**Sunday, September 13th, 2020**

**1st Kings 3:16-28**

The church was known for its inspiring prayer meetings.

One evening a young pianist, who was working on his doctor's degree, was performing.

According to his professor, the young man had abilities which left his peers far behind.

To the casual listener, his mastery of the piano was both enjoyable and amazing,

But to the informed listener, his mastery of music was nothing short of incredible.

This pianist had limited hearing.

He was able to hear, and enjoy, the notes in the lower register of the piano.

But as the notes got higher, they became dimmer to his ear.

There were whole sections of the keyboard which he could never hear.

If this young pianist had simply chosen to play those pieces

          which he could fully appreciate, he would still be outstanding.

Yet this young man had chosen to play notes which he will never hear.

Those notes were validated to him by other sources:

          by the printed score, by the directives of his teacher and coach,

          by the touch of his fingertips, and the sense of vibration from the instrument.

By faith, he hit each note according to instruction.

He did not personally sense, or feel, or hear, the consequence of his actions.

But his actions left a hearing audience in awe.

In spite of his handicap, he had the faith to play the silent notes.

He trusts and believes in the music, even the notes he will never hear.

He has the wisdom to know that the music he cannot hear is important.

When David had grown old, his son Solomon became King of the Israelites.

The Lord appeared to Solomon during the night in a dream.

God said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you."

Solomon answered, "O Lord my God give your servant, a wise and discerning heart to

govern your people, and to distinguish between right and wrong."

The Lord was pleased with Solomon's request and granted it.

Before long Solomon was faced with a problem which appeared to be unsolvable.

Two prostitutes, living together, each had a child born to them.

Then one of the babies died.

Each woman claimed the surviving child was her own.

And they appeared before Solomon to settle the disagreement.

It appeared to be an impossible task.

There were no witnesses. No DNA available. No blood test. No proof.

In that time who would consider

          the disagreement between two women to be important?

Who would listen to two prostitutes?

Who would care about an unsolvable disagreement?

Why would Solomon, king of all Israel, be concerned about these two women?

Simply because God was concerned about them.

Despite their imperfections, God loved them.

In spite of all our imperfections, God cares about us, and loves us.

Solomon wished to make things right, and fair, and just.

With all of his knowledge, Solomon could not determine

          who really was the living child's mother.

The problem appeared unsolvable.

And, so, he had to depend on the wisdom God had granted him.

Requesting a sword, Solomon gave the order:

“Cut the living child in two, and each of the mothers can have half of him.”

Immediately the false mother was willing – both of them would then be childless.

But the true mother was willing to give her child to the lying woman,

so that he could have life.

Because of her love for her son, he was given back to her.

When all Israel heard the verdict the king had given, they held the king in awe,

because they saw he had wisdom from God to administer justice.

They knew their king was a man of discernment, and compassion, and God's wisdom.

Wisdom is the God-given ability, to perceive the true nature of a matter,

          and implement the will of God in the circumstances.

With God's wisdom, this unsolvable dispute was resolved fairly.

All during our lives, in all the difficult circumstances of our lives,

          we need to seek wisdom from God, in order to live rightly.

Knowledge is not the same thing as wisdom.

Knowledge memorizes the Ten Commandments.

          Wisdom obeys them.

Knowledge learns about God.

          Wisdom honors and worships Him.

Wisdom is not simply knowing what is good, and fair, and proper for us,

          but applying that knowledge in our daily lives.

Wisdom was a very important concept in Old Testament times.

The word "wisdom" appears over 220 times in the Old Testament;

including, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Solomon, and Job.

Throughout the New Testament,

          Jesus taught us about God's ways, and God's wisdom.

God's wisdom helps us see in the darkness, and confusion of this world.

His wisdom helps us to see if something is true or false.

His wisdom guides us down the narrow path of life.

Wise ones still seek him.                   Wise ones still find him.

We have at our disposal today, more knowledge than at any time in history.

More information has been produced in the last thirty years,

          than in the previous five thousand.

Today information doubles every four years.

Since the advent of the Internet we have more knowledge at our fingertips,

          than we can possibly process.

Yet, there is still a tendency to equate wisdom with intelligence, titles, and degrees.

But there is a heavenly wisdom, which enables us

          to find peace in conflict and confusion;

          to walk in God's ways, even when we do not understand.

A father often told his children:

"If you ever get lost in a crowd, and separated from us,

          there is one thing that you must do.

Find a mother with children, or pushing a stroller,

          then go ask her to help you find your mother and father.

You will be safe and OK.

Because a mother with children knows about lost children.

A mother with children understands and cares."

Such mothers care enough to do what is needed,

          and they know what to do: Take care of the lost child,

          keep them safe and confident of getting back to their family.

And they will not stop until they do.

Life on this planet can be very confusing, discouraging, and frightening.

But we know one we can trust to lead us through.

God knows what we need, and he knows what to do:

          He guides us through the dark times,

          And He does not stop until we are safely at home with him.

AMEN