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# 30 DAYS OF HOPE

WHEN CARING FOR AGING PARENTS

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“Kathy Howard’s *30 Days of Hope When Caring for Aging Parents* is a heartening companion for anyone from early to later stages of caregiving for parents. With tenderness, grace, and honesty, she comes alongside the caregiver with understanding and insight in these daily devotions. The questions for reflection are both practical and poignant.”

—Cynthia Ruchti, author of more than twenty books, including *As My Parents Age*

“I wish I could have had Kathy Howard’s book when I cared for two elderly women: my mother and my mother-in-law, who had Lewy body dementia. I could have benefited from this book and not felt so alone and without support. I know *30 Days of Hope When Caring for Aging Parents* will make a significant impact on the many caring for those with dementia or being a caregiver in any way. She offers encouragement, knowledge, inspiration, and hope. I will be referring to it often.”

—Kathy Collard Miller, speaker and author of many books, including *Pure-Hearted: The Blessings of Living Out God’s Glory*

“We are in the middle of the hardest life stage so far—caring for aging parents—and it is *only* by the grace and strength of God that we are able to daily rise to this most difficult honor of giving love and care to parents who can no longer care for themselves. Kathy Howard, a fellow traveler on this road of caregiving, kindly, compassionately, and honestly shares practical hope and help. *30 Days of Hope When Caring for Aging Parents* connects us to the God of hope. Daily, through Kathy’s poignant and inspiring devotionals, God breathes life and light into the heart of the caregiver.”

—Pam and Bill Farrel, codirectors of Love-Wise, authors of forty-five books, including bestselling *Men Are Like Waffles, Women Are Like Spaghetti* and *Discovering Hope in the Psalms: A Creative Bible Study Experience* (coauthored by Pam Farrel, Jean E. Jones, and Karla Dornacher)

“As one who cared for my mother for twelve years, I truly appreciated reading this excellent book. I clearly remember how exhausting those caregiving times can be and how much we need a word of hope to help carry us through. *30 Days of Hope When Caring for Aging Parents* is the ideal book for such a time, with short but personal devotionals that strengthen and encourage. And, of course, each devotional points readers to the One who is Himself the ultimate Caregiver, whose infinite love and grace sustains all who turn to Him.”

—Kathi Macias, author of more than fifty books, including *To the Moon and Back* and *A Husband’s Christmas Prayer*

“Finally! A book I can recommend for caregivers and the book I wish I had while caregiving for my mother-in-law! *30 Days of Hope When Caring for Aging Parents* by Kathy Howard is a unique gift that instills hope, reminds caregivers that they’re not alone, and inspires joy in the trenches of the caregiving journey. With real and relatable stories, personal reflection, prayer prompts, and Scripture that readers can cling to and be strengthened by, Kathy provides caregivers with a much-needed resource. I highly recommend *30 Days of Hope When Caring for Aging Parents* for caregivers, small groups that focus on caregivers, and to give as a gift to every caregiver you know and love.”

—Stephanie Shott, national Bible teacher, author, and president of The MOM Initiative

“Theology must connect with reality and the promises of God must find expression in the trials of life. *30 Days of Hope When Caring for Aging Parents* is a book that brings the resources of God to bear upon the painful realities of life. The reader will find great hope, divine strength, and Christlike compassion as they assist parents on the final stretch of their journey toward home.”

—Dr. Mel Blackaby, senior pastor, First Baptist Jonesboro, GA

GIFTS OF HOPE SERIES

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KATHY HOWARD



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*For my first family: my parents, Ray and Margaret, and  
my brother Gary (“Gee”).*

*Mom and Dad, thank you for pointing me to Jesus.  
May He sustain you by His grace and fill you with His peace  
as you keep the faith (2 Timothy 4:7).*

*Gee, thank you for loving our parents so well. You are a  
strong example of Christ’s love and kindness.*

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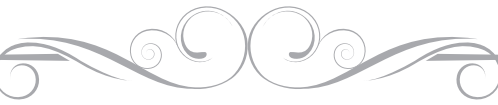


## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Since I began the caregiving journey with my parents several years ago, I've talked with so many others who are walking or have walked this same path. Every story is unique, but many of the challenges are universal. Thank you to all of you who have openly and honestly shared stories, laughter, grief, and tears. You have encouraged and challenged me.

Thank you also to those special friends who graciously agreed to allow me to share parts of their caregiving stories between the covers of this book. May God use your offering to encourage others.





## INTRODUCTION

**N**o one prepared you for this! And yet, here you are, struggling to navigate the family role-reversal. The parent, who cared for you, now needs your care.

A multitude of resources and services exist to help you care for your parents. Dozens of books are available to guide you through the healthcare labyrinth and provide practical tips for your parents' day-to-day care. This book doesn't do any of that. This book is written specifically for you—the one who must care for his or her parent.

You truly want to excel at this God-given task, but it challenges you at every turn. Many days demand more than you feel you have to give. You are often physically and emotionally exhausted, and you long for regular spiritual refreshment.

Whether you care for your parent full time, part time, or share the responsibilities with a family member or professional caregiver, this book is for you. *30 Days of Hope When Caring for Aging Parents* goes to the Bible to find hope and encouragement for those caring for aging or ill parents. This daily devotional combines Scripture, biblical insight, life experience, reflection questions, and prayer prompts to help you rest in God's grace and rely on His strength during this challenging season of life.

The idea for this book flowed from my own life experience. Although I don't have a background in medicine or geriatric care, I do possess some on-the-job training and a desire to encourage others walking the same path.

My father-in-law lived with my husband and me for five years before he passed away. Although his mind remained relatively sound, he experienced a host of serious health issues that required an ongoing combination of surgeries, hospital care, inpatient rehab, and at-home physical and occupational therapy.

At the same time, my own parents' conditions began to deteriorate. Mom's early-onset dementia grew worse. Due to severe back problems, Dad suffered with constant pain and leg weakness. Yet for a while, he managed to watch out for Mom and keep things going at home.

Then we began to notice new symptoms in Dad. He began to fall regularly. Handwriting became too difficult for him. Slow, mumbled speech made communication a painstaking process. Neighbors and friends from church had to help more and more. After some medical visits and tests, Dad's doctor diagnosed him with Parkinson's.

Things needed to change. Mom and Dad had lived in the same home for nearly fifty years, but my brother Gary and I had both moved to other states. Gary lived ten hours away, and it took me four hours to get to them by car.

At the time, they refused to move to be near one of us, so Gary and I began to encourage them to consider assisted living. I researched the ones near them and even took them to visit several. Again, they resisted.

I made regular trips to check in on them, driving the eight-hour round trip every couple of weeks. But I couldn't get there quickly enough for an emergency.

Finally, we "forced" them to accept some in-home help, and they soon loved their helpers. Sadly, that solution didn't last long. Dad developed blood clots in his legs and ended up in the hospital the day before our son's wedding. That hospital stay—plus two more on its heels—meant Dad needed more extended care and rehab than he could get at home.

Since Mom could not stay alone, my brother, my sister-in-law Cindy, and I played tag team for weeks. As a temporary solution, Mom's doctor admitted her as a patient in the same care facility as Dad.

What began as a temporary situation lasted nine months. I continued to make regular trips. My brother began to get their financial affairs straight. We both began to strongly urge them to move to be near my brother. As a nurse, Gary would be able to

make sure they received all the medical help they needed. Plus, with Gary and his family so close, they would be able to live in their own home with in-home help.

When Dad finally accepted that moving was the best solution, he began to help us get Mom on board. Gary managed their finances, looked for a house close by, and researched local home health agencies. I began to clean out their house and pack up belongings that would make the move.

A few months later, Mom and Dad settled into their new home just one mile away from my brother. They received round-the-clock help, and Gary and Cindy became an integral part of their daily lives. While the details of their care may change with their needs, our desire to lovingly provide for them does not.

Like your parents, my parents' care includes far more than dealing with doctors and overseeing their daily physical needs. For instance, how do I help my father grieve his loss of independence and physical strength? How do I handle my own anger and hurt when my mother wounds me repeatedly with her words? And what does it look like to honor my parents even while I control much of their lives?

Through His Word, God gives me strength, grace, and wisdom for these issues and more. God may not change the circumstances, but He freely pours out everything I need in the midst of them. He longs to do the same for you. May you experience God's tangible presence and faithful sustenance today and in the days ahead.





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# GOD'S GRACIOUS PROVISION



*His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. . . . For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

—2 Peter 1:3, 5–8

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**W**hen my husband Wayne and I were young parents, our church friends had an ongoing joke that reflected the challenge of raising little humans. We designated that carefree time of life before the arrival of the first offspring as BC—*before children*. Before children we enjoyed spontaneous outings, a little extra spending money, and a good night's sleep. BC, we stayed out late and went to the bathroom by ourselves.

But after our children's arrivals, everything changed. Grocery store trips required hours of preparation. Paychecks often ran out before the next payday. I began to carry diaper bags instead of fashionable handbags. And we regularly navigated our days in a sleep-deprived state.

Caring for little ones was tough. Then they grew to be teenagers and parenting stretched us to new lengths. Now, with our children grown, we can look back and clearly see how God sustained us with His grace through every stage of parenting.

Then we totally skipped the empty-nest stage. The summer our last child left for college, my eighty-year-old father-in-law arrived. One young birdie flew out, and one old birdie flew in.

Granted, Pappaw only needed a little assistance during the first years he spent with us. Then his health began to decline, and he experienced one major problem after another. As doctors, medication, lengthy hospital stays, surgeries, and rehab dominated his life, he needed us more and more.

For a season, I was helping both my husband with his father and making regular trips to care for my own parents. I desperately wanted to do everything right, but the responsibilities felt heavy, draining.

I quickly realized I didn't have what it takes. I'm ill equipped to make good decisions for my parents. I lack the spiritual strength to love and care for them unconditionally. One minute I want to

hug them and tell them everything will be all right, and the next I want to force them to “listen to reason.”

Many of you are there now—overwhelmed with the needs of your parents and the responsibility of caring for them. Like me, you don’t have what it takes to do it well.

But I know Someone who has everything we need and more. Caring for aging and ill parents challenges us daily and can stretch us to the breaking point. But by His power and grace, God will give us everything we need to care for them and live a life that pleases God.

Caring for our parents is both our God-given responsibility and a privilege (1 Timothy 5:4). God knows the challenges of the task and, thankfully, everything He demands from us He also graciously provides. He asks us to care for our parents with kindness, grace, and wisdom. And He will provide those things “through our knowledge of Him who called us” (2 Peter 1:3).

Did you see that? The key to God’s provision is a Christian’s relationship with Jesus. As we abide in His Son, God’s powerful provision flows through this life-giving connection. The power is Christ *in* us, working *through* us to minister to our parents.

Caring for our parents is a joint venture with God. As we step out in obedience, God’s power fuels our efforts. This partnership will accomplish far more than we could ever do on our own. Our obedient efforts together with God’s divine power will be effective and productive (2 Peter 1:8). God doesn’t promise the task will be easy. But He does promise our efforts will make a difference.

So take a deep breath and settle into the amazing truth that even though we lack what we need for this journey, our powerful God has it all. And the provision starts with Jesus. Let us draw close to Him and hold tight.

### *Personal Reflection*

*The power you need to care for your parents is found in the Power Source. What can you do each day to purposefully stay connected to Jesus? How will abiding in Jesus strengthen you for your God-given task?*

### *Prayer Prompt*

*Lord, I am not equipped for this task. But I accept it as both my responsibility and my privilege. Help me hold tightly to Jesus. Please graciously give me everything I need to care for my parents well and in a way that both honors and pleases You.*



# HONOR *AND* PARENT?



*Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity. Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need. But if a widow has children or grandchildren, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God.*

—1 Timothy 5:1–4

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**M**y father was hospitalized with a urinary tract infection and sepsis. Due to my mother's worsening dementia, she could not stay alone. Each day we drove to the hospital to spend the bulk of the day with Dad and then I took her home for the night.

During the drive one morning, Mom was rummaging around in the small makeup bag she keeps in her purse. I could see the activity in my peripheral vision. Then at a stoplight I glanced over just in time to see her touch a mascara wand to her lips.

"Whatcha doin', Mom?" I asked casually.

"I need a little color on my lips," was her reply.

Seriously, what do you do with this? I had a few choices. I could let her walk into the hospital with black lips, setting her up for possible embarrassment. I could stop her with a quick rebuke, which would inevitably hurt her feelings, make her angry, or both. Or I could ask God to help me do the kind thing—the right thing, the right way.

I quickly asked God for wisdom and words. He was faithful to provide.

"Mom, I've got some lipstick in my purse I think would look great on you. Would you like to try it? I think it's just your color!"

Mom returned the mascara to the makeup bag and used my lipstick. Her feelings were spared, and she was satisfied. I'd like to tell you every sticky encounter ends similarly, but sadly they often do not. Too often I react from my own resources instead of turning first to God.

As our parents age, as illness takes its toll, they require increasingly more help. They may need financial guidance, help at home, emotional support, or constant health care. Whatever your particular situation, as the parent becomes more like a child in many ways, the child must take on the parenting role.



Although the specific circumstances will look different for each family, God's Word leaves no doubt—caring for our parents is our God-given responsibility. It pleases God and should be a natural result of our relationship with Him. But is it possible to both care for and honor our parents?

In Ephesians 6:2, the Apostle Paul quoted the fifth commandment: “Honor your father and mother.” God wants us to respond to our parents as people of worth and to treat them in ways that best meet their needs. We can seek to do what's best for our parents and do it in a way that shows we value them—with kindness and respect.

I've learned—the hard way—that so much depends on my attitude and tone. If my heart isn't right with God, if I'm in the middle of a pity party, or if I'm all wrapped up in self, I end up doing exactly what Paul warned Timothy against: *Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father.*

More than once I've caught myself trying to do the right thing in the wrong way. Impatience, selfishness, and frustration easily foster harsh words. The end result isn't all that matters. The words and actions we use to get there should comfort, encourage, console, and strengthen our parents.

Honoring our parents while caring for them is definitely not child's play. But it pleases God, and He stands by ready to supply everything we need to do the right thing, the right way.

### *Personal Reflection*

*Evaluate some of your recent interactions with your parents. In what ways, if any, could you have improved on the outcome? What activities or conversations do you regularly have with your parents? These may include trips to the doctor or paying the bills. In what ways can you intentionally do the right thing in the right way?*

### *Prayer Prompt*

*Heavenly Father, I long to honor my parents, even while I parent them. Give me Your wisdom and grace to do the right thing in the right way, today and every day. Heal my parent's heart from any harsh words or unkind action of mine. Help them feel valued and respected even while I care for them.*



## THESE TERRIBLE BUT TEMPORARY GROANS



*I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. . . . Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.*

—Romans 8:18, 23–26

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**M**y father built his life, our family, and all his relationships on the foundation of Christ. But his illness, my mother's dementia, and their overall situation threatened to shake that foundation. Dad's retirement years were not what he had expected. He felt beaten.

Like my father, many of your parents who know God's Word may still be caught off guard by the presence of struggle in their own lives. They may forget God's truth about trials and instead allow disappointment, frustration, and pain to rob them of the hopeful expectation of eternity and God's provision for their lives today.

Our parents' trials are not unique. Because of sin, the whole world and all its inhabitants are subject to death and decay. All creation groans with sin's effects. Jesus warned that we would experience trouble in this world (John 16:33)—yet like my father, many of us are rocked when it arrives.

In Romans 8:22, Paul likens believers' troubles to the pangs of childbirth: "We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time." The things that cause us pain now will not only end, they will also usher in a glorious result—our ultimate transformation and eternal freedom.

God also works in and through our struggles now—mine, yours, and our parents'—to strengthen our faith and make us spiritually mature (James 1:2–4). Although it seems counterintuitive, God promises to bless those who persevere under trial, to bestow on them the "crown of life" (v. 12).

I tend to be spiritually shortsighted. I get caught up in today and allow my temporary troubles to knock me off balance. I lose touch with God's greater, eternal purposes. I sometimes allow temporary, physical circumstances to overshadow God's eternal, spiritual reality. Maybe you do too. Maybe your parent does.

We often look at life through temporal glasses. We get caught in the here and now. But we can remind ourselves—and

our parents—to keep an eternal perspective. To remember God’s promises. I pray God will help us all catch a glimpse of eternity. To remember that our “present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed.”

We will all groan with pain, grief, loss, and illness. God may remove some in this lifetime and others may remain until this earthly life is over. Until then, we have God’s Spirit to comfort, strengthen, and provide.

And we have hope that is far greater than these groanings. We have a certain hope that one day our struggles will be eternally finished. On that day, God will restore and transform our frail bodies. He will consummate our eternal redemption. And He will draw us—as His sons and daughters—into His presence forever.

If your parent does not have a saving relationship with Jesus, it is not too late. God is able to save no matter their physical or mental condition. No obstacle is too great. No circumstance too daunting. Keep praying. Keep pointing them to Jesus.

Let us all encourage our parents and ourselves with the truth of God’s Word. Our struggles do not surprise Him. They are merely birth pains pointing us to eternal glory.

### *Personal Reflection*

*Do you or your parent struggle with keeping an eternal focus? If so, which of God’s promises do you need to most keep in mind?*

### *Prayer Prompt*

*Holy Spirit, I am not sure how to best pray for my parents, but You know both my heart and the will of God. Please intercede for my parents with the Father. Strengthen them to meet the challenges of today. Fill their minds with peace and focus their thoughts on God’s eternal promises.*





# HELPING ON OUR KNEES



*I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

—Ephesians 3:16–21

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**M**y friend, Stephanie, and her husband care for his mother full time. Louise, who suffers with advanced dementia, has lived with them for more than a year. Stephanie covers the majority of the day-to-day caregiving responsibilities.

Stephanie loves Jesus and seeks to glorify Him in everything she does, including caring for her mother-in-law. But the demands of the constant responsibility drain her physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Also, since Stephanie has had to drastically cut her social interaction and commitment to things outside the home, she feels isolated.

Louise needs constant attention. For instance, she often hides her medication instead of taking it. Louise's moods erratically shift from one extreme to the other. Anger often bubbles up into yelling and door slamming. And Stephanie must often intercede when Louise rudely insults a visiting relative or family friend.

The dementia has even robbed Louise of the ability to carry out simple, routine tasks, like dressing. One day, when Stephanie and her husband planned to take Louise out for dinner, she walked into the living room wearing just her camisole and slip. Louise believed the outfit was suitable, so helping her change required gentleness, patience, and tact.

Stephanie cannot meet the demanding challenges without prayer. The best way to help Louise and also keep her own heart and mind aligned with God's is through constant communication with her heavenly Father.

"So often I want to give up and walk away. To just put her in a home and move on with my life. But it's not my life, it's God's. So, I pray. A lot."

Today's Bible passage describes the power available through prayer for believers discouraged by trials and difficulties. Paul, who wrote this letter from prison, did not want the believers in Ephesus to be discouraged because of his suffering. So he prayed for them (vv. 13–14). Paul's prayer for the Ephesians reminds us that God



possesses unlimited, divine resources He lovingly makes available to His children.

God's provision flows from an infinite storehouse of glorious riches into the inner life of His people through the indwelling Holy Spirit. God is able to meet our spiritual, emotional, mental, and physical needs. Yet often, we simply fail to ask Him.

The world simply can never provide the same help, encouragement, or comfort as our Father God. Its efforts merely bandage a gaping wound. But, God's power and provision exceed our every need. No struggle or trial, illness or disease, grief or loss is beyond the scope of Christ's power and love.

God invites us to pray. He gently urges us, in all our feebleness, to intercede for our parents. To plead for ourselves. But what do we ask? How should we pray?

Broad, sweeping prayers reach out for God's immeasurably more for our parents and ourselves. Ask for God's strength, wisdom, perseverance, and discernment. Plead for God's comfort, encouragement, healing, and joy. Pray for a fresh glimpse of God and His glory. Then stretch out your hands and receive His provision to enable you to care for your parents in a way that honors them and pleases God.

Specific, targeted prayers cover those needs unique to each of us. Share with God the types of needs you share with your best friend. Are you struggling to be kind to your parent? Does your back hurt due to the physical demands of caregiving? Is your parent suffering with bedsores or a reaction to a new medication? God not only cares about every detail, He longs to provide in ways that will bring good to us and glory to Him.

### *Personal Reflection*

*Have you minimized the importance of prayer for yourself and your parent? What are some specific ways you can expand your prayer time, either on your knees or on the go?*

### *Prayer Prompt*

*Father, thank You for Your willingness and ability to do immeasurably more than I could dare to ask. Remind me to pray constantly, and make me sensitive to Your invitation to bring my needs—and the needs of my parent—to You. Fill me with faith in the power of prayer.*



# WHAT DO WE DO NOW?



*My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding—indeed, 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; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding.*

—Proverbs 2:1–6

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**M**y parents needed help long before I realized it. Their need snuck up on me. Since they had always been so independent, strong, and capable, it took a while for my perception of them to catch up with reality.

Then I felt as though I was already behind . . . that I had to run to catch up. I missed that initial step, the first small decision of many decisions to come. I fell into the deep end. When I came up for air my first thought was *what do we do now?* You may have that same feeling—overwhelmed with decisions for someone who used to have all the answers.

As we care for our aging parents, we face a constant barrage of decisions, some small and some huge. My friend Teresa and her siblings are just beginning the caregiving journey with their parents. Teresa’s mom and dad live in a large, multilevel house on more than an acre of land. The family worries about their physical ability to care for the property as well as their safety carrying out the required tasks. In recent months, Teresa’s dad has fallen more than once.

Their first big decision looms—when and how should the children talk to their parents about moving somewhere safer and more manageable? Teresa isn’t sure how to proceed, but she is sure about where to find the answer. “I pray for God’s wisdom to know when the time will be right to talk to them and about timing for a move. God knows when that should be.”

Wouldn’t it be great if our aging parents came with an instruction manual? But no guidebook exists to tell us, “When this happens, then you do this . . .” There is no troubleshooting checklist. The only practical training most of us receive may be on the job, but we do have access to a vast storehouse of divine wisdom.

By definition, wisdom is the ability to choose and act rightly in specific situations. God wants to guide us along a wise path. He desires for us to do the right thing, to make good decisions for our parents and ourselves. Therefore, He does not hide His wisdom from us but gives generously to all who asks (James 1:5). King

Solomon, who wrote most of the Book of Proverbs, is often said to be the wisest man who ever lived. He asked God for wisdom, and God gave it.

The search for true wisdom is really a search for its source—God Himself. Let us begin there: in God’s presence, in His revealed Word. The Bible provides the framework of discernment we need for all life’s situations. There we find principles for godly living, guidelines for relationships, and insights that shape our attitude and behavior. Also, don’t hesitate to seek counsel and advice from godly friends who’ve walked this same path with their parents. God often uses other believers to guide and encourage us.

Through the guidance of His Spirit and godly counsel of fellow believers, God will use what we have diligently treasured in our hearts and minds to walk us through specific circumstances. As we follow God’s direction, we will begin to experience the cumulative effect of godly wisdom. Yesterday’s wise decisions set us on a good path, guarding our course for today’s wise choices. The exercise of godly wisdom today will keep us on God’s good path, paving the way into a wise tomorrow (Proverbs 2:9).

Wise King Solomon described the discovery of wisdom as a treasure hunt. Wisdom comes to light as we diligently seek it in God’s Word and in His presence. Let us look for wisdom like silver; search for it like precious treasure. Let us call out to the Author of wisdom and ask Him to grant what He longs to give.

### *Personal Reflection*

*Do you pray and read God's Word with determined anticipation of receiving His wisdom and guidance? Think about and list ways you can purposefully hunt for God's wisdom. Also list the names of a few godly friends and mentors who can help you confirm God's guidance.*

### *Prayer Prompt*

*Father, caring for my parents requires wisdom I do not have. You promise to generously give Your wisdom to those who ask, so I am asking today. Pour out Your wisdom on me so I will know how to best care for my parents.*