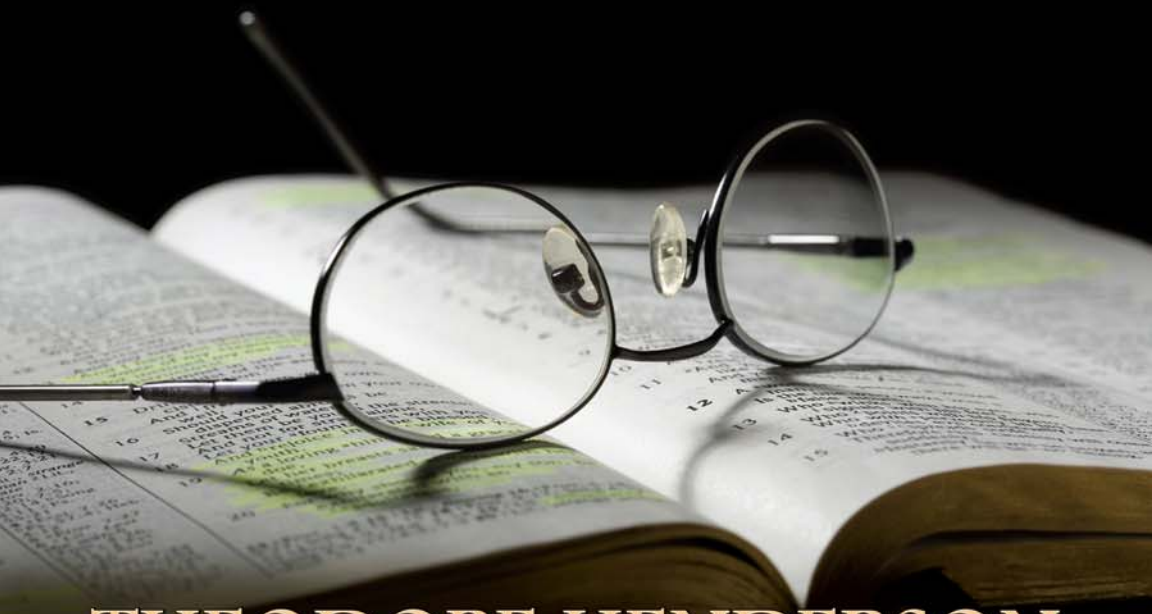


A 31-DAY JOURNEY TO WISDOM-FILLED LIVING



THE WISDOM COMPASS



THEODORE HENDERSON



THE WISDOM COMPASS

**A 31-DAY JOURNEY TO
WISDOM-FILLED LIVING**

THEODORE HENDERSON



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The Wisdom Compass: A 31-Day Journey to Wisdom-Filled Living

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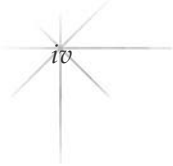
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INTRODUCTION

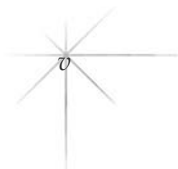
Welcome to our journey together. Allow me to introduce myself as your tour guide. I have an MBA and over twenty years of sales and sales management experience in the business and technology field. More importantly, for your purposes, I am an avid and enthusiastic reader of the Bible. I love the Bible's how-to method of teaching life's lessons. I enjoy finding ways to apply the Bible to my everyday practical life as well as my spiritual life. In short, the principles in this book have allowed me to marry to spiritual and the practical for an overall enhanced life and better everyday living.

While reading the book of Proverbs, you'll find that there are no promises that if you do A plus B it will equal C. However, I would like to suggest that if you do A plus B, C is very likely to follow. In other words, learn the lessons, apply them, and things will often work out.

I am using the book of Proverbs, the twentieth book of the Bible, as the basis for the teachings in this book. The quotes are from the New International Version (NIV) because I have found it easier to read than the King James version — particularly for those who are not avid Bible readers. Personally, I like to read several versions. I learn something from each in the nuances of the language and find all of them very helpful. For our purposes, I decided to standardize on the NIV.

Here is what you'll need for our thirty-one-day journey of transformation:

- **A Bible.** The NIV is preferable as that is what we are using. A modern English version is okay also, but any version you are comfortable with will suffice.
- **Thirty to forty minutes per day.** Whether that is in the morning,

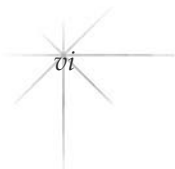


afternoon, or evening is totally up to you. This study is designed with thirty-one chapters so that you may experience transformation in just one month. As you go through the book, you achieve the best results if you read the entire passage referenced in the book of Proverbs.

As you read through each chapter, make note of the sections or verses that strike you or relate to your current situation. Mark them off or underline them in the text or maybe write a couple of notes. I find there is something special about physically writing commentary about what you are reading or thinking – something that doesn't happen when you read without writing anything down. You more easily remember concepts and ideas when your hand moves to paper. You have probably experienced that if you've written goals – having them in your head just isn't enough. Writing them down reinforces and imprints them in your psyche more effectively.

I encourage you to make the time even if you feel you don't have it. Write out those passages, and then refer to them throughout the day and in the days to come. If time permits, begin your study time the next day by re-reading the work that you did the previous day. It will be time well-invested in your transformation. It's time to begin our journey.

Theodore Henderson
www.thewisdomcompass.com



PROVERBS 1



Embracing Wisdom's Call

*"Wisdom calls aloud in the street, she raises
her voice in the public squares."*

Proverbs 1:20

If you have never read the book of Proverbs in its entirety or as a lesson in living, then this is the first day of the rest of a better life. As you read further, it is made plain the book was written to give us wisdom, instruction, perception, prudence, knowledge, judgment, learning, and advice. However, everything hinges on wisdom and all of these approaches are synonymous.

Wisdom is something available to all. No amount of money can buy it or make your mind open to it. You have to want it and listen for it whether it occurs in the written or verbal form. God's wisdom is responsible for all of the beauty and splendor around us. Take advantage of it as you begin your daily lesson.



The first chapter of Proverbs clearly identifies King Solomon and his lineage to King David. Notice also that it identifies these purposes for Proverbs beginning with Proverbs 1:2.

- For attaining wisdom and discipline
- For understanding words of insight
- For acquiring a disciplined and prudent life
- For the ability to make intelligent decisions especially in life's everyday matters
- For doing what is right and just and fair

Proverbs is a guide for doing what's right and making sound judgments in sometimes difficult circumstances. It is a fantastic guidebook for educating children and young people and providing practical application for the young. If you are already wise, spending time in the book of Proverbs only adds to your learning and discernment. Next, of course, you'll want to unravel the other proverbial teachings and parables to gain greater understanding through re-reading.

Those of the Christian faith want to attain fear of the Lord because that is the beginning of the transformation process. These five purposes noted in Proverbs 1:2 allow you to use your faith to get the benefit of living your life fully. Employing biblical principals opens the door for something supernatural to happen in your life. Once you begin the process, you'll grasp that it isn't just "positive thinking" or happening by your own initiative. If it were that easy, we could simply manifest our way out of trouble or avoid it. Fortunately, life has a different classroom in store for us.

So you may be thinking, "The five purposes sound great; but how do I actually do that in my daily life?" Well, let's look at some examples. First, let's pretend you are an athlete and you're training either for a team of some type (basketball, baseball, soccer, etc.) or maybe you're training for an event such as a triathlon. The first thing you do to be successful is practice. The coach sets up practice and encourages you to also practice outside of the bounds of the normally scheduled session.

If you've followed successful athletes, you probably noticed that most of their success is not always about athletic gifts. A lot of it is about discipline. They practice well before or beyond the regularly scheduled practice time because they want to hone their skills. You adopt the same discipline



because you don't want to just remain on the team — you want to be the best on the team and you want to help the team win.

It's all about striving to reach the next level. If you're a high school player, you're trying to get a college scholarship. If you're a college player and think you have the talent, you're trying to make it to the pros. Even if you don't make it to a pro team, that same attitude of discipline will actually transform you into a person who can succeed in business and other avenues of life.

Whatever the area may be, the same principles work whether it is in the business arena or playing for a team. When you look into the life of most successful people (all areas of their life; not just the financial portion), you will see this pattern of disciplined sacrifice is not an accident. The athlete who spends additional hours practicing after the rest of the team has gone home may also be more likely to achieve a successful career outside of sports — even though people call him or her an overnight success. When the athlete is called on and excels, it usually happens because they prepared themselves with years of practicing the fundamentals.

You'll find the same discipline applies with students who by the normal standards of their high school or peer group are exceptionally intelligent. They seek out extra tutoring or start associating with other like-minded, academically geared peers, or even seek special assignments from the instructors. It isn't a surprise they end up with the scholarships or are able to remain at the top of the class in college when others become shell-shocked by the increased competition.

Here is another example from my own life. Each morning, I get up thirty to forty-five minutes earlier than necessary to prepare for work. I spend that extra time reading Bible verses, meditating on the Word, writing out particular goals and my daily schedule, and then refocusing on the goals and the schedule in a meditative format. It takes about a half an hour. After I finish on certain days, I do some form of exercise.

Yes, that's thirty to sixty minutes I could use for sleeping. However, I find that my career, my personal life, and all of the attachments that come with them have become much easier for me to pursue — particularly when a crisis comes — by keeping this almost daily habit. It provides a foundation, a focus, and a vision of where you're going, so you find yourself not being



derailed anywhere near as quickly. And if you are derailed, you won't find yourself grounded and can get back on track swiftly.

Proverbs 1:8-22

⁸ Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do not forsake your mother's teaching. ⁹ They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck. ¹⁰ My son, if sinners entice you, do not give in to them. ¹¹ If they say, "Come along with us; let's lie in wait for someone's blood, let's waylay some harmless soul. ¹² Let's swallow them alive, like the grave, ^[b] and whole, like those who go down to the pit. ¹³ We will get all sorts of valuable things and fill our houses with plunder. ¹⁴ Throw in your lot with us, and we will share a common purse." ¹⁵ My son, do not go along with them, do not set foot on their paths. ¹⁶ For their feet rush into sin, they are swift to shed blood. ¹⁷ How useless to spread a net in full view of all the birds! ¹⁸ These men lie in wait for their own blood; they waylay only themselves! ¹⁹ Such is the end of all who go after ill-gotten gain; it takes away the lives of those who get it. ²⁰ Wisdom calls aloud in the street, she raises her voice in the public squares. ²¹ At the head of the noisy streets ^[c] she cries out, in the gateways of the city she makes her speech. ²² "How long will you simple ones ^[d] love your simple ways?"

How long will mockers delight in disdain? In Proverbs 1:8-19, you'll find a passage that — even though it is ancient and biblical in tone — could be ripped right out of the headlines of today's murder news. It says that lying in wait, mugging, killing, stealing what others have, and basically being an out-and-out criminal and miscreant is an easy choice. However, that is not what a successful, productive, balanced person does.

Proverbs 1:20-22 highlight three other types of people: the mockers, the fools, and the simple. Proverbs refers to mockers, fools, and the simple over and over again as people who are bad or questionable characters we should avoid.

The simple are viewed as the least-harmful group. They live without much thought and are basically too lazy to change. We all have a relative or a friend like this. They're harmless and simple, but we understand they're not really going anywhere unless they change their ways — assuming they're capable.

Fools are smarter, but (in the biblical sense) they make a conscious decision



to live by their own wits instead of using God's advice and guidance or other intelligent advice necessary to make proper decisions. Those who feel they can make a living at the roulette wheel or craps table or depend upon a lottery win will likely waste what little money they have on a fool's errand.

Now, the mockers are the worst of all. They don't just ignore biblical advice – they rebel against it. Mockers are considered criminals, muggers, murderers, and thieves. They believe they will get away with their behavior because nothing will happen to them. As we all know, there are prisons full of people who haven't gotten away with their behaviors and actions, and there are graveyards full of people who haven't gotten away with it either. So, how do we apply Proverbs 1 to our life?

You'll find that successful people are readers and communicators. They are always seeking knowledge. Even someone with poor eyesight will seek out knowledge through Braille books or audio books. They are continually expanding themselves in some way that is important to their life – personally, spiritually, and financially. They are living examples that you don't always have to sit in a classroom to improve.

For the sake of comparison, a fool would listen to someone who tells them, "You don't have to educate yourself. You don't necessarily have to be a reader. Just buy my program, and you'll get rich! No reading, no school, no advanced education." I suppose there may be an isolated incident somewhere where something like that may happen. However, we're far better off investing in knowledge that moves us ahead and enjoying the quality of a life we've earned through self-education and expanding our minds whether we have graduated from college or not.

In summary, real words of wisdom are plainspoken and clear. There shouldn't be any confusing language to throw you off track. Sometimes, an individual doesn't understand because the biblical teaching conflicts with their carnal feelings. In such a case, the problem is with the person and not the lesson being spoken. When a decision is to be made, it calls for simple wisdom. There is no sitting on the fence with God's word. Following the teachings and living a wiser existence translates to a better life.



Action Steps on the Life Path

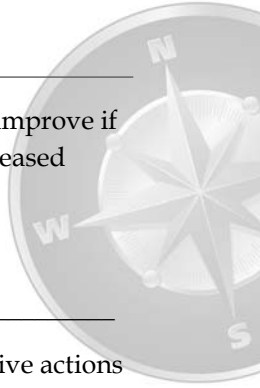
Take a moment to think of a particular area of your life that will improve if you self-educate, read more, improve your process, or apply increased discipline.

What is the area you want to improve?

What actions will you take to improve that area? Name three to five actions with a deadline for each.

What measurable result do you expect to receive?

What is your deadline for completing this improvement?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Theodore Henderson

During a career that spans more than twenty years, Theodore Henderson has excelled as an articulate, organized, and successful business manager, consultant, seminar leader, and public speaker. He has demonstrated a proven ability to build and maintain profitable, long-term relationships with a sophisticated client base.

In 2003, he launched a New York City-based firm providing both non-profit and for-profit consulting in entrepreneurship, education, and self-development. The firm specialized in facilitating a thorough business-planning process that delivers a coherent, easy-to-read business plan appropriate for new business owners as well as for prospective lenders and investors. He spent three years doing this as an after-school program aimed at young people as well as coaching adults under the banner of his church before returning to corporate life.

Theodore now works with individuals who want to use biblical principles and Christian faith as a guide to success in all the key areas of life: spiritual, social, personal, family, and business. He is also still involved in youth leadership training.

He is passionate about speech, communication, and the application of biblical principals to business and personal success. Whether in his keynote speeches, his published articles, or in his seminars on faith-based approaches to personal financial issues and self-development, that passion is clearly demonstrated. Specific topics on which he speaks and writes



include faith, God, and financial empowerment; communication and financial success; and dynamic communication.

Theodore holds a Master's degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Finance and Information Systems. He is active in Toastmasters International and has achieved the level of Distinguished Toastmaster (DTM) – the highest educational level currently offered by the organization – in recognition of his superior leadership and communication skills. He is also active in the New York City chapter of the National Speakers Association as well as other charitable activities.

Theodore is a lifelong New Yorker and is passionate about his native city. As a real estate investor, he purchased and completely renovated properties. Theodore is very involved in his neighborhood and church, periodically volunteering for other charitable activities. He has taken a special interest in mentoring and tutoring urban youth and the disadvantaged. He has guided youth in the completion of business plans and coached them to win business plan competitions.

Despite such a hectic schedule, he still finds time for his family as well as biking, skiing, Latin dancing, and playing with his chihuahuas and cats.

For more information on Theodore's work, visit www.thewisdomcompass.com.

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There is a divine plan for each of us

If you want the best chance to arrive at the correct destination, the path chosen is key.

The book of Proverbs is a guide for doing what's right and making sound judgments in sometimes difficult circumstances. It was written to give us wisdom, instruction, perception, prudence, knowledge, judgment, learning, and advice.

The goal of this entire collection of lessons is to live according to God's wisdom. The Word is a lighthouse we need during a storm, but we also need it when the waters are calm. As Proverbs 6:23 says, "For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way to life." There is a divine plan for each person, but it is up to us to seek and follow its direction. After all, we are creatures of free will, and we don't have to follow the right path.

If you are striving to live life at that next level, *The Wisdom Compass* can provide you the steps to planning that journey. Don't let wisdom slip past you or you will let the real "good life" get away. Remember Proverbs 4:13: "Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life."

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