

Third Presbyterian Church  
Midweek Bible Study  
1<sup>st</sup> Kings 3:16-28  
Lessons from a Prostitute Story

**1 Kings 3:16-28** <sup>16</sup> Now two prostitutes came to the king and stood before him. <sup>17</sup> One of them said, "My lord, this woman and I live in the same house. I had a baby while she was there with me. <sup>18</sup> The third day after my child was born, this woman also had a baby. We were alone; there was no one in the house but the two of us.

<sup>19</sup> "During the night this woman's son died because she lay on him. <sup>20</sup> So she got up in the middle of the night and took my son from my side while I your servant was asleep. She put him by her breast and put her dead son by my breast. <sup>21</sup> The next morning, I got up to nurse my son--and he was dead! But when I looked at him closely in the morning light, I saw that it wasn't the son I had borne." <sup>22</sup> The other woman said, "No! The living one is my son; the dead one is yours." But the first one insisted, "No! The dead one is yours; the living one is mine." And so they argued before the king. <sup>23</sup> The king said, "This one says, 'My son is alive and your son is dead,' while that one says, 'No! Your son is dead and mine is alive.'" <sup>24</sup> Then the king said, "Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword for the king. <sup>25</sup> He then gave an order: "Cut the living child in two and give half to one and half to the other." <sup>26</sup> The woman whose son was alive was filled with compassion for her son and said to the king, "Please, my lord, give her the living baby! Don't kill him!" But the other said, "Neither I nor you shall have him. Cut him in two!" <sup>27</sup> Then the king gave his ruling: "Give the living baby to the first woman. Do not kill him; she is his mother." <sup>28</sup> When all Israel heard the verdict the king had given, they held the king in awe, because they saw that he had wisdom from God to administer justice.

1. We are all called to evangelize; however, we do get very judgmental in deciding who gets the blessing of our witness.
  - A. How do we overcome our society prejudices and stereotypes and make ourselves available to witness to whomever the Holy Spirit prompts us to regardless of their appearance or social status?
2. When we are moved to share our witness of Jesus Christ to the unsaved, they don't want to hear us regurgitate scriptures (chapter/verse). They want to know if the Lord is on their side, does the Lord care about me enough to intervene in my situation, Do I still have a change with God or have I just messed up too bad that I can't be forgiven?
  - A. Using what you have been taught, learned and experienced, what would you say to an unsaved person who is in a storm to convince them that God is on their side.
3. The sermon spoke about the difference between Christianity and churchianity, in your own words, what is the difference and how do we avoid engaging the unsaved with churchianity?
4. When the two women went back to their home, one had her baby back and one woman was bearing the burden of unbearable guilt of being responsible for the death of her own child (and she needs ministry).
  - A. Share your thoughts about being in the position of the mother who has her child and you are being moved to minister to this hurting mother who is guilty of calling for your child to be killed and deceiving you.
  - B. What is the most difficult situation God has moved you to share the Love of Christ with someone who has done you wrong?
5. One of the ways the sermon spoke about answering the question of the unsaved if God is on their side is for our response to their situation or circumstance to be the Doctor not the Lawyer.
  - A. Explain what it means to be the Lawyer and to be the Doctor in your own words and why does being the lawyer not work when trying to win someone to Christ?

- B. What do we do to become more instinctively “Doctors” in our witnessing rather than Lawyers?
6. What I also learned from this story is that ministry will not always be convenient. Solomon was at a party celebrating his kingship and was confronted by this dilemma. But he didn’t dismiss the interruption but handled the issue with compassion.
    - A. How do we determine what is worthy of interruption when it comes to ministering to peoples needs?
    - B. What are some things we can do to be more responsible to some of the interruptions for ministry in our life?
  7. When we are granted a blessing, we are immediately tested in what we have just received.... why does this happen?
    - A. Share with the group a situation of a blessing received and an immediately test and how you navigated.
  8. The final lesson this prostitute story teaches us that when we have a problem, take it to the king.
    - A. What are some of the options we go to before we go to God?
    - B. Why do we hesitate at times in talking our problems to the KING of Glory?
    - C. What does it mean to seek first the kingdom of God and all His righteousness?
  9. Share your main takeaway from the sermon and the lesson?

**(3:16-28) Wisdom, Example of— Judgment, Example of— Discernment, Example of— Understanding, Example of— Justice, Example of:** Solomon immediately demonstrated the wisdom God had supernaturally given him, a clear example of sharp, intelligent discernment. The case brought before Solomon is one of the most well-known stories in the Bible, and the case tested Solomon's wisdom. It revealed that the LORD had definitely given Solomon unusual insight into human nature.

1. The difficult case involved two prostitutes who lived together ([1 Kings 3:17-22](#)). The two women bore sons just three days apart, but there were no witnesses present during the births. During the night one woman's son died because she carelessly rolled over on him ([1 Kings 3:19](#)). Perhaps she had been in a drunken stupor. Whatever the case, this careless woman awoke during the night, quietly got up, and switched sons while the other woman slept ([1 Kings 3:20](#)).

When the other woman arose the next morning to nurse her son, she discovered he was dead. But when she closely observed him, she noticed that he was not the son she had borne ([1 Kings 3:21](#)).

2. The perplexing case that needed to be solved was just this: To whom did the living son belong? Each woman was now claiming the living son as her own. Note the wisdom, the sharp understanding and discernment of Solomon ([1 Kings 3:23-26](#)). He reviewed the facts of the case and then applied the principle of maternal instinct and love to get to the truth. He tested the women by calling for a sword and ordering the child to be cut in two, with one half given to each mother ([1 Kings 3:24-25](#)). But immediately the true mother, gripped by her maternal love and concern for the baby, cried out, begging for the king to give the child to the other woman. A startling contrast between the nature of the two women was immediately exposed. One woman was revealing a cruel heart, a cruelty that was willing to allow the child to be killed. And the other woman was revealing a maternal instinct and love for the child ([1 Kings 3:26](#)).

3. Justice could now be executed. Solomon gave the verdict: the baby was to be given to the loving, compassionate woman ([1 Kings 3:27](#)). She had proven beyond any doubt that she was the true mother of the living child.

4. Note the impact of Solomon's wisdom: the entire nation held him in awe, recognizing his God-given ability to rule wisely and justly throughout the nation. The people respected their king and held him in the highest esteem, knowing that such wisdom could come only from God Himself.

**Thought 1.** One of the greatest needs of the human race is *wisdom*. Wisdom is the ability to understand and to discern what to do, how to do it, and when to do it. If we know what to do, how to do it, and when to do it—we are wise. We possess wisdom. A wise person understands and discerns between...

- right and wrong
- good and bad
- righteousness and evil
- honesty and dishonesty
- truth and falsehood
- morality and immorality
- diligence and slothfulness
- hard work and laziness
- pride and humility
- righteous anger and wicked anger
- fair treatment and unfair treatment
- genuine love and infatuation

Wisdom even discerns between the good and the excellent, the acceptable and the best. Wisdom is one of the greatest qualities in all the earth, a quality that we must all possess. Without wisdom, society disintegrates and eventually collapses. No government, no society, and no family can survive without wisdom. In order to walk through life successfully, we must grow in understanding, be able to discern what to do, how to do it, and when to do it. We must discern between the good and the bad, the truth and the deception in order to succeed and live fruitful and productive lives. This is the clear teaching of God's Holy Word:

**"Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" ([Matthew 7:24-27](#)).**

Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible - Commentary - The Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – 1 Kings.