

John has done it again! Another in a great collection of classics, only this time, the reader takes center stage as *X: Multiply Your God-Given Potential* helps the reader uncover what so many are searching for—their purpose. So many books talk about potential but few have the ability to take you, step-by-step, through a process that not only helps you discover what you were created to do, but what you can do today to move in that direction. John is a masterful teacher, and this book is a much-needed resource for every church discipleship ministry and for believers who know they were made for more.

JENTEZEN FRANKLIN
Senior Pastor of Free Chapel
New York Times best-selling author

Your potential is not automatic; it must be developed. My friend John Bevere provides the spark you need to rise above complacency and boldly pursue your destiny!

MARK BATTERSON
New York Times best-selling author of *The Circle Maker*
Lead Pastor of National Community Church

John Bevere's book *X: Multiply Your God-Given Potential* is more than a book on discovering your purpose. It's a manual for discovering your gifts, living a God-honoring life, and investing in others. If you are passionate about making a difference, this book is one to read and reread for years to come!

CRAIG GROESCHEL
Pastor of Life.Church
New York Times best-selling author

This book is for the doers—the people who are ready to step up and step out in the pursuit of their God-given potential. It's not an easy journey, but this book may be just what you need to help you along the way.

STEVEN FURTICK

Pastor of Elevation Church

New York Times best-selling author

I firmly believe each one of us was created with a specific individual purpose as well as a shared purpose—to build the Kingdom of God. *X: Multiply Your God-Given Potential* will help you identify your specific individual purpose and discover how you can multiply that to build God's Kingdom.

CHRISTINE CAINE

Best-selling author

Founder of A21 and Propel Women

I love this book! Author and friend John Bevere has written a masterpiece that is sure to inspire countless numbers of believers to step into their God-given design and potential. This possibility excites me beyond words. He shares from his own experiences how he stepped past his own skill level into a realm of grace, that he might see what God would do through him. And the outcome is brilliant.

John inspires us to push past our comfort zones into the realm of advancement, where we see the manifestation of God's will on the earth through the power of multiplication. The insights and inspiration contained on these pages is worth the book's weight in gold. I sincerely believe that *X: Multiply Your God-Given Potential* will contribute to the reformation we all long for. Let us steward our God-

given potential with such faithfulness that, at the end of our days, we may stand before Him and hear Him say, “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

BILL JOHNSON

Senior Leader of Bethel Church

Author of *The Way of Life* and *Strengthen Yourself in the Lord*

To reach your potential, you must grow. And to grow, you must be highly intentional about it. My friend John Bevere has penned an incredible book that gives you the tools to both accelerate your growth and realize your potential.

JOHN MAXWELL

Best-selling author and leadership expert

What God has placed within you is too valuable to remain buried and hidden by fear. John was catalytic in helping me discover and realize my potential. I know these truths will help do the same for you!

LISA BEVERE

New York Times best-selling author

Co-founder of Messenger International

JOHN BEVERE

USA TODAY BEST-SELLING AUTHOR



**MULTIPLY YOUR
GOD-GIVEN POTENTIAL**

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Dedicated to the magnificent wives of our sons . . .

Lisa and I love you deeply and each of you exhibits the beautiful traits listed below and more, but these are the ones that stand out the most:

Julianna

Married to Addison October 25, 2009.

You are lovely and wise.

You will always be my first daughter.

Jessica

Married to Austin September 24, 2018.

You are kind and adorable.

Joy fills the atmosphere wherever you go.

Christian

Married to Arden November 18, 2018.

You are full of grace and tender of heart.

You love our son beautifully.

The future Mrs. Alec Bevere

My heart longs to meet our future daughter.

I love you deeply already.

Each of you brings great joy to Lisa and me.

Thank you for multiplying our family.

Forever our daughters.



CONTENTS

About This Book	xiii
1 Connecting the Dots	1
2 Imparted Abilities	17
3 Assess Yourself Honestly	35
4 Stewards	47
5 Faithful	67
6 Diligence and Multiplication	87
7 Great Multiplication	103
8 Strategic Ideas	119
9 Investing	137
10 The Catalyst	157
11 Imitate Me	175
12 Hindrances to Multiplication I	195
13 Hindrances to Multiplication II	209
14 Discover and Develop Your Gifts	225
15 Anointed	245
Appendix	257
Acknowledgments	259
Notes	261



ABOUT THIS BOOK

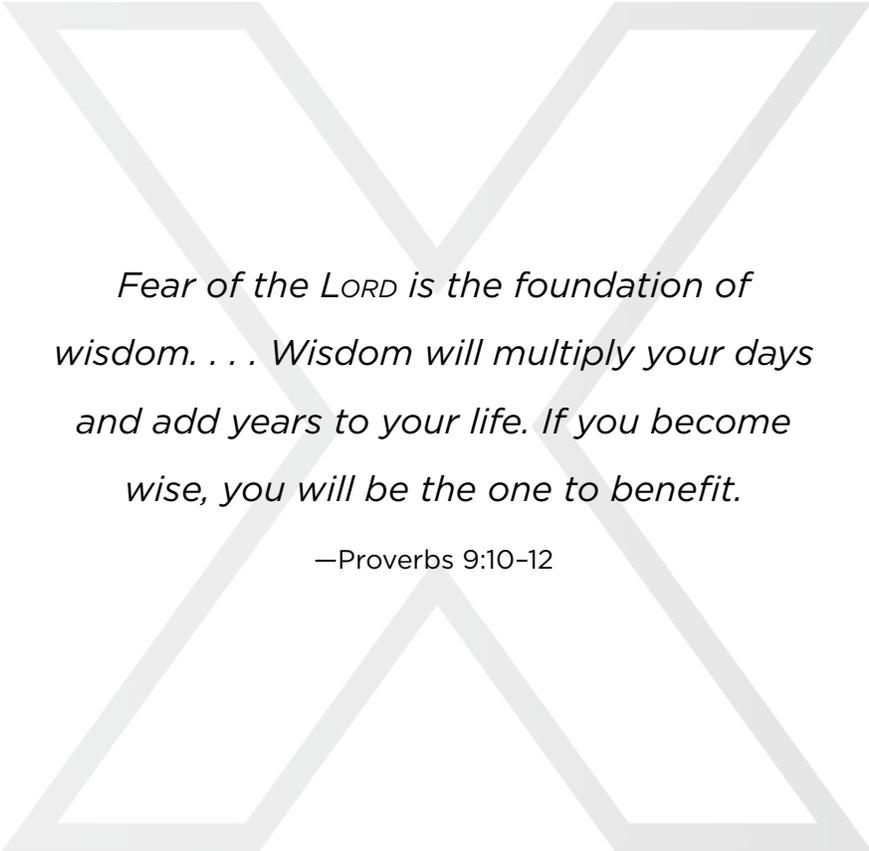
Throughout these pages, you'll find biblical insights and strategies that will empower you to discover your purpose, ignite your passion, and realize your potential. With each chapter, there are also reflective questions that will help you personalize what you're learning.

If you'd like to learn more about how to multiply, I've created bonus content, including video lessons, a companion guide, and other online resources that can be used individually or in a group setting. You can access these resources, along with my entire library of discipleship resources, at www.MessengerX.com. Millions of people have used our resources, and our goal is to make them available to every person, regardless of their location, language, or financial position (something you'll learn more about in this book). Take a minute to check out the site and join our global community of messengers.

And if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to me and my team at Messenger International.

Cheering you on!

John



*Fear of the LORD is the foundation of
wisdom. . . . Wisdom will multiply your days
and add years to your life. If you become
wise, you will be the one to benefit.*

—Proverbs 9:10-12

Connecting the Dots

The year was 2012. I was scheduled to speak in the Los Angeles area for a church's weekend services. My normal pattern is to fly in late Saturday afternoon, minister Saturday evening and Sunday morning, and return home Sunday afternoon. This routine was about to change.

One of our ministry partners, I'll call him Stan, in discovering I was scheduled in the LA area, called and asked if I would like to play the golf course at the famous Riviera Country Club. I didn't have to think twice, as playing this course was on my bucket list. I enthusiastically responded, "Absolutely yes, I'd love to!"

Let me give some backstory. In over thirty-five years of traveling and communicating God's Word, every once in a while, my love for playing golf slips out when addressing audiences. An unplanned, yet pleasant outcome over the years has been several offers to play some of the nicest golf clubs in the world. This certainly was such an occasion.

This was a *very special* invitation. Riviera is an exclusive and private club—very difficult to get into. Each year this course hosts the PGA tour event called the Genesis Invitational (formerly known as the Los Angeles Open). It has also hosted major tournaments, including

a few US Opens, PGA Championships, the US Amateur, and other notable tournaments.

Stan picked me up early Saturday morning for the dream round. To make matters even sweeter, one of my close friends, Aaron Baddeley, had just won the LA Open the year before. I anticipated mentally replaying some of his outstanding shots from winning the tournament in 2011!

I started out the first four holes being three over par (nerves got the best of me), but ended the round at two under par. Stan and I had a great time together; it was a memorable morning, to say the least.

On the drive back to my hotel in downtown Los Angeles, Stan asked a heartfelt question: “John, can I ask you about an issue I’ve been wrestling with?”

“Sure.”

In a vulnerable and most sincere manner, he set up his question: “John, I’ve worked tirelessly and diligently, giving many hours to build my businesses over the past couple of decades. My net worth is now approximately \$9 million. Everything is running smoothly with my current clients. The result of years of hard work is that my wife and children are financially set for life.”

Then came his question: “Now that I’m entering the decade of my fifties, why should I work at the same pace? Why should I struggle to build my businesses to \$35 million over the next ten years?”

The Holy Spirit instantly gave me wisdom on how to answer. “Let me pose a scenario to you,” I said. “Suppose I was to say to you, ‘Stan, I’ve spent years working hard to write seventeen books that are now in over eighty languages with copies numbering in the multiple millions. I’ve flown over ten million miles in the past twenty-five years, fought jet lag, experienced a variety of cultures and strange foods, and stayed in tiny hotel rooms—all to be able to minister the gospel

all over the globe. The ministry is doing well and finances are stable; Lisa and my children are set, too. Why should I continue to work at this same rate?”

It was a perfect setup. With a slight chuckle, he answered, “I wouldn’t want to be in your shoes when you face Jesus one day.”

I immediately said, “Stan, that’s exactly what you said to me in regard to your businesses.”

The smile immediately left his face. He turned his eyes away from the highway toward me with a look of shock. In disbelief he questioned, “How do you get that?”

“Stan, God has gifted every one of His children. These gifts are divinely given to build His kingdom. However, we are stewards and therefore can choose, at any given time, to use these gifts in one of three ways:

“We can use the gifts to build the kingdom.

“We can use the gifts to build ourselves.

“We can just neglect the gifts altogether.”

I had Stan’s attention, so I continued: “Some of my obvious gifts are writing and speaking; your gifts are related to business and giving. You just laughed at my scenario! However, your scenario is exactly the same. Your gifts are just as important for building the kingdom as mine are. In fact, yours may be more important, but you haven’t connected the dots!”

We continued to talk along these lines. From our conversation, it was both fulfilling and enjoyable to see the rapid change in Stan’s thoughts and attitude.

Six months later, I called Stan to touch base and see how he was. It was another unforgettable chat.

“Hey, Stan, how you doing?”

“Do you want the honest truth?” His answer caught me off guard.

“Yes, of course!”

“I’ve been haunted, in a good way, over the words you spoke to me six months ago.”

“What are you doing about it?”

With a laugh, he quickly stated, “I’m busting my rear end to build my businesses up to \$35 million for the sake of building the kingdom.”

“Good for you!”

Stan had grasped the reality that he’s not a spectator in advancing God’s kingdom, but a vital participant. He’d caught the vision, which eludes so many, that his unique abilities are valuable for the eternal, not just the temporal. Now he fully understands he’s gifted for a greater purpose than himself and his family. I’m so grateful he was blunt, sincere, and humble. These traits opened him up to receive the truth that would change his life. And, due to his testimony, not only his life but, in turn, so many others.

Stan’s enlightenment has now become his motivation to multiply and exemplifies the primary purpose of this book. In conversing with believers throughout my years of travel, the vast number who think no differently than Stan is a shocking reality. In fact, if I were backed into a corner, I would have to say it’s the majority. However, many are not as forthright as Stan in admitting it, but as conversations ensue, the disconnect is uncovered.

If you question your purpose with similar thoughts, I’m so happy you have this book in your hands. It’s my sincere hope your paradigm will also shift.

As with Stan, be honest with yourself; it will help connect your dots. In this posture of humility, you’ll discover and firmly believe in multiplying your unique gifts for building the kingdom. You are just as called by God as your pastor or I. Your calling is as legitimate as was that of the great Billy Graham or any other well-known minister.

We will discuss how to discover, develop and, most importantly, multiply your gifts to enhance your specific calling. The Word of God and the stories contained in this book will build your faith to greatly increase your effectiveness. I know firsthand; it happened with me as I typed and edited this book.

BORN ON PURPOSE FOR A PURPOSE

Let's begin by examining a very familiar portion of Scripture:

For by *grace* you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is *the gift of God*, not of works, lest anyone should boast. (Ephesians 2:8–9 NKJV)

The focus of these two verses is the *grace of God*. It is clear—abundantly clear—that we are saved by grace and this is a gift from God. The twenty-first-century church has done an excellent job of communicating this truth. We can never work hard, live pure, or sacrifice enough to earn the privilege of spending eternity with our Creator, Almighty God. This familiar scripture has been one of the—if not the primary—references to reveal this important truth. However, there has been neglect in what comes next:

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we *should* walk in them. (Ephesians 2:10 NKJV)

Notice that the next word after the ninth verse is *for*. This word is a *conjunction*, which joins the two statements together. In other words, the beginning of the thought is not complete on its own. The word

for means “because of this,” so verse 10 should not be left out when citing verses 8 and 9; otherwise you don’t get the complete meaning of what’s being communicated.

Verse 10 states that we are His handiwork created for a purpose—to produce good works. So, in essence, in these three verses Paul is saying:

We are saved by grace *to first be someone*—a child of God; *and* we are equally empowered by that same grace *to do something*.

We can never overemphasize one truth to the neglect of another truth. But let me emphasize up front that who we are in Christ Jesus is paramount to what we do, for *anything we do should be an outflow of who we are*.

It is easy to shy away from the “to-do something” aspect, as it relieves us from any pressure of laboring to build the kingdom. The sad reality is, though, that it’s our labor that energizes us. Jesus says, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work” (John 4:34 NKJV). He also says, “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you” (John 20:21 NKJV). Putting His two statements together, we clearly see that our food is to do and finish the will of Jesus who sends us. Food is what strengthens us. If we don’t eat, we become weak and are good for very little.

Let’s now bring this over to our spiritual life. If we don’t do the will of Jesus who sends us, we become weak. Now we are vulnerable to temptation.

In over forty years of walking with Jesus, I’ve noticed that one of the primary causes of people slipping away from the faith is a lack of “doing.” They become lazy and idle in regard to their calling, and before they know it, they find themselves in complacent drunkenness,

immorality, or given to interests that pull them back into the world's way of living. They lose their spiritual strength. Here's the bottom line:

What we do strengthens us.

So, allow me to restate the truth of these three Scriptures: You were born again by the free gift of grace to be a child of God, and you were equally empowered by that same grace to do something. Scripture declares God planned each of our works beforehand. David writes:

You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in Your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed. (Psalm 139:16)

God designed things for you to do before you were born. He actually recorded these works in a book! We can only imagine how huge this book is, because every moment of our life is recorded in it. These assignments He planned for us revolve around building His kingdom. It's His deepest desire that we fulfill His plans for our life, but it is not guaranteed that we will. Notice in Ephesians 2:10 the word *should*. It doesn't say "that we *would* walk in them," rather "that we *should* walk in them." Here is where our free will enters the game. He prearranged our works, but it is up to us to walk in what He planned.

I'm firmly convinced that when we stand before Jesus at the believer's judgment seat (where we will be rewarded for our labor as Christians or suffer loss for our neglect), He will open this book and say, "Let's compare how you actually lived to the original plan My Father and I had in mind for you." (In regard to the judgment, it is written in two different places in Scripture that the "books were opened" (see Daniel 7:10 and Revelation 20:12 NKJV).) I believe these books

were written by God about our life before we were born. In regard to our specific calling, we won't be judged on what we did, rather on what we were called to do. That's sobering.

At this point you may feel a little panic. Please don't! There are three important things to note: First, God is more passionate about you completing what He's called you to do than you are, so He's not going to hide His plans from you. He desires for you to know your calling more than you want to! Second, the process of growing into the fullness of your calling is a journey, not a one-time event, so fight the urge to give in to impatience. Third, in this book you'll find insights from both Scripture and experience in order to discover and develop your calling.

To help illustrate, consider this example. Suppose I am a city planner and desire to build a spectacular residential, recreational, and retail shop complex near the city center. Being the city planner makes me the chief designer, so I organize the master plan with skilled developers and architects. In this complex I want play areas, amusement rides, sports courts, fountains, sitting areas, and walking trails. I also want to incorporate retail shops with upstairs condominiums, restaurants, movie theaters, and other creative accents to make our complex unique.

Once the design is complete, I then determine what contractors I will need to accomplish the different aspects of the master plan. I hire these various contractors and give the time line for their assignments. The project is set to commence.

If all the contractors do exactly what I ask, the massive project will be built seamlessly and run smoothly. However, what if some of the contractors don't make this project a priority? What if they accept the assignment but, in the allotted time for construction, use their skills to work on other jobs? What if they go fishing, golfing, and attend sporting events too often so the job gets neglected? What if oth-

ers are lazy and don't take their work seriously? If I totally depend on these original contractors, the project wouldn't get done on schedule. In fact, it may never be done.

The choice belongs to the contractors in what to do with their time and talents. However, as the city planner, I'm not going to settle for major delays or the possibility of the project never being finished. Instead, I'm going to have to bring in others to do the work.

What is the result? The original contractors don't get the reward of being a part of the team that builds the beautiful complex. They will not be able to show their children, grandchildren, and friends their part in the beautiful focus of the city center. Their children will not be able to tell others about what their parents were a part of. They also will lose the reward of being paid for the assignment.

You can see this same principle exemplified all through Scripture. God has a master plan for the building of His kingdom. Yet, throughout history, God has had to work with people who haven't fulfilled His desires. Therefore, He's frequently had to adjust His original plan. (I speak in human terms because God knows the end from the beginning—He's not bound to time.) Therefore, "changing" the plan is not a shock to Him. He knew what His laborers would choose beforehand. He was already prepared with their replacements.

Here are a few of many examples of this in Scripture. You see this with Abraham's father, Terah. (Our youngest son, Arden, recently reminded me of this truth.) Most of us know that Abraham was born and grew up in Ur of the Chaldeans before God called him to go to the land of Canaan. The lesser known fact is that if you look closely at his father, Terah, you'll discover he was more likely the original one called to do this. We read:

One day Terah took his son Abram, his daughter-in-law Sarai (his son Abram's wife), and his grandson Lot (his son Haran's

child) and moved away from Ur of the Chaldeans. He was *headed for the land of Canaan*, but they stopped at Haran and *settled there*. Terah lived for 205 years and died while still in Haran. (Genesis 11:31–32)

There are two things to consider. First, why would a man, for no reason, uproot his family from Ur and travel over six hundred miles toward, of all places, the land of Canaan? The trip by camel is slow and arduous. With women and children, it probably took at least a few months. It's not like Terah could go online and see pictures and read articles of Canaan being a great place to live and work. He didn't discover it through posts on social media. There would have to have been a reason for this distinct and distant move.

Second, if he was headed for Canaan, why did he settle in Haran? Why didn't he complete his journey to the destination? Could it be that he was tempted to not finish? Could he have run up against interfering desires, hardships, a family member who was fed up with traveling, or other distracting circumstances? Could it have been that he saw more chances for opportunity in Haran and didn't want to risk losing out on them simply over a word from God?

In considering all this, could we possibly conclude that Terah was God's first choice to be "the father of many nations"? Was he also originally assigned to be the *father of faith*, a term now ascribed to Abraham (see Romans 4:16–17)?

Terah decided to not go the distance; he settled in Haran. I believe if he had stayed the course, today we would read about his adventures and covenant with God. I believe Israel would have ascribed him to be their father and that Jesus would have been referred to as the "seed of Terah" instead of the "seed of Abraham" (see Galatians 3:16).

Another example of a change in God's master plan is the judge and head priest Eli. He and his descendants were assigned to be the

priests who would approach God for the people. However, a prophet sent to Eli declared:

The LORD, the God of Israel, says: I promised that your branch of the tribe of Levi would always be My priests. But I will honor those who honor Me, and I will despise those who think lightly of Me. The time is coming when I will put an end to your family, so it will no longer serve as My priests. (1 Samuel 2:30–31)

Eli's disobedience affected both him and his descendants. Had he walked honorably before God, the priesthood would have continued with Eli's clan.

Still another example is all the kings of Israel. The first would be David's son Solomon. God said to him, "Since you have not kept My covenant and have disobeyed My decrees, I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to one of your servants" (1 Kings 11:11). Later, had Solomon stayed true, the kingdom never would have been ripped away from his son, Rehoboam. The majority of the kingdom was given to Jeroboam, yet later he also failed in being faithful. God told him:

I promoted you from the ranks of the common people and made you ruler over My people Israel. I ripped the kingdom away from the family of David and gave it to you. But you have not been like My servant David, who obeyed My commands and followed Me with all his heart and always did whatever I wanted. . . . And since you have turned your back on Me, I will bring disaster on your dynasty. (1 Kings 14:7–10)

Jeroboam would have had an enduring dynasty had he not misused his position and gifts to benefit himself instead of God's kingdom.

A similar message was given to King Baasha of Israel (see 1 Kings 16:1–7), as well as to others entrusted with kingdom responsibilities.

Here's my point: Often our unfaithfulness to the call of God on our life affects not only us, but also our descendants. With Terah it didn't, but with many others it did.

We see a similar situation among the prophets. Elisha served Elijah and received a double portion of what was on Elijah's life. But years later, Elisha's servant, Gehazi, who was next in line to walk in the prophetic gifting, lost focus of what was important and pulled away. He became a leper and left the service he was originally called to (see 2 Kings 5:20–27). A new servant (who was not named) moved into his place to assist Elisha.

In the New Testament you see this with Judas Iscariot. Because he misused his calling and the gifts entrusted to him, he had to be replaced. Peter said to the disciples in the upper room, "This was written in the book of Psalms, where it says, . . . 'Let someone else take his position.' So now we must choose a replacement for Judas" (Acts 1:20–21).

How sad, how tragic! It's sobering to think of the regrets many will have because they chose to not steward the calling or gifts upon their lives in a worthy manner.

In returning to the positive aspect, you, dear reader, were born on purpose and for a purpose. Your life has great value in building the eternal. It's not the will of a mere man or woman, but determined by God Himself.

YOU DETERMINE YOUR EFFECTIVENESS

Here is the startling reality: *How effective you are is not up to God but up to you.* That may sound irreverent if you have put all your life achievements in the basket of "God's sovereignty." I assure you, how-

ever, it is not irreverent nor does this statement take anything away from the sovereignty of God. It is a testimony of His trust in us, and His desire for His sons and daughters to exercise the free will He's given us.

Let's look again at a portion of the Scripture that opened this chapter:

Wisdom will *multiply your days* and add years to your life.
If you become wise, you will be the one to benefit. (Proverbs 9:11–12)

This truth is so encouraging and powerful! What does it mean to *multiply your days*? It can't mean to lengthen your life; this is already covered by the statement, ". . . and add years to your life." It can't mean anything other than increasing your effectiveness each and every day. In other words, you'll get more out of the day than someone without God's wisdom.

You've most likely heard the proverb, "If the ax is dull, and one does not sharpen the edge, then he must use more strength; but wisdom brings success" (Ecclesiastes 10:10 NKJV). Wisdom is the focus here. You will not be as effective or productive with a dull ax (a lack of wisdom). Conversely, you'll be able to cut down many more trees with an ax that's sharpened (living wisely). You will multiply your efforts using the same strength.

God's wisdom is so important. I will share a story later in the book of a friend of mine who was unproductive as a believer for decades and eventually became fed up with his lethargic state. The first thing he did was to immerse himself in the Scriptures for six months. This gave him the wisdom to be more effective, and you'll be amazed by his life story.

It's not just my friend, but all of us are told, "Getting wisdom is

the most important thing you can do” (Proverbs 4:7 GNT). I love this statement. Once you really believe it, you’ll give your time and energy to acquiring wisdom. But the great truth of Proverbs 9:11–12 is this: Once you obtain wisdom, *you are the one who benefits!*

The wisdom of God that I write about in this book took years of seeking, searching, and listening—coupled with both positive and negative experiences. But as you’ll discover, it’s not only me, but others that I’ve had the privilege to interview who’ve walked wisely and borne tremendous fruit. I can only hope that, in a short amount of time, you will receive what took me years to obtain, and that you will go much farther with this wisdom than I have. It’s a kingdom matter—we are all one, so if you benefit, then I benefit. If you go farther than me, it’s also to my advantage, because we are one. We are all working for a common purpose and for the glory of one King.

A HIDDEN SECRET

Let’s transition into the next chapter with this question: Would you be interested in knowing a hidden secret that most people are unaware of, that will propel your abilities beyond what you’ve ever experienced?

I think so! And here’s the thing—there is such a secret. It’s a hidden truth that we are about to uncover.

REFLECT

1. According to Ephesians 2:10, God planned things for you to do before you were born. Have you sought to know these plans? What has hindered your discovery of them?
2. You were born on purpose for a purpose. In light of Stan's story, how do you view your gifts and abilities? Do you view them as important for building God's kingdom? Or have you, like Stan, failed to connect the dots?
3. Doing the will of God strengthens us. Is what you're doing with your life strengthening you? Are you passionate about the work you're doing? If not, why do you lack fulfillment?



*Having then gifts differing according to the
grace that is given to us, let us use them.*

—Romans 12:6 NKJV