

A silhouette of a person wearing a hoodie, walking away from the viewer on a hill. The background is a cloudy sky with a light glow behind the person. The text is overlaid on the image.

Inviting God into Your Situation

Skillful Living, Proverbs 9:10

Skilled Living

- Do Over = To do something again in order to improve or correct mistakes
 - A new attempt or opportunity to do something after a previous attempt has been unsuccessful or unsatisfactory
 - Time Magazine Story, June 30 2023, “Well, the mess finally hits the fan when events in George’s personal life make a cosmic do-over sound tempting.”
 - In golf it’s called a mulligan
 - A free shot sometimes given a golfer in informal play when the previous shot was poorly played
 - Movie making calls them retakes
 - An act of filming or photographing something again

Skilled Living

- Maybe you are here, and your life is similar to George's, and you feel like your life needs a cosmic life do-over
 - The swirl of circumstances from unfavorable decisions, addictions, wrong life priorities
 - Life has become stagnant, unfulfilling, or unsatisfying lacking meaning and purpose, dry
 - You would like to start over again, but can you do that, and if yes, how?

Skilled Living

- Maybe you're a teenager not wanting to follow the mistakes of others leaving scars and regrets on your heart
 - How can I keep from making the same mistakes as in the past?
 - How can I find peace in my current circumstances?
 - Is there any answer for my past?
 - How can I have abundant life like Jesus promised?
- Since Jesus promises abundant life then the short answer is, Yes, but you must start where wisdom starts

Scripture

- **Proverbs 9:10 NIV**, The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.
 - **NCV**, Wisdom begins with respect for the Lord, and understanding begins with knowing the Holy One.
 - **MSG**, Skilled living gets its start in the Fear-of-God, insight into life from knowing a Holy God.

Skilled Living

- **Genesis 1:31 NIV**, God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.
 - **MSG**, God looked over everything he had made; it was so good, so very good! It was evening, it was morning— Day Six.
 - This is what God created mankind to exist in – very, very good
 - We brought in the very, very not good with our sinfulness and rebellion toward God’s commands on how to live
 - We were not created with an innate ability to handle the not good correctly or easily
 - Result - we can really mess up our lives quickly

Skilled Living

- Jesus promised every born-again child of God, He would never leave us as orphans in this world, never forsake us
 - Never leave us fatherless
 - God has promised us His wisdom to live life skillfully in the not very good
- His wisdom is contrary to human understanding at times
 - His wisdom is foreign to our own innate knowledge and assumptions of life
 - We will miss His wisdom, zoom right past it, or set it aside unless we have the proper fear of the Lord active in our daily lives

Fear of the Lord is grasping the power, might, beauty, and brilliance of the Lord God Almighty

- The word “fear” in Scripture can mean several things
 - Terror one feels in a frightening situation (*Deut. 2:25*)
 - Respect in a way a servant fears his master and serves only him faithfully (*Joshua 24:14*)
 - Extreme reverence and awe a person feel in the presence of greatness and great authority and power (*Isaiah 6:5*)

Fear of the Lord is grasping the power, might, beauty, and brilliance of the Lord God Almighty

- The fear of the Lord is a combination of all of these
 - Terror should be the response to those who reject His great salvation or those living in overt rebellion to His commands
 - Respect should be the response of His true children for all He has done in our lives, and we serve Him, live for Him, govern or lives for Him only
 - Extreme reverence and awe just because of who He is – holding all, complete, total power and authority
 - Understanding He holds our life in the palm of His hand

Fear of the Lord is grasping the power, might, beauty, and brilliance of the Lord God Almighty

- Mankind is attempting to recreate God in our own image
 - He is defined as figment or creation of our imagination to try and make sense of things in the cosmos we do not yet understand
 - Jesus is some milk-toast teacher wringing His hands at what mankind is doing to His creation
 - There is no room for God's judgement of sin, mankind's responsibility to Him - only love, joy, peace, prosperity, and understanding or tolerance

Fear of the Lord is grasping the power, might, beauty, and brilliance of the Lord God Almighty

- Scripturally, the fear of the Lord can be defined as “the continual awareness that our heavenly Father is watching and evaluating everything we think, say, and do along with the motivation behind it”
 - To the churches in *Revelation 1-2*, “I know your works, afflictions, deeds, who you really are” – nothing escapes His attention
 - And I know where they are leading you – joyous praise from God or having your lampstand removed
- When the reality of God’s true nature has caused us to fall down in worship, we are then in the right position to gain His wisdom

Fear of the Lord is grasping the power, might, beauty, and brilliance of the Lord God Almighty

- **Matthew 17:1-6 NIV**, After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. 2 There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. 3 Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.
- 4 Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!”
- 6 When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. 7 But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.”

Wisdom is merely seeing life from God's perspective and responding accordingly

- Until our hearts and minds are in a right relationship with God, we are unable to have the *“wisdom that comes from heaven”*, (*James 3:17*)
 - Without the fear of the Lord, we may gain knowledge of earthly things and make some practical choices for this life, but we are missing the one ingredient that defines a wise person
 - **Psalm 14:1 NIV**, The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, their deeds are vile; there is no one who does good.
 - Or the fools say, “I will not listen or obey or even consult God

Wisdom is merely seeing life from God's perspective and responding accordingly

- When we live with a sense of God's nearness, we make better decisions
 - We understand God has a will of blessing for us
 - A Biblical fear of God for believers includes understanding how much God hates sin and fears His judgement on sin
 - Just remember God's judgement on Israel whom He loves

Wisdom is merely seeing life from God's perspective and responding accordingly

- **Deuteronomy 40:15-20 NIV**, 15 See, “I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. 16 For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.
 - 17 But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them, 18 I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess.

Wisdom is merely seeing life from God's perspective and responding accordingly

- **Deuteronomy 40:15-20 NIV**, 19 This day I call the heavens and the earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live 20 and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
 - How do you or did they choose life?
 - The same as Adam and Eve, choosing to obey and not rebel against God's commands and precepts
 - Love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him

Wisdom is merely seeing life from God's perspective and responding accordingly

- **Acts 5:1-10 NIV**, Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. 2 With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet.
 - 3 Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? 4 Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God."
 - 5 When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened.

Wisdom is merely seeing life from God's perspective and responding accordingly

- Remember it was God's hatred of sin that caused Him to send His Son Jesus to bear His judgement of our sin and rebellion on the cross
 - Without the Biblical fear of the Lord, we will make final decisions on faulty human understand and logic
 - When we incorporate the fear of the Lord in our lives, we make decisions based upon His approval

Wisdom is merely seeing life from God's perspective and responding accordingly

- Our respect of God's majesty causes us to honor Him with our very lives
 - Our gratitude for His mercy causes us to serve Him all the days of our lives
 - Our understanding our "God of Love" is also a "God of judgement and discipline" should inspire us to stay away from even the appearance of evil
 - Sin and rebellion is foolishness, righteousness is wise and when we live righteously, we are on the path to wisdom, and everyone in our life will benefit

We find the wisdom of God in His written Word under the guidance of His Holy Spirit

- As you study God's Word you are not doing it to just gain knowledge
 - There are those who are not believers but can quote scripture to you better than you can
 - They have a knowledge of God's Word but without the benefit of God's Wisdom
 - **James 1:22 NCV**, Do what God's teaching says; when you only listen and do nothing, you are fooling yourselves
 - **MSG**, Don't fool yourself into thinking that you are a listener when you are anything but, letting the Word go in one ear and out the other. Act on what you hear!

We find the wisdom of God in His written Word under the guidance of His Holy Spirit

- When we read God's Word, we understand the Holy Spirit within us is guiding and revealing to us God's intent for us to live skillfully or blessed
 - Begin to know who God is, what He has done, how much He loves and cares for us His children
 - Begin to know who we are in Christ Jesus, promises of God, provisions of Christ, presence of Christ in our lives
 - Begin to learn how to make skillful life decisions

We find the wisdom of God in His written Word under the guidance of His Holy Spirit

- Following God's commands and precepts has a way of "making wise the simple"
 - **Psalm 9:7 NCV**, The teachings of the Lord are perfect; they give new strength. The rules of the Lord can be trusted; they make plain people wise.
 - We become wise when we study the Word and apply it to our lives

We find the wisdom of God in His written Word under the guidance of His Holy Spirit

- Examples of commands and precepts
 - **1st Thessalonians 5:22 NASB**, “abstain (*stay away*) from every form (*appearance*) of evil.”
 - **2nd Corinthians 6:14-15 MSG**, “Don’t become partners with those who reject God. How can you make a partnership out of right and wrong? That’s not partnership; that’s war. Is light best friends with dark? Does Christ go strolling with the Devil? Do trust and mistrust hold hands?”
 - **NIV**, “unequally yoked”
 - **Proverbs 22:7 MSG**, “The poor are always ruled over by the rich, so don’t borrow and put yourself under their power.”

We find the wisdom of God in His written Word under the guidance of His Holy Spirit

- Examples of commands and precepts
 - **Hebrews 10:24-25 NIV**, “24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”
 - **Proverbs 25:1 NCV**, “A gentle answer will calm a person’s anger, but an unkind answer will cause more anger.”
 - **Proverbs 19:11 NCV**, “The wise are patient; they will be honored if they ignore insults.”

We find the wisdom of God in His written Word under the guidance of His Holy Spirit

- Examples of commands and precepts
 - **Philippians 4:8 NCV**, “Brothers and sisters, think about the things that are good and worthy of praise. Think about the things that are true and honorable and right and pure and beautiful and respected.”
 - **John 13:34-45 NIV**, 34 “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Skilled Living

- Peter knew some things about Jesus as he followed Him
 - But he did not pay attention to Jesus' words and the words of Scripture resulting in his decision to deny Jesus three times
 - **Proverbs 26:18 NCV**, Pride leads to destruction; a proud attitude brings ruin
 - Deep scar tore his heart with deep questions about his future
 - Peter was supposed to be the rock of the new Christian movement
 - Jesus restores Peter's relationship with Him
 - And Jesus restores His call upon Peter's life

Skilled Living

- Scripture and life is full of examples of a life restored
 - Moses, David after Bathsheba, Possessed man living in the tombs, but mostly me
 - **1st Chronicles 17:16-17 NCV**, 16 Then King David went in and sat in front of the Lord. David said, “Lord God, who am I? What is my family? Why did you bring me to this point? 17 But that was not enough for you, God. You have also made promises about my future family. Lord God, you have treated me like a very important person.”
 - Jesus has promised to do this in your life allowing you to make skillful life decisions



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