

READING ASSIGNMENT, WEEK 3: WISDOM BOOKS (for June 17 sermon)

BOOKS COVERED: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon

GOD’S RESPONSE; JOB’S REACTION | JOB 38:1-18; 42:1-6

God answers “out of the storm.” The Lord is not tame. God’s presence is stormy, disruptive, and loving at the same time. Have you found Him so?

Job spoke without knowledge and understanding. Can you identify? Prepare to talk with the group about the arrogance and presumption in the ways we approach God.

Job’s eyes now see the Lord (v. 5). Do you see the Lord? Do you recognize His creative power and purpose in you and in the world? How does seeing make you feel? Does seeing God change how you see yourself? How so?

A PSALM OF DAVID | PSALM 8

Do you believe God made the universe? Why? Do you believe people are the pinnacle of creation? Why?

David is convinced God gives men and women a job to do, a destiny to live out (vv. 58). How is the human race doing generally? How are you doing personally?

The psalm opens and closes with precisely the same words: “The Lord, his name is majestic in all the earth” (vv. 1 and 9). What did David intend by this? Do you see your life and work connected to God from start to finish?

A PSALM OF DAVID | PSALM 23

What is the image God in vv. 1-4? Is your phase of life right now restful and restorative, or hard-pressed? Explain.

The imagery shifts in vv. 5-8. How is the Lord pictured? Can you see yourself an honored guest at a meal hosted by God?

As you walk through life, what sorts of things follow you? Describe in terms like the writer. And whom do you follow? Are you secure or insecure in the world? Where or who is home?

WISDOM’S BENEFITS | PROVERBS 3:1-15

This passage is part of a long section in the book (1:8-9:18) about the superiority of wisdom. What is the promise of v. 2?

Proverbs gives practical advice for godly living. And the text moves in a direct manner. Vv. 3-12 give wise counsel and promise benefits. For instance, v. 3 advises us to always be loving and faithful; then v. 4 promises we'll receive the benefit of favor and a good name. Name some other examples given.

What does v. 13 promise? Have you found it true, or do you aspire to experience it? What do vv. 14-15 claim? Do you agree? What do you most desire? Why?

STANDING IN AWE OF GOD | ECCLESIASTES 5:1-7

Read vv. 1-3. Men and women need to stand in awe of God. Our awe deepens and expands when we worship the Lord, if we worship correctly. When you come to worship God at church, what is your attitude toward Him? What helps increase your awe of God?

Read vv. 4-6. Is a person a fool to promise God genuine worship but then not deliver? Do our mouths sometimes claim to do what we know we'll refuse to do? How good are we at actually following through on giving or serving or showing up or (fill in the blank)?

Read vv. 2 and 6. Do you see wisdom in this advice? Is it hard or easy to obey? Talk can be cheap and empty (v. 7), but fear of God is valuable and meaningful. What does that look like in your daily life?
