

## LOCKDOWN DAY 124 – 28 JULY 2020

Molweni dear family and friends of False Bay Diocese,

Scriptures: 1 Kings 3:5-12, Romans 8:26-30, Matthew 13:44. Hymn: *Joy to the world!*

We continue with our Reflection of yesterday, particularly with the theme of **Wisdom and Joy**.

Throughout the Bible we find the word wisdom used quite a lot. In the Bible wisdom is a gift from God. In our Confirmation liturgy, after the singing of the hymn addressed to the Holy Spirit, the *Veni Creator*, the Bishop stretches out her/his hands towards those to be confirmed and prays for **God's Spirit** to rest upon them and the first gift mentioned is **the Spirit of Wisdom**.

In the New Testament wisdom is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Wisdom is needed to live our lives but that **wisdom** can only come from God. In the reading from Paul to the Romans we have deep **wisdom**: "We know that all things work together **for good** for those who love God, who are called according to God's purpose...(Read Rom 8:26-30)

We know that by turning everything to the good, God cooperates with all those who love God. Even when darkness and loss become our daily bread, still the **love of God** works without ceasing to bring out **larger love, larger forgiveness, more acceptance of life and love even within pain**. The problem with our present age is that there is a huge lack of wisdom. Many people search for the pride of power, the accumulation of money and wealth, the experience of pleasure. In 1 Kings 3:5-12 we read that King Solomon dreamed that a higher wisdom and deeper joy might be found. Solomon was famous for his riches, but his real treasure was in a wise and understanding heart, it was in knowing right from wrong that Solomon found joy.

The question Jesus asks in today's parable is this '*where is your treasure?*', your **real** treasure. This is what the Kingdom of God is all about. What is our hearts desire, our deepest existential longing? The modern soul seeks pleasures in many different ways. These worldly pleasures fall away after satisfying our desires and we become restless again. Some even build shrines to their own ego.

All the parables of Jesus can be interpreted on many different levels, from many different perspectives. The problem with the parable about the person finding the treasure in the field, is that some people miss the point completely. Yes, it is true that at that time people did not have bank accounts and they buried their treasures in fields in the earth. Sometimes they died without telling anybody and somebody could discover it. That is true but using Biblical terminology, let us go deeper into what is actually happening here. The word field does not just mean any kind of field, it means a field where things grow. An agricultural field. That is the meaning of the word in Greek. We are created from the soil of the earth and in that field God has planted God's seed. The person finds the treasure in the field. The word finding here means searching. It does not mean finding by chance. The word found used in the parable by Jesus, demands looking for something in order to find it. It demands an effort that you are aware that there is something more and you go looking for it. The man was not just walking through the field. He was searching for something and the field is a symbol of himself, his life, his very person.

Like Solomon, this person went into the very depths of his heart, of his soul, knowing that there must be something greater. Solomon asked for wisdom and he got it. The man in the parable finds the same wisdom, the same treasure and he goes off happy. He sells everything he owns. In other words he sells his earthliness, his unredeemed self, he sells all that in order to gain the real treasure.

What he was looking for, he could not find as he was looking in the wrong place. He was searching in the things of this world and then God surprised him. (*I encourage you to read the memoirs of C.S. Lewis – Surprised by Joy*). All of us need to **search** for God and God will **surprise** us **with joy** when we find God. The French philosopher, Blaise Pascal said there are 3 groups of people in the world:

1. Those who are not searching for God and therefore never find him;
2. Those who are searching for God but have not yet found him;
3. Those who have searched for God and have found him.

We will not find God unless we search for God. Covid-19 has taught us that all of us needs to go into that field, our lives, to understand that there is something deeper there than the worldliness that we live. There must be more meaning to the human heart. There must be a deeper meaning to life itself, to existence itself and we must search for that meaning, that purpose, that reason but if we search in the wrong place, we will never find it.

Jesus challenges the people to search for the Kingdom of God in their own fields, within themselves and by discovering God within, we can sell everything we own to attain true joy, which comes from when we bow down before the will of God and enter into the Kingdom of God. 'Thy kingdom come' we pray in the 'Our Father'. It does not mean at the end of time. It means now, in the human soul. (Pause and sing the Lord's Prayer)

Are we prepared to enter into the Kingdom of God knowing that there is a greater wisdom to be attained, a greater joy to be attained and it starts by allowing God to enter into the depths of our field, our very being?

The gospel text challenges us to be like King Solomon, to **ask God for a deeper wisdom**. We need to make the prayer of Solomon our own: '*Give your servant a heart to understand how to discern between good and evil*'. Do we have the courage to ask for that? That is the question. **The greatest treasure we have in our souls is our faith**. Faith that has been passed down to us.

Let us proclaim with joy, the great treasure of our faith. *The Nicene Creed. Die Geloofsbelydenis van Nicea. Isivumo Sokholo Sasenikeya. (Apb, pg 108)*

Today, please **reach out** to our present Confirmation candidates and those of the past 5 years, their parents, caregivers and Confirmation instructors.

My dear Brothers and Sisters let us ask God that we will find all things working for good in answer to our prayers and petitions. That the merciful love of God will come to all who serve the church and comfort them in their difficulties. *Lord hear us. Lord graciously hear us*. That the saving wisdom of God will come to rulers of nations and communities and shape their thoughts and actions for peace. *Lord hear us. Lord graciously hear us*. That the tender compassion of God will come to those oppressed by any need and renew their hope in God's promises. *Lord hear us. Lord graciously hear us*. That the abundant healing of God will come to the sick and raise them up in mind and body. *Lord hear us. Lord graciously hear us*. That the eternal happiness of God will come to our beloved dead and be their treasure forever. *Lord hear us. Lord graciously hear us*.

I am, Because We Are, Because God is ... Opening hearts to heal God's world. *Recover your Joy*.