Please turn to, or use your app and proceed to the book of Proverbs.

As you likely know, our Pastor recently started a series through the book of Proverbs, in that series he is taking a topical approach to look at the book or Proverbs. This past Wednesday we looked at women from the book of Proverbs, next week it is men.

Because many of the virtues as well as the vices are repeated in the book of Proverbs a topical approach is a good way to deal with the book.

BUT, an expositional study is also good. The book has clear design and so as we look at it expositional, I think you will see how God has constructed this amazing book to speak wisdom into our lives.

My plan. If there remains an interest, we will meet once a month and I will do an expository walk-through of two chapters at each meeting.

For today, I will do some background on the book of Proverbs and then we will look only at chapter 1.

* **Background**

**First the genre.** **Anyone know what genre the book of Proverbs fall under?** The book of Proverbs falls into a genre that we refer to as **“wisdom literature.”** The wisdom literature includes **Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Job**. These three need to be taken together, for they form a **triplet** that provides a very **balanced understanding of wisdom.**

The Bible’s wisdom literature explores the question: **“What does it mean to live well in God’s world?” This is an important question and one that anyone who has a remote interest in God should have an interest in understanding.**

**Now, when I mention the Proverbs, what come to mind?** Likely you think of those **short**, **pithy** statements that often compare or contrast something, they are often (two-liners) if you will, and are generally **loaded with wisdom**.

That is what the book is primarily, but it may surprise you to learn that the **first nine chapters are poems**, with some **proverbial sayings** built into them. **We will talk more about this in a moment**.

The book of Proverbs covers many important life lessons and it touches upon every area of our lives. Including work, sexuality, money, friendships, marriage, fear, faith, goodness, evil, pride, and humility, just to name a few. It really is a book we should commit ourselves to reading over and over and over.

**So who is the author of the Proverbs?**

**Yes, Solomon which means (peace). This would clearly stand in contrast to David (who was a man of war). Surprising, Solomon was likely what David called him, but not his actual name.**

**Anyone know his actual name?**

“**24** Then David comforted his wife, Bathsheba, and went in to her and lay with her, and she bore a son, and he called his name Solomon. And the LORD loved him **25** and sent a message by Nathan the prophet. So he called his name Jedidiah, because of the LORD.” (2Sa 12:24-25 ESV)

**His name means beloved of Yahweh.**

But to deal with the question. Solomon is mentioned as the author in both Proverbs 1:1 and 10:1:

“The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:” (Pr 1:1 ESV)

“The proverbs of Solomon. A wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother.” (Pr 10:1 ESV)

Solomon’s interest in creating proverbs is told to us in **I Kings 4:29-34** where we read:

“**29** ¶ And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding beyond measure, and breadth of mind like the sand on the seashore, **30** so that Solomon’s wisdom surpassed the wisdom of all the people of the east and all the wisdom of Egypt. **31** For he was wiser than all other men, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol, and his fame was in all the surrounding nations. **32** He also spoke 3,000 proverbs, and his songs were 1,005. **33** He spoke of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that grows out of the wall. He spoke also of beasts, and of birds, and of reptiles, and of fish. **34** And people of all nations came to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and from all the kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom.” (1Ki 4:29-34 ESV)

Outside of Jesus Christ, Solomon was the wisest man to ever walk the planet and that wisdom was given to him by God: “**10** It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. **11** And God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches or the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, **12** behold, I now do according to your word. Behold, I give you a wise and discerning mind, so that none like you has been before you and none like you shall arise after you. **13** I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor, so that no other king shall compare with you, all your days. **14** And if you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days."” (1Ki 3:10-14 ESV)

In the book of Proverbs we also encounter proverbs that were written by Solomon but were **compiled by King Hezekiah’s men**. These start in Proverbs 25:1:

Verses…

There are also two batches of sayings that come from a group called “the wise” 22:17-24:22 and 24:23-34.

Verses…

There are also oracles from a man amend Agur 30:1-33 and a king named Lemuel 31:1-9

Prov 30:1

Pro 31:1

So Solomon is the main author, but there were also collectors and possibly other authors.

Now, to go back and develop something I said earlier. As we begin, the first thing that will jump out is in spite of everything I have just said, is that the **first nine chapters** are not the **traditional proverbs** that we think of when we think of the book of Proverbs. Instead, they are a series of **poems**, that contain **proverbial statements**. **They serve to warm us up to the importance of the information contained in the Proverbs.**

**So let’s briefly discuss the general structure and in particular** what is up with these **first nine chapters**.

**Chapter 1:1-7** we have the **introduction**, we will look at that in a **moment**.

Next begging in chapter 1 and carrying all the way to chapter 9 we have **ten speeches** or **ten monologues**, or **ten teaching sessions** or **ten poems** from a **Father to his son**... The **phrase “my son”** is used **15 times** in the **first nine chapters**.

**Let me show you where I believe these start and end, just so that you can see them in advance:**

The **first** from the father – **1:8-19**

The **second** from the father – **2:1-2:22**

The **third** from the father – **3:1–12**

The **fourth** from the father – **3:21-35**

The **fifth** from the father – **4:1-9**

The **sixth** from the father – **4:10-19**

The **seventh** from the father – **4:20-27**

The **eight** from the father – **5:1-23**

The **nineth** from the father – **6:1-35**

The **tenth** from the father – **7:1-27** (the final and most intense of all!)

But it is not just guidance from the father.

Here in the first nine chapters, we also have **four speeches**, **four monologues**, **four teachings**, or **four poems** from **wisdom**. Here **wisdom is personified as a lady**, we will call her **lady wisdom**. Here in chapters 1-9 lady wisdom speaks to us four separate times. **We would be wise to listen.**

The **first** from lady wisdom – **1:20-33**

The **second** from lady wisdom – **3:13-20**

The **third** from lady wisdom – **8:1-36** – Proverbs 8 is of special mention because of the way **wisdom is personified**, I will give you just a **sample now:**

“**27** When he (Yahweh) established the heavens, I was there; when he drew a circle on the face of the deep, **28** when he made firm the skies above, when he established the fountains of the deep, **29** when he assigned to the sea its limit, so that the waters might not transgress his command, when he marked out the foundations of the earth, **30** then I was beside him, like a master workman, and I was daily his delight, rejoicing before him always, **31** rejoicing in his inhabited world and delighting in the children of man.” (Pr 8:27-31 ESV)

The **fourth** from lady wisdom – **9:1-18**

Then, beginning in chapter 10 we find strings of proverbs as we are accustomed to seeing them!

**Scholars** tell us that from **10:1 – 22:16** there are a total of **375 proverbs**. These are the traditional proverbs that are designed like what you think about when you think about Proverbs.

**There is a great deal of wisdom in these 13 chapters**

**Then, beginning in 22:17 – 24:22** we have **30 sayings** of **“the wise”** Thes divide into **30 discreet teachings** of the wise.

“**17** ¶ Incline your ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my knowledge, **18** for it will be pleasant if you keep them within you, if all of them are ready on your lips. **19** That your trust may be in the LORD, I have made them known to you today, even to you. **20** Have I not written for you thirty sayings of counsel and knowledge,” (Pr 22:17-20 ESV)

Then, beginning in **24:23-34** we have “additional sayings of **“the wise.”**

“These also are sayings of the wise...” (Pr 24:23a ESV)

Then beginning in **Pro 25:1-29:27**, we encounter a **section of Proverbs that were written by Solomon**, but they were **compiled** by **men of King Hezekiah**, the king of Judah.

“These also are proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied.” (Pr 25:1 ESV)

**Solomon ruled from 971-941BC**, Hezekiah was a Judean king who ruled from 715-687BC. So, this is roughly **250 years later.**

**In Proverbs** **30:1-31** we find yet another section of Proverbs, these are **accredited to Agur**, the son of Jakeh.

“The words of Agur son of Jakeh. The oracle. The man declares, I am weary, O God; I am weary, O God, and worn out.” (Pr 30:1 ESV)

The exact identity of the Agur is unknown, although there are some theories out there, none stand on extremely solid ground.

**Then in chapter** **31:1-31** we encounter another section of the Proverbs that are accredited to King Lemuel.

“The words of King Lemuel. An oracle that his mother taught him:” (Pr 31:1 ESV)

We are not sure who king Lemual was and we will likely talk about some of the theories around who he was once we get there.

Suffice it to say, the book of proverbs is an **amazing book** with many **more roots than we might originally imagine**.

Again, this is an amazing book of wisdom that God has pulled together.

**A Major question: How should we understand these proverbial statements, the bulk of the book of Proverbs?**

Some say they are promises that are to be received by faith. While others say the proverbs are about **probabilities**, **if this**, **then this is most likely outcome.**

As we work through the Proverbs **you will likely decide** for yourself which definition or some other definition you believe to be true.

**A key term** in the book or Proverbs is the Hebrew word **חכמה chokmah khok-maw’** it is **translated wisdom** but it means the **skill, knowledge,**  and **art** of doing something **exceptionally well**. This word is used **39 times** in the **book of Proverbs**. **So keep your eye out for this word.**

Because let’s be honest, the reason we are here is we are really looking for wisdom for **חכמה chokmah khok-maw’** (skill, knowledge, and art) on how to **live well in God’s world**.

This wisdom is **practical**, **intellectual**, **moral** and it is **deep**. It is the skill, knowledge and art of living life well.

**That is a quick overview of this amazing book.**

**Questions.**

Proverbs 1 (overview)

1:1-1 is the **basic introduction** to the Proverbs, 2-6 is the **goal of the Proverbs**, and verse 7 is the **motto of the Proverbs and indeed of life**:

**Vs 1 - The Introduction:**

**1** ¶ The proverbs of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel:

**Vs 2-6 - The Goal:**

**2** To know wisdom and instruction, to understand words of insight, **3** to receive instruction in wise dealing, in righteousness, justice, and equity; **4** to give prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the youth —  **5** Let the wise hear and increase in learning, and the one who understands obtain guidance, **6** to understand a proverb and a saying, the words of the wise and their riddles.

To know **Wisdom**, the Hebrew word is: **חכמה (Chokmah) (*khok-maw’)***

To know **instruction**, the Hebrew word is: **מוסר (muwcar) (moo-sawr’)** – discipline, instruction, or chastening.

To understand words of insight or **words of instruction**.

But is also **not just to know**, but to **receive instruction** in various areas of my life.

It is designed to give **prudence**, **knowledge**, and **discretion**.

SO, because that is true... **Let the wise hear**, let **wise increase in learning.**

**That is the goal of the Proverbs!**

**Is there anything else you see here?**

**Vs 7 - The Motto:**

**7** ¶ The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge; fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

**Wisdom starts** with a reverent fear of God, that and **that alone is the beginning of knowledge**. It does not start in a special school or College.

**Rich Turner paraphrase of the Motto:** Jesus Christ himself is the beginning of wisdom and you will never grow wise unless you humble yourself before the God man. **Real, godly wisdom requires you to first bow the knee to King Jesus, then and only then are you prepared to receive God’s wisdom.**

**Paul said it this way to the church in Corinth:**

“**7** But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. **8** None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” (1Co 2:7-8 ESV)

**Or this way to the church in Corinth:**

Speaking of Christ: “in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (Col 2:3 ESV)

**Vs 8-19**, we have the **first poem**, the first sayings, we have the first monologue, the **first teaching from the Father**.

The first speech from the father breaks down into **three component parts**:

**Part #1 –** Is the call to hear the father’s instructions, to hear your mother’s teaching and the reason: “**8** Hear, my son, your father’s instruction, and forsake not your mother’s teaching, **9** for they are a graceful garland for your head and pendants for your neck.

The father’s instructions are like, and Solomon wants us to picture this, like a beautiful crown on the head, they are like a stunning necklace around the neck. They are beautiful, they are attractive, they are desirable.

You and I are called to hear and to follow.

**Part #2 -** of this initial speech from the father, namely what **not to do and why**:

**10** ¶ My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. **11** If they say, "Come with us, let us lie in wait for blood; let us ambush the innocent without reason; **12** like Sheol let us swallow them alive, and whole, like those who go down to the pit; **13** we shall find all precious goods, we shall fill our houses with plunder; **14** throw in your lot among us; we will all have one purse" —  **15** my son, do not walk in the way with them; hold back your foot from their paths, **16** for their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood. **17** For in vain is a net spread in the sight of any bird, **18** but these men lie in wait for their own blood; they set an ambush for their own lives.

Vs 10 – Do not run with the wicked, do not chase after the evil things they chase after (stealing and looting) and he even explains why along the way:

These men according to verse 18 are lying in ambush for their own lives.

Being greedy for unjust or undeserved gains, steals away the life of the one who gains it.

Do not throw in with people like this, they are unjust and they will drag you into the net that has been prepared for them.

**Part #3 – The deep knowledge**

**Vs 19 –** Such are the ways of everyone who is greedy for unjust gain; it takes away the life of its possessors.”

**This conclusion is surprising and shocking**. But one we should let settle in. Greed is ugly.

To **greedily desire** things we have not earned is a trap for our souls.

The first warning, right out of the gate is beware of greed and covetousness.

**Greed, we might say is a silent destroyer.**

But also, here in chapter one we have the first speech, the first monologue, the first teaching, the first poem from Lady Wisdom:

**The first speech by Lady Wisdom (vs 20- 33)**

This **breaks into 5 component parts**:

The call, the rhetorical questions, the warning, the judgment, and the good news.

**Part #1 - The call -**

“**20** ¶ Wisdom cries aloud in the street, in the markets she raises her voice; **21** at the head of the noisy streets she cries out; at the entrance of the city gates she speaks:

See her in your mind... This regal woman, lady wisdom is crying out in the streets and at the gates, **what is she saying?**

**Part #2 – The rhetorical questions -**

**22** "How long, O simple ones, will you love being simple? How long will scoffers delight in their scoffing and fools hate knowledge? **23** If you turn at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my spirit to you; I will make my words known to you.

Here she asks **three rhetorical questions**, how long O simple will you love being simple. How long scoffers will you delight in scoffing. Fools, how long will you go on hating knowledge?

**The she says IF, IF, IF, you turn at her reproof, THEN, behold, I will pour out my Spirit and I will make my words known to you**.

For this to happen, man and women must turn from their simplicity, they must turn from their scoffing, they must turn...

**Part #3 – The warning -**

**24** Because I have called and you refused to listen, have stretched out my hand and no one has heeded, **25** because you have ignored all my counsel and would have none of my reproof, **26** I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when terror strikes you, **27** when terror strikes you like a storm and your calamity comes like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you.

To refuse God’s wisdom, to ignore his counsel, to refuse his correction, is to sign ourselves up for calamity and terror, and it is to isolate us from God deliverance in our distress!

**Part #4 – The judgment -**

**28** Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer; they will seek me diligently but will not find me. **29** Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD, **30** would have none of my counsel and despised all my reproof, **31** therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way, and have their fill of their own devices. **32** For the simple are killed by their turning away, and the complacency of fools destroys them;

Further, when we call, having rejected wisdom, Lady wisdom tells us that God will not answer us, we will look, but we will not find him.

Notice reject knowledge is to sign ourselves up for the fill of our own devices.

**Part #5 – The Good News -**

**33** but whoever listens to me will dwell secure and will be at ease, without dread of disaster."

Notice in closing chapter 1, whoever listens to wisdom (The wisdom of God, who is Jesus), whoever listens to “me” verse 33 says, will dwell secure and will be at ease, and without dread of disaster.

**Spiritually,** we do this by placing faith in Jesus. The Bible is clear, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved (Rom 10:13).

**Practically,** in our day-to-day lives we do this by submitting to King Jesus. **By heeding His words and His commands.**

**Solomon** was the **wisest man** to ever lived, yet he lived much of his life **foolishly** and **suffered in this life** for his choices.

**David** was a man after God’s own heart, who allowed sin to bring a sword into his house that he dwelt with his whole life.

You and I need to be **born again**. Then we need the **חכמה chokmah khok-maw’** (**skill, knowledge, and art)** on how to **live well in God’s world**.

I present to you **Proverbs chapter 1.**

**Closing thoughts?**

**Proverbs 1:** [Innocent as Doves Does not Mean Ignorance of Evil | SermonAudio](https://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=214161239261)

Proverbs 2: [The Pursuit of Wisdom and Protection from the Wicked | SermonAudio](https://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=1230618103)