rejections which cut. Miraging hope. Distant solutions ever beyond reach.

This is the wilderness of the soul.

We have all experienced the wilderness, the confusion, the fear, the doubt, the lostness.

The wilderness is not comfortable. We don't need to journey to experience the

wilderness.

It is all around us. On the television, in the hospitals, in the isolation, and the loneliness.

We don't know which way to turn and the struggle seems endless.

But we are never alone in the wilderness. God is always with us.

We can trust in his presence. And we can trust in his Word.

We can trust in his forgiveness, and his love, and his guidance.

In the wilderness, if we listen, we can hear the voice of God.

Mom, Dad, and their two daughters: Kimberly and Sydney,

took a trip to the United Kingdom.

They had a wonderful time together exploring the countryside.

One morning they visited a castle. In the middle of the amazing garden was a maze.

Row after row of shoulder-high hedges, leading to one dead end after another.

If one successfully navigated the labyrinth,

they would discover the door to a tall tower in the center of the garden.

The journey through the maze began well enough.

But soon they began to disagree about which way to go.

Sydney wanted to turn right, when Kimberly thought they should go left.

Mom wanted to travel straight ahead.

And Dad was positive they were all wrong.

Finally they separated and went their own way.

Dad was relieved, and he was certain he would be the first one

to get out of the maze and climb up into the tall tower.

But before long he was stuck in the middle of the hedges.

He couldn't figure out which way to go.

He wondered if he could push through the hedges and escape.

But the hedges were too thick and unyielding.

He thought about climbing the over the top of the hedges to discover which way to go.

But the branches bent under his weight and would not support him.

Frustrated, Dad stood still and began to believe he would never get out of the labyrinth.

He wanted to give up, but couldn't figure how to do that either.

Suddenly he heard a familiar voice from up in the sky: "Hey, Dad."

He looked up to see Sydney waving from the turret at the top of the tower.

“You are going the wrong way, Dad,”

Then Kimberly called out, "Back up and turn right."

Dad decided to trust his two daughters.

He didn't have to. He could have trusted his own instincts,

(which hadn't worked out very well so far).

He could have consulted other confused tourists.

He could have sat down on the ground, and pouted,

and wondered why God would let this happen to him.

But he didn't.

He listened to his daughters.

Their vantage point was better than his. They were above the maze.

They could see what he couldn't.

Before long, with Kimberly's and Sydney's help,

he navigated the maze, and reached the door to the tower.

Perhaps when we find ourselves in the wilderness, we should do the same with God.

God is higher than the heavens. The Lord is high above all the nations.

He can see what eludes us.

He wants us to get us out of the labyrinth and bring us home.

Trust in God. Rely on his Word. God is constantly communicating with us.

When we are trapped in the wilderness, and lost in the labyrinth,

it is time to remember God is above the maze.

He can see what we cannot.

God is still watching over us, He is still speaking to us.

When we to listen to him and trust him, we discover our time in the wilderness will pass.

AMEN