

02.27.11

Wisdom Literature



## STUDY GUIDE

### THE ALL WISE GOD

#### SERMON SUMMARY

Todd Pruitt from Job, Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes

A very important question to ask as we study Scripture: What does this writing tell me about God?

#### *The God Who Makes Us Wise (Proverbs)*

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge but fools despise wisdom and instruction.” Proverbs 1:7

Wisdom acknowledges our utter dependence upon him.  
Proverbs not a golden quote book.

Proverbs 3:5-6; Colossians 1:9-10, 28-29

Only by knowing and understanding Jesus can we know and do the will of God. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Faith in Jesus is fear of the Lord.

#### *The God Who Gives Us Meaning (Ecclesiastes)*

In light of Romans 8:19-23 the words, “Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher, vanity of vanities! All is vanity” is not an oddity or outside of reason.

As a result of the fall, life is futile and man is hopeless to find satisfaction on their own.

Yet in Christ we do not labor in vain: 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Corinthians 15:58.

#### *The God Who is Not Easily Understood (Job)*

While Ecclesiastes ponders the futility of life, Job experiences it.

Job wrestles through a number of issues: the righteous sufferer, the meaning of faith, the meaning of wisdom and the question of God's justice.

Job, who is considered “blameless and upright” (1:8) by God, succumbs to his weakness and accuses God in his suffering.

God answers Job (38-40:2)

It remains hard to understand God, but Job learns through his suffering, affirming his limited knowledge before the holy and righteous God.

### *The God Who Inspires Singing (Psalms)*

Psalm 1, 2 and 40

These wisdom writings find their fullest expression in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Jesus fulfills the wisdom theme of God’s Great Story in at least three ways.

Jesus is the ultimate wise person

Jesus death and resurrection are the greatest expressions of God’s wisdom

Jesus himself is the wisdom of God

## WORSHIP

Read aloud the following:

(ESV) 1 Corinthians 2

<sup>12</sup>Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God. <sup>13</sup>And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual. <sup>14</sup>The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned. <sup>15</sup>The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one. <sup>16</sup>“For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

Pray for wisdom from God as you begin.

## STUDY

Proverbs confronts us with sobering words about the nature and disposition of wisdom. Solomon wrote that the fear of God is where knowledge begins and a fool

will despise such wisdom and instruction (Prov 1:7). These words should give us pause, but let us pause with a Gospel-centered purpose, knowing that the wisdom literature of Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon has a specific end: for the glory to God. Daniel Estes writes, “Even though the ancient Hebrews produced few written texts apart from the Bible, these books of Old Testament poetry are widely regarded as among the finest literary masterpieces in all of world literature.” Let us approach these works with humility and wonder in light of the revelation of Jesus Christ, who, as Paul writes, is himself wisdom from God (1 Cor 1:30).

*The God Who Makes us Wise (Proverbs)*

Q: Since each book of Scripture has a historical setting, why is it important to affirm that Proverbs points forward to the revealed Christ?

Q: Why is faith in Jesus, fearing the Lord?

*The God Who Gives Us Meaning (Ecclesiastes)*

Read Ecclesiastes 5:1-2 aloud. Discuss how the phrase “house of God” takes on a new meaning now that Christ rose from the dead and inaugurated his Church by the Spirit of God.

Q: How would this passage apply to followers of the Old Testament? To followers in the New Testament? What are similarities and differences?

*The God Who is Not Easily Understood (Job)*

Q: Why would it be the wisdom of fools to say to a suffering individual, “The reason you suffer is because you do not have enough faith”? Why does it create a greater burden for the sufferer?

Share your sufferings with one another. Pray for each other as necessary.

*The God Inspires Singing (Psalms)*

It is Jesus who the Psalter anticipates because he is the Son of God. The psalms are an offering to God, and as the second person of the Trinity, Jesus is the appropriate object of our praise and lament.

Read Psalm 40 aloud. Reflect on the Psalmist's affirmation of God's faithfulness even in the midst of his suffering.

On the Biblical grounds that Jesus is fully human and fully God, he is worthy of divine praise since he became to us wisdom from God (1 Cor 1:30), and in action, Scripture demonstrates that that wisdom (Jesus himself) has its highest expression in the cross of Jesus (1 Cor 1:20-31), silencing all human pretensions. With the writers of the New Testament we affirm that the Gospel of Jesus Christ (his life, death, and resurrection on behalf of sinners) is the central reality and motivation for all our identity, all our conversations and all our actions.

### **DIRECTED PRAYER**

Share your requests and pray for one another.