

I. Introduction and Review.

A. How is the book of Proverbs different from all other wisdom literature?

1. The wisdom in Proverbs is rooted in the knowledge of God. 1:7
2. Proverbs has much to say about God's Character (Attributes).
3. The teaching of the book of Proverbs about God is intensely practical!

B. Why study theology (the attributes of God)?

1. Nowadays many people come to church to better know and love themselves.
2. Your great need is to know and love God! Eph. 1:18-19 3:18-19
3. Many people today believe in idols (false concepts of God).
4. The problem with a fool is his attitude towards God. 29:3 *The foolishness of man subverts his way, and his heart rages against the LORD.*

C. How can God be known?

1. God is incomprehensible (Transcendent). 25:2 Dt. 29:29 Ro. 11:33-36 Isa. 40:18 *It is the glory of God to conceal a matter... The secret things belong to the LORD our God... To whom will you liken God, or what likeness will you compare with Him*
2. God is knowable because He has chosen to reveal Himself (Imminent). 30:5-6 Deut. 29:29b II Ti. 3:16-17 II Pet. 1:21 Ps. 19 Ro. 1:19-20 Heb.

D. How are God's attributes to be studied?

1. All of His attributes are interrelated.
2. There is no "correct" list which fully comprehends all of His attributes.
3. Instead of trying to do a comprehensive survey of God's attributes, we will stick to the attributes emphasized in the book of Proverbs.
4. We will also share Proverbs' emphasis on our response to God's character.

II. God is Powerful (Sovereign/Omnipotent).

A. God's power is demonstrated in His Creation. 3:19-20 8:22-36

1. He has made all things. 20:12 22:2 29:13 *The hearing ear, the seeing eye. The LORD has made both of them.*
2. As His creatures, we are accountable to Him. 17:5 14:31 Isa. 29:16 Ps. 95:6-7 *He who oppresses the poor reproaches His Maker...*

B. God's power is shown in His complete control of all things (Providence).

1. God is able to carry out all of His plans. Ps. 115:3 Eph. 1:11 Je. 32:27 Ro. 8:28 Is. 46:8-11 *Our God is in the heavens, He does what He pleases... Behold I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?*
2. He is sovereign over the free acts of men. 19:21 *Many are the plans in a man's heart, but the counsel of the LORD, It will stand* 16:9 *The mind of a man plans his way, but the LORD directs his step..* 20:24 *Man's steps are ordained by the LORD, How then can man understand his way?..* 16:1 *The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the LORD...* Num. 22:18 23:23 John 11:49-52 19:19 Ezek. 36:26 Acts 16:14 Eph. 2:1ff Jer. 31:33 John 6:44f
3. He is sovereign over rulers. 21:1 Dan. 4:31-35 Isa. 45:1-2 44:28 *The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.*
4. He is sovereign over the wicked. 16:4 *The LORD has made everything for His purpose, even the wicked for the day of evil. .* Acts 2:23 Ge. 50:20 Re. 17:17 Isa. 43:21 Ps. 104:31 145:10 Ro. 9:21f

5. **He is sovereign over inanimate objects: the Lot.** **16:33** *The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.* Ex. 28:30 Josh 7:14f Nu. 5:17-31 Acts 1:26
6. **God's plan is perfect: the best possible plan.**

C. Objections to God's sovereignty.

1. **How can God be sovereign and good if there is so much evil in the world?**
2. **Is there a contradiction between God's sovereignty and man's freedom?**
 - a. **Man's acts are still free and responsible.**
 - b. **How this fits together is in the realm of mystery.** Deut. 29:29 (like the Trinity)
3. **Ultimately we have to realize that because we are finite and sinful, we cannot comprehend God's ways and we ought not to question Him.** Isa. 29:16 Ro. 9:19f

D. Application.

1. **Be thankful that a personal God is in control, rather than blind impersonal fate.**
2. **Your pride is an assault on God's sovereignty.** **16:5,18 18:12 29:23** *Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the Lord; assuredly he will not go unpunished* Eze. 28:2. **Isa. 45:9** *Refuse: believe: Sovereignty Woe to the one who quarrels with his Maker - an earthenware vessel among the vessels of the earth. Will the clay say to the potter, "What are you doing?"*
3. **It is very foolish to oppose God.** **15:25 21:30** Psalm 2:1f **33:10-11** Rev. 17:14 *The LORD will tear down the house of the proud... There is no wisdom and no understanding and no counsel against the LORD...16:5,18 21:4 29:23* *Everyone who is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD; Assuredly He will not be unpunished.... Pride goes before destruction and a haughty spirit before stumbling.*
4. **Humble yourself and fear God.** **15:33 22:4 11:2 19:23 29:23** *The fear of the LORD is the instruction for wisdom, and before honor comes humility*
 - a. **Don't trust yourself.** **28:26** *He who trusts in his own heart is a fool*
 - b. **Don't fear (or trust) men!.** **29:25** Jer. 17:5-8 Ezek. 29:6-7
5. **The success of your efforts in life rests entirely with God.** **27:1** Js 4:13f Ps. 37:23 *Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth* **21:31** *The horse is prepared for the day of battle but the victory belongs to the LORD*
6. **Commit your plans to God.** **16:3 3:5-6** I Pet. 5:7 Ps. 37:5 **90:17** *Commit your works to the LORD and your plans will be established.*
 - a. **Commit by making your plans according to the wisdom He has revealed**
 - b. **Commit by submitting to His sovereign will for the best outcome.**
 - c. **Don't use God's sovereignty as an excuse for laziness. Instead let it be your motivation for holy activity.** **I Co. 15:10** Phil. 2:12-13

III. God is All Knowing.

A. God is wise.

1. **God's wisdom is contrasted with our ignorance.** **30:1-6 25:2**
2. **He is the source of all wisdom which is revealed in His perfect Word.** **30:5-6 29:18 2:5-7** Ps. 19:8-10 119:140 12:6. Dt. 4:2 *Every word of God is tested... Do not add to His words. Lest He reprove you...*
3. **Study the Word.** **16:20 13:13** *He who gives attention to the Word shall find good*

B. God is omniscient (He knows everything comprehensively). Mt. 10:29-30 Ro. 11:33f Isa. 40:27-28.

1. **God's knowledge is perfect. He is never wrong and He never learns.**
2. **God sees everything you do.** **15:3 5:21** Ps. 33:10-11 *The eyes of the LORD are in every place, watching the evil and the good.*

3. **God knows the hearts of men.** 15:11 20:27 Ps. 139:8 Jer. 17:10 Heb. 4:13 *Sheol and Abaddon lie open before the LORD, how much more the hearts of men!*
 - a. **He sees beyond our outward actions and appearances.**
 - b. **He knows us better than we know ourselves!** 16:2 21:2 *All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, but the LORD weighs the motives... Every man's way is right in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the hearts.*

C. Application.

1. **Be humble about what you know.**
2. **Be pure.**
 - a. **Hypocrisy is futile. You cannot fool God.** 21:27 15:8 Is. 29:13,15 *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination, how much more when he brings it with evil intent*
 - b. **There is no such thing as secret sin.** 5:21 *The ways of a man are before the eyes of the LORD, and HE watches all His paths.*
 - c. **Ask God to show you the hard truth about yourself.** Ps. 139:23-24 *Search me O God and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; And see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.*
3. **Marvel that in spite of the fact that God fully knows us, He still loves us!**

IV. God is just.

A. **God's Justice is implicit in virtually every line of Proverbs.2:8a** 24:12d 8:20 16:11

1. **God, by nature is just. He hates wickedness.** 6:16-17 15:26 17:25 20:10
Guarding the paths of justice... Will He not render to man according to His work?...
2. **God enacts justice.** 10:16,27-32,3 3:33 14:11 *The wages of the righteous is life. The income of the wicked, punishment... The fear of the LORD prolongs life, but the years of the wicked will be shortened.*

B. **God's justice is infallible.**

1. **Because God is all knowing, His judgement is perfectly accurate.** 24:12bc *Does He not consider it who weighs the hearts? Does He not know it who keeps your soul?* 17:3 *The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold, but the LORD tests hearts.*
2. **Because God is all powerful, His judgements are always carried out.**
 - a. **Wicked behavior will be punished.** 11:21a 13:21a 16:5 17:5 19:5 28:18-20 29:16
Assuredly the evil man will not go unpunished... Adversity pursues sinners
 - b. **Wise behavior will be blessed.** 11:21b 24:14 13:21b 2:21-22 16:7 22:4,9
The descendants of the righteous will be delivered... Know that wisdom is thus for your soul; If you find it, then there will be a future and your hope will not be cut off... The righteous will be rewarded with prosperity.
3. **Even if this doesn't seem to be happening in the short term, our sovereign God will bring justice in the long term.**

C. Application. .

1. **You will never ever gain by sinning against God.**
2. **You will never ever lose by doing His will.** 19:23
3. **Thanks be to God that justice has been met by mercy in the cross of Christ and that God's justice for our sin has been satisfied by our substitute!**
4. **Trust God.**
 - a. **To take care of you. God protects the righteous.** 2:8b 14:26 18:10 30:5b
 - b. **To deal with those who harm you. It is not your job to bring about justice (revenge). Leave that to the LORD.** 20:22 29:26 24:17-18 25:21-22 *Do not*

say, "I will repay evil." Wait for the LORD and He will save you...Many seek the ruler's favor, but justice for man comes from the LORD. **23:10 24:11-12 22:22-23**

V. God is Gracious.

A. We are all sinners in need of grace. 20:9 Ps. 130:3-4 Gal. 3:10,13 *Who can say I have cleansed my heart, I am pure from my sin?... If you LORD should mark iniquities O Lord, who could stand, but there is forgiveness with you.*

B. God lovingly calls out to sinners. 1:20-21 8:4f 9:1-6

- 1. Turn and live. 1:22-23 28:13-14** *He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will find compassion. How blessed is the man who fears always, but he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity.*
- 2. A way has been provided for justice and mercy to meet: at the cross. 16:6**
- 3. Humble yourself. Fear God and live. 9:10 Before it is too late. 1:24-31**

Discussion Questions for Family Worship.

- 1. How is the book of Proverbs different from other wisdom literature?**
- 2. In what unique way are the attributes of God taught in the book of Proverbs?**
- 3. What does it mean that God is Sovereign?**
- 4. Does God control the wills of people?**
If so, how can we be held responsible for our actions?
- 5. Why does God hate human pride so much?**
- 6. How specifically can you "commit your works to the LORD"?**
What plans have you committed to the LORD?
- 7. Why is it important that the Bible be infallible?**
- 8. What does it mean that God is Omniscient?**
- 9. What practical application can be made of the omniscience of God?**
- 10. How is God's justice different from that of human rulers?**
- 11. How is God's justice seen on every page of Proverbs?**
- 12. How can sinners be made just before a Holy God?**