**Wisdom (7-30-17)**

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1 Kings 3: 4-12 Romans 8: 26-39

Matthew 13: 44-52

**Summary:** The beginning of wisdom is the love of the Lord. The end of wisdom is the love of the Lord. This is a circle, a family circle, the family of God.

 Solomon pleased God when he asked for wisdom, but what, exactly, is the nature of wisdom? It is common for people to assume smart people are wise, but knowledge is not wisdom and there are many educated fools in the world. One who is wise may not know what they want to learn, but they do understand how to find out the truth. The famous story of Solomon discovering which mother was the real mom is a prime example of this. More than data accumulation, wisdom is about how to act, how to live, what to say, what and who to avoid, and how to live a good, happy, and productive life.

 Many think wisdom is the Holy Spirit, but wisdom is a gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is an aspect of the triune God. Wisdom was created by God as a power or principality, like an angel. In fact, let me read from Proverbs 8:22-31 (do so).

In Proverbs, Wisdom is female and is named in Greek: “Sophia.” With no little irony, her nemesis, Stupidity, is also female and they both call out to everyone on Earth. [Read Proverbs 9: 7-18].

 Wisdom does not teach facts, she teaches how to live intelligently, how to be honest, just, compassionate, and fair. Wisdom gives empathy and foresight, opening our minds to proverbs and parables, lifting our thinking “out of the box” to attune our minds to our true model, the mind of Christ. This is why the beginning, middle and end of wisdom is knowing God.

 Solomon, a child king, knew he had no hope to govern God’s people without God’s help. He might have many erudite advisors but God was his one true hope. That is also true for Paul, who strides through life and death, stiff-arming Satan himself because nothing can peel God’s love away from him. This is very true for us also, as we move toward the promise of the kingdom of Heaven.

 And, here we come to all those parables Jesus told about that very kingdom. Hear them all again: a mustard seed so tiny as to be unseen becoming a tree so vast that it can shelter the homeless birds, a costly pearl and hidden treasure so great that they are worth all the discoverer owns, and – finally-- a great dragnet hauling in every fish, both worthwhile and mere fertilizer. Each parable has deep meanings, but did you notice Jesus asks his disciples if they understood – and when they do, Jesus tells them that they are, themselves, yet another parable!

 “Therefore,” he says, “every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven, is like a head of a household who brings forth out of his treasure things old and new.”

 God creates something very old as He saves; so old that God made it before He said, “Let there be light!” The first thing formed, before light, before time, before the world: Wisdom. God does something very new as He saves, creating a new heart, a new mind, a new song, just for you, just for me. This is a direct contrast to Stupidity, which encourages conceit, narcissism, and exploitation. God makes us, not we ourselves; so, our pride is in God alone.

 When Jesus was born, the wise sought him, following the light of a star. Today, we follow His light but, if we are wise, we still seek Him. So, let’s be wise and seek Him today and forevermore.