



# WISDOM *for* Living

A 40-day Devotional for Practical,  
Intentional, Wise Living

BOYD BAILEY

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Intentional, Wise Living

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## WISDOM FOR LIVING

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WISDOM  
for *Living*



*The Author*  
BOYD BAILEY

## *Meet the Author*

**BOYD BAILEY**

**B**oyd began serving National Christian Foundation as President of the Georgia division in March, 2016. Prior to that time, Boyd was the co-founder and CEO of **Ministry Ventures**, a faith-based nonprofit, where he has trained and coached over 1,000 ministries in the best practices of prayer, board, ministry models, administration, and fundraising. Prior to Ministry Ventures, Boyd was the **National Director for Crown Financial Ministries** and an Associate Pastor at First Baptist Church of Atlanta. Boyd serves on numerous boards, including: Ministry Ventures, Wisdom Hunters, and Souly Business.

He is the author of Wisdom Hunters devotionals, and is the founder of Wisdom Hunters, Inc., an Atlanta-based ministry created to encourage Christians to apply God's unchanging truth in a changing world.

Boyd received his Bachelor of Arts from Jacksonville State University and his Masters of Divinity from Southwestern Seminary. Boyd and his wife, Rita, live in Roswell, Georgia. They have been married 40 years and are blessed with four daughters and four sons-in-law who love Jesus, and nine grandchildren. Boyd enjoys reading classical literature, business trends, theology, and digital news. He and Rita like to hike, travel, sit by the fire in the mountains, enjoy a cup of coffee at home, and walk on the beach. Missions, travel, and investing in young couples are passions as well. What is most enjoyable for Boyd is to get quiet before the Lord in prayer and Bible reading.

## Introduction

Wise living is all about the Lord Jesus Christ. What is His best? What is His will? What are His ways when I'm puzzled about the wise thing to do? Sometimes I find myself inexperienced concerning the situation I face. I might lack confidence or objectivity in making the right judgment. Hallelujah, my heavenly Father wants me to know Him and know His plan for my life. My Lord longs for me to walk with Him in His ways.

Wise living requires keeping the realization and understanding of God at the center of our thinking. An awareness of Christ becomes the centerpiece to our core beliefs. *What would Jesus do?* Grows into a way of life. His desires, His motivations, His thoughts, and His character capture our imagination. This leads to wise living, for it is Christlike living.

“Who is wise? Let them realize these things. Who is discerning? Let them understand. The ways of the LORD are right; the righteous walk in them, but the rebellious stumble in them” (Hosea 14:9). Wisdom for living is a treasure from above that is found through humble seeking. It is found first in the person of Jesus Christ: “Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God” (1 Corinthians 1:24). To know Him is to know and understand godly wisdom. The life of Jesus illustrates wisdom for us, and His teaching educates us in wisdom. Indeed, it is in relationship with God the Son that Christians are able to grow in godly wisdom.

God the Father gives wisdom to those who ask in faith: “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously

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to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt” (James 1:5-6). Trusting children of God have access to wisdom from their generous heavenly Father.

God the Spirit reveals wisdom to those who love Him: “These are the things [wisdom] God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God” (1 Corinthians 2:10). The Holy Spirit gives us discernment to know the difference between authentic wisdom from the Almighty and the counterfeit wisdom of the world.

God is gracious to give us wisdom through grace from God the Father—through relationship with God the Son—by revelation from God the Spirit.

“Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom” (James 3:13).

Wisdom is required more often than we realize. It is wisdom that cuts through emotion and gets to the reality of the situation. “What is the wise thing to do?” is an effective question in decision-making. “What is best for the enterprise?” is a wise question to ask as it relates to business and ministry.

Gaining true wisdom requires humility. This is what qualifies us to receive wisdom, because God knows a humble heart can be trusted with knowledge and understanding. Humility remembers that the origin of wisdom rests in Christ, the wisdom of God. And a humble person uses the influence of their wisdom for the good of others. It is at the feet of Jesus in



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prayer and dependence that our Lord fills our mind with His thoughts. “With humility comes wisdom” (Proverbs 11:2).

There is a worldly wisdom that competes with the wisdom of God. Every day I have to decide which world I will go to for knowledge and understanding. Will I humbly pursue the unseen resources of heaven, or will I proudly rely on the seen solutions offered on Earth? God’s wisdom leads us to Christ, but the world’s wisdom denies Him. The wisdom of God is unfathomable, but the world’s wisdom is limited.

The question is, are you soliciting wisdom on a consistent basis? Knowledge and experience mixed with common sense and discernment is a great recipe for wisdom. Wisdom is seeking to understand God’s perspective. This is why the wisdom found in God’s Word is so relevant for living. The Bible is a treasure trove of wisdom waiting to be discovered by the discerning wisdom hunter. Seek out wisdom, and you will find something more valuable than money or possessions.

Don’t merely pray, read, and meditate on the Bible, but also seek out wise people—those with gray hair who exhibit wise behavior. The wise will help you validate the inkling of wisdom you are beginning to grasp from your study of Scripture. Read books and listen to messages from men and women who are wise. Try to expose your mind and heart daily to sources of wisdom. Hang out long enough with wisdom, and it will rub off on you. So take every opportunity to call on wisdom. Be wise in your relationships. Be wise with your money. Be wise with your time. Your wisdom attracts others who are hungry for the same.

The Lord longs to shower His children with raindrops of wisdom.

## INTRODUCTION

He delights in imparting His game plan for living. However, it takes our daily pursuit for the wisdom of God to penetrate our thinking. Wise living defaults to a Biblical worldview of thinking. The ways of the Spirit are revealed as you understand and apply Scripture. This understanding of His personal concern for you invites you to have security and confidence in Him. Wise living is based on the character of God. “This calls for wisdom” (Revelation 13:18).

The Lord’s wisdom is very practical for living an abundant life. It relates to building healthy relationships, managing money, making decisions, resolving conflict, growing a church or business, and planning for a family. Wisdom is God’s perspective applied to common sense and proven principles that produce the best results.

Leaders don’t need any more techniques, but they could use more godly wisdom. Parents don’t need a one-size-fits-all approach to parenting, but they desperately need generous wisdom from their heavenly Father. Relationships under stress benefit from godly counsel, but more than anything—in humility—they need discernment and direction from the Holy Spirit. Wisdom applies at all times—with all people—in all cultures.

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

The crown jewel of wisdom accumulation is the fear of the Lord. The fear of God positions you to receive wisdom. No fear of God means no wisdom. No wonder our world is flush with fools! We have lost our fear of God, and thus wisdom has eluded us. The

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fear of the Lord is an incubator for wisdom. He gives wisdom to those who fear Him.

Love God, but fear Him. Worship God, but fear Him. Learn of God, but fear Him. Serve God, but fear Him. Your fear of God qualifies you for wisdom. Do not become so familiar with God that you lose your fear of God. This is unwise and leads to foolishness.

Wisdom awaits your harvest call. Pluck it and enjoy it, like plump, luscious, and juicy fruit on a hot summer day. Taste and see that wisdom is good. No one has ever complained of attaining too much wisdom. So call on wisdom often. Seek out the wise, and ask them and God for wisdom. This is the wise thing to do!

By God's grace, let's all be wisdom hunters for His glory. Like Solomon (1 Kings 3:9-14), instead of asking for more money, recognition, and control—let's ask for wisdom from above. How happy it makes our heavenly Father when we seek to know and understand His heart, so we can live out our lives from His viewpoint. "The fear of the LORD is the key to this treasure" (Isaiah 33:6).

*If you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom.—Proverbs 2:3-6*

Seeking to Live Wisely,

**Boyd Bailey**



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## *How to Become a Disciple of Jesus Christ*



*Spiritual*

WISDOM





**PRINCIPLE #1:**  
*Exchanged Life*

**PRINCIPLE #2:**  
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**PRINCIPLE #3:**  
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**PRINCIPLE #7:**  
*Urgent Prayers for Children*

**PRINCIPLE #8:**  
*Listen to the Lord's Voice*

## DAY 1

### *Exchanged Life*

*You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

—EPHESIANS 4:22-24

There is a great exchange that takes place when a person places their faith in Jesus Christ. Their old way of living is replaced with living for the Lord. Their old way of thinking is replaced with thinking on the truth of Jesus. Their old way of speaking is replaced with speech that is sprinkled with the grace of God. The old has passed, the new has come. The life of Christ becomes the life of the follower of Christ. No longer are we led down the dead-end road of unrighteousness, but we are set free to journey down the less traveled road of righteousness. We give up what we could not keep—our life on Earth, in exchange for what we can keep—eternal life in heaven. To a watching world it seems foolish to give up for God, but what we get from God—forgiveness, peace, and love—is true life. “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds

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on things above, not on earthly things. For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory” (Colossians 3:1-4).

Have you surrendered yourself to your Savior Jesus? Have you given over to Him trust in your own goodness and good deeds in exchange for His holiness and His Spirit-filled power? This great exchange of the temporal for the eternal is what gives you the capacity to grow in grace and to become a person of great faith. However, an effective exchange requires the receiver to have faith in the giver. God is a generous giver who can be trusted.

Make this great eternal exchange and do not waste another day. No one has ever regretted receiving from Almighty God His agenda for their life. The Lord wants you in exchange for Him. Jesus wants your life in exchange for His life. He wants your troubled heart in exchange for His tender heart. He wants your fears in exchange for His peace and calm.

*No one has ever  
regretted receiving  
from Almighty  
God His agenda  
for their life.*

“If you declare with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved” (Romans 10:9-10).



*Jesus wants your  
life in exchange  
for His life.*





## DAY 2

### *Abundant Life*

*The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

—JOHN 10:10, NKJV

*W*hat is quality of life for the Christian? How does Christ define quality living? He offers abundant life, but what does this look like for those who love the Lord? Abundant life begins by receiving the gift of God in the life of Christ. “And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son” (1 John 5:11). Quality of life begins with eternal life as the end goal. Abundant life is the reward for our salvation.

*Quality of life means we live life motivated by what outcomes will live on into eternity.*

Quality of life means we live life motivated by what outcomes will live on into eternity. It will probably mean getting less and giving more in this life. By adjusting down my standard of living, I am able to give more toward what matters to Jesus. The Lord modeled well for us a life of quality. One example was His

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unselfish service: “In humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus” (Philippians 2:3-5). Service to others brings quality of life to all parties.


Quality of life may not lead to ease and comfort, as our culture likes to advertise. Paul described his life of obedience to the Lord as a dangerous way, “I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my fellow Jews, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false believers” (2 Corinthians 11:26). You face danger, but knowing you live for Christ makes you persevere and trust Him.

How is your quality of life? Is it abundant in its obedience to Christ? Is He your life to the point where His priorities are your priorities? Do you let go of earthly indulgences so others can gain eternal rewards?

“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20, *ESV*).





A close-up photograph of a hand, likely a woman's, with a ring on the ring finger. The hand is positioned in the foreground, with the fingers slightly spread. The background is a bright, sunlit outdoor scene with a bokeh effect of green leaves and a prominent rainbow lens flare at the bottom center. The text is overlaid on the hand in a black, cursive font.

*Quality of life on Earth  
begins with eternal life  
as the end goal.*

## DAY 3

### *Eternal Rewards*

*He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward.*

—HEBREWS 11:26

*E*tternal rewards are based on a disciple's effort on Earth. Believers who ignore their spiritual opportunities and obligations will miss out on their heavenly Father's affirmation and remuneration. But those sober saints who take seriously their Savior's expectations will enter into the joy of their Master. Christ rewards obedience to Him.

Rewards in heaven are meant to be a godly motivation. Yes, our first response is to serve Jesus out of love and our overflowing gratitude for His goodness and grace. And it is wise to fear the Lord and allow our holy awe of the Almighty to be foundational for our life of faith and works. But there is an end in mind: Jesus wants His children to be devoted to and compelled by anticipating His generous gifts.

“For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with

his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what they have done” (Matthew 16:27).

Renewing your mind with an eternal decision-making filter that facilitates biblical thinking and doing is a process. You can begin by asking the Lord in prayer how He wants you to invest your life in others. How does God want you to use your experience, your assets, your time, your money, and your influence for His purposes? In other words, how can you make eternal investments on Earth that bear fruit for God’s glory?

What you do does not get you to heaven—that comes only by faith in Christ and God’s amazing grace. But what you do after becoming a follower of Jesus does determine the quality of your eternal experience. The persecuted and martyred in this life have a great reward waiting in the next life. Those who initiate resources and influence on behalf of the poor and needy bring great satisfaction to Jesus that He expresses in bountiful blessings. Indeed, He rewards all those who diligently seek Him by faith.

*Remain faithful  
to God’s call and  
look forward to  
His reward.*

“And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

Love God and your reward will be great. Be a faithful witness who plants or waters the gospel of Jesus Christ and you will be

## SPIRITUAL WISDOM

rewarded by living forever with eternally grateful souls. Send your money ahead to heaven by aggressively giving it away on Earth. Resist—even reject—rewards from the culture so you are positioned to receive Christ’s rewards. Remain faithful to God’s call and look forward to His reward.

[Jesus said,] “Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done” (Revelation 22:12).



### QUESTION FOR THOUGHT AND PRAYER

*How can I live my life in a way that honors the Lord and looks forward to His rewards?*



### RELATED READINGS

PSALM 58:11; ISAIAH 49:4; EPHESIANS 6:8; COLOSSIANS 3:24

## NOTES

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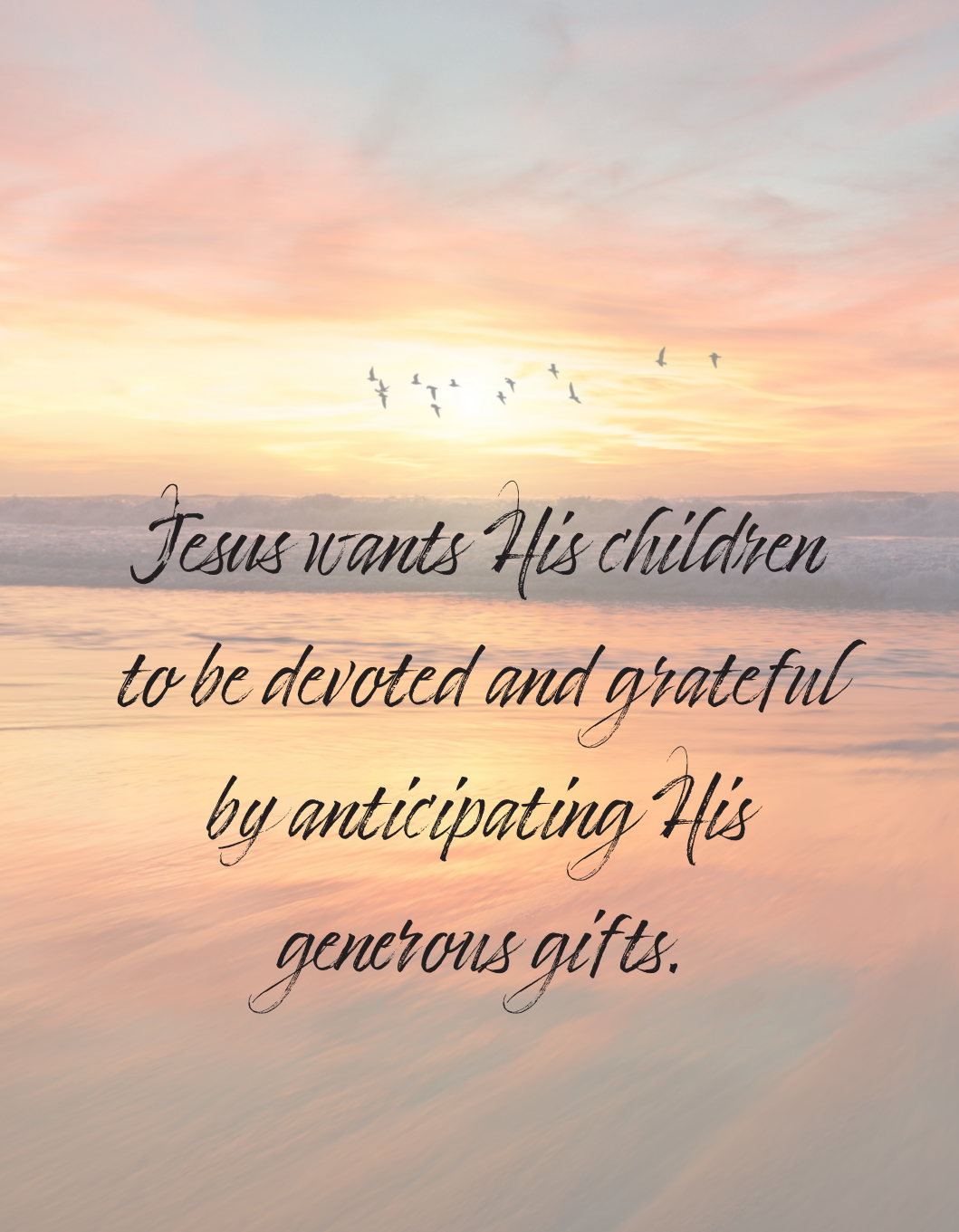
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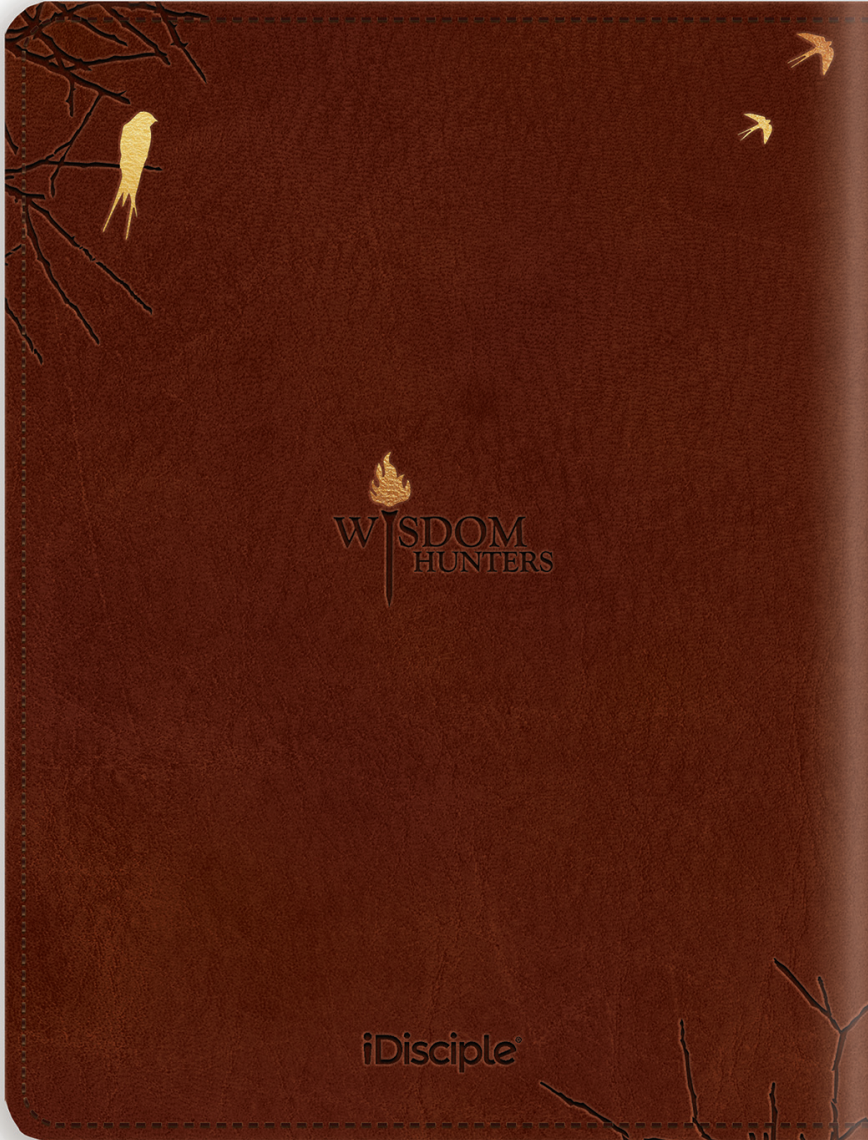
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A serene sunset over the ocean. The sky is filled with soft, warm colors of orange, yellow, and pink, with the sun low on the horizon. Several birds are silhouetted against the bright sky, flying in a loose formation. The water in the foreground is calm, reflecting the colors of the sky.

*Jesus wants His children  
to be devoted and grateful  
by anticipating His  
generous gifts.*



WISDOM  
HUNTERS

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