THE POSTERITY GOSPEL
MANAGING OUR SPIRITUAL WEALTH

BY DAVID L. MCKENNA
“We don’t get to write our own obituaries, but we do get to live the life that will be written about—especially the sacred things we’ve done in service to our Lord. David McKenna has written an important book about the spiritual legacy each of us will leave behind to glorify God and encourage future generations. Reading his life story will prompt you to think about what your life means, not in material wealth but in your inestimable value to Christ’s kingdom.”

- Richard Stearns
  President of World Vision U.S.
  Author of The Hole in Our Gospel

“With 10,000 people retiring everyday for the next 10 years, this book could change the course of history through the following generations. How are we managing our spiritual wealth? How are we passing that on? From David McKenna’s wealth of experience in education, business, ministry and more, he humbly gives guidance from his own life. Not just his successes but also his failures. I was compelled to look at what I am passing on in new and lasting ways. This is a call to ‘pay as much attention to our spiritual wealth as we do to our financial wealth.’ It is a book every Christ-follower should read and heed.”

- Jo Anne Lyon
  General Superintendent Emerita
  The Wesleyan Church
“Drawing on the wisdom of Psalm 17 to ‘declare God’s marvelous deeds to the next generation,’ The Posterity Gospel is a rich, insightful, and deeply personal narrative of lessons learned through a lifetime of leadership and faith. David McKenna parallels the call to pass down a spiritual legacy to the concept of passing down one’s financial wealth, and the result is a treasure trove of biblical wisdom that will equip the young with truth and inspire the old to steward their own spiritual portfolio wisely.”

- Dan Busby
  President
  Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability

“With laser-like precision, David McKenna drills deep into the critical issue faced by millions of baby boomers: ‘What is the spiritual wealth I will leave?’ Most have not given serious thought to this issue. McKenna guides the reader with his real-life engaging style--a must read!”

- Don Argue
  Commissioner
  United States Commission on International Religious Freedom
“This book is rich with wonderful insight on stewardship--not only stewardship of our resources but our very lives. I felt moved by David McKenna’s transparency and shared experiences, and challenged to walk more closely with the Lord Jesus, so that every aspect of my life, personality and gifts can be fully deployed in our Lord’s service. It is a beautiful book, written by a beautiful and wise brother and friend. May we join Dr. McKenna in giving our very lives away for the cause of Christ.”

- David Goodnight
  Senior Partner, Stoel Rives LLP
  Chairman, Free Methodist Foundation

“Spiritually speaking, I am a wealthy man. The Lord has prospered me with godly mentors who have regularly deposited their wisdom in my life. David McKenna is one such contributor. His ‘Posterity Gospel’ is a case in point. I read it with interest that compounds daily.”

- Greg Asimakoupoulos
  Chaplain
  Author of Sunday Rhymes & Reasons
“In The Posterity Gospel: Managing Our Spiritual Wealth, David McKenna opens the pages of his own personal story with compelling honesty and human warmth to show us what it means to shape, steward, and generously share a lifetime of spiritual assets. ‘This is so good,’ I found myself repeating as I lingered over this book, stopping to ponder now and then—and, more than once, to wipe away a tear or two while a tender, new kind of encouragement began stirring in my heart. I have loved reading Dr. McKenna’s spiritually enriching works for years. But (hand on my heart) I have to say, this is his masterpiece. It is also a master class for those who, like me, are determined to finish well and leave a legacy worth having to those I love and lead. The best part is that someday, sooner than I realize, the truths in The Posterity Gospel give me hope that recipients of the grace-assets from my life will say the same about the legacy gifts I leave behind.”

- Jodi Detrick, D.Min.
  Author of The Jesus-Hearted Woman: 10 Leadership Qualities for Enduring & Endearing Influence
  Former Columnist for The Seattle Times
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Prologue: The Posterity Psalm .................................................12

**Part I: Our Spiritual Legacy**
- Rethinking Our Wealth ..........................................................18
- Older, Grayer, Wiser ..............................................................26
- What’s in Your Wallet? ..............................................................32
- The Debt of Love I Owe ............................................................38

**Part II: Early Savings**
- Free, But Not Cheap ...............................................................48
- Blessed Assurance .................................................................56
- I Love a Mystery! .................................................................64
- Whistle While You Work ..........................................................72

**Part III: Mid-term Investments**
- Landing in Wind and Wave ....................................................84
- On Board with Ulysses .............................................................90

**Part IV: Long-term Gains**
- Getting to “Yes” ........................................................................100
- From Rush to Hush ....................................................................108
- May I Have this Dance? .............................................................114
- All or Nothing ...........................................................................122
- Go Plant a Tree! .........................................................................130

**Part V: Maturing Futures**
- Learning to Let Go ..................................................................140
- Training for the Bell Lap .........................................................148
- Passing the Peace .................................................................158

Epilogue: The Rest of the Story .................................................168
The Posterity Gospel is the most difficult book that I have written. Even though I know that my purpose is to glorify God, I fear the hazards that so often go with memoirs. If you tell a story of success, you can be accused of bragging. If you confess to failure, you can create misunderstanding among your readers. Yet, if you lower the highs and raise the lows, memoirs make the dullest of reading. More than once I put the book on the shelf of unpublished documents.

While reading Psalm 71:17-18 as part of our daily devotions, I was set free. God showed me that I stand on the pivot point between memory of the past and hope for the future. Doubt gave way to anticipation. I knew that I had a message that needed to be heard, not just for our family, but also for other fathers in the faith who have a story to tell.
Remembering the Past

The Psalmist begins by remembering his journey from youth to age. Reflection results in the story of what he has learned and how God has blessed him.

The Psalmist is giving us the corrective for an age limited to the "Radical Now." A secular mindset has cut the roots of our "community of memory." For the first time in any generation, our children are growing up with no common memory of a prayer to pray, a scripture to recite, or a hymn to sing.

The loss of our "community of memory" comes at the price of biblical truth. "Remember" is God's Word for both the Old and New Testaments.

Each day I go past our Jewish neighbors’ condo and note the "mezuzah" on the doorframe. It is their reminder of God’s timeless instructions to the Hebrew children:

*Fix these word of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.*

(Deuteronomy 11:18-20)

We have no comparable symbol in our condo. We are not into religious plaques, paintings or figurines. But any visitor will see the Bible on the coffee table, the devotional book on my nightstand, and the open hymnal on the piano. Each is a reminder that our faith is centered in the memorable moment of the Eucharist when Jesus “…took bread, gave thanks, broke
it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me” (Luke 22:19).

Each of us has stories to remember and retell. What we have learned under the tutelage of God and His miraculous deeds make up the portfolio of our spiritual wealth.

**Connecting the Generations**

With a show of good humor, the Psalmist admits that he is old, gray, and in need of a role to play in God’s continuing story. Another corrective comes forward for an error of our age.

At the same time that contemporary culture has escalated the value of “relationships,” it has promoted a solitary, individualized, and privatized Christian faith. In its extreme form, this is a viewpoint that claims, “I am my own religion.” More acceptable, but equally wrong is the boastful claim, “I am spiritual, but not religious.” In either case, Christian faith is contaminated by the inroads of self-interest.

John Wesley encountered this same heresy during the Evangelical Revival in 18th century England. Without equivocation, he preached, “Christianity is essentially a social religion, and to turn it into a solitary religion is indeed to destroy it.” Backing up his words, Wesley established small groups for his converts and social ministries for his members. The truth still holds. We who are intimately related in the Body of Christ are also responsible for others who desperately need His love.

God has a special assignment for those of us who hold the spiritual wealth of memory. In the jargon of the computer world, we are “hyperlinks” in the information chain that connects the generations. Only when the hyperlink is activated do we see the whole story. It is up to us to make the connection.
Anticipating the Future

With absolute confidence in God’s timeless presence, the Psalmist anticipates telling of His power and might at work in the next generation.

Again, we see a corrective at work. In the past, each new generation of Americans anticipated a future better than the past. Not now. Just as the coming generation forgets the past, it fears the future. Like the pressure mounting on the tectonic plates predicts a massive physical earthquake, the clashing plates of religious, economic, and ethnic divisiveness are leading to the same conclusion. A social earthquake that endangers the moral ground of human civilization is no longer “if,” but “when.”

The Psalmist refuses to share this despair. He foresees God’s power as the counterforce that will assure the next generation and all who are to come with a story of their own. The message goes out, “Don’t give up on our world until God does.” Stories of our families must always point forward with realistic hope for God’s power in the generation to come.

The Posterity Gospel is written with “The Posterity Psalm” in mind. Remembering what God has done in the past and anticipating what He will do in the future make up the portfolio of our spiritual wealth. Guardians of memory in each generation stand on the pivot point of the present with these stories in mind. The same principles of biblical stewardship that apply to our financial wealth are in effect. Transferring gratitude for the past and hope for the future will be the test of our stewardship. Let the story begin.
PART I
Our Spiritual Legacy
"How do you want to be remembered?" Peter Drucker’s favorite question is one that each of us has to answer. At the age of eighty-eight, with the blessings of grace, the wealth of long years, and the limits of time, I cannot avoid thinking about my legacy. Personally, what do I want to leave as an inheritance for our four children, twelve grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren? Publicly, how do I want to be remembered as a servant of Jesus Christ called to leadership in Christian ministry?

I address these legacy questions to myself and all Christ-followers who are in retirement or coming to retirement. In our generation, we are beneficiaries of unprecedented financial wealth (“treasures on earth”) and, if we are faithful, abundant spiritual wealth (“treasures in heaven”). Now, as we age and come to retirement, we are accountable to God for the management and transfer of these resources to the next generation. Biblical stewardship is the key to our accountability. Just as we are obligated to apply the principles of biblical stewardship to whatever financial wealth we have, we are equally responsible for applying those principles to
whatever spiritual wealth we have. The time has come for all Christ-followers to pay as much attention to our spiritual wealth as we should to our financial wealth. In either case, biblical stewardship is the test of our time and our gift to the future.

**Stewarding Our Wealth**

My wife, Jan, and I have already answered the question of stewardship for our financial assets. Even though our estate is modest, we recognize the need for a legal will that stipulates the distribution of any financial wealth that may remain after both of us are gone. To die “intestate” or without a will is considered laxity or neglect of our fiduciary responsibilities. Wisdom calls us to declare our purpose, make an inventory, develop a plan, and distribute our financial assets in a way that perpetuates the motives and direction of our life even after death.

What about managing the wealth of our spiritual resources? A quick look back over the last half-century shows that we are also blessed with an affluence of spiritual wealth. Collectively, Christians in America have not only been free to worship without persecution, but history itself may record an “Evangelical Awakening” in the 1970s that brought multiple millions to Christ and birthed a powerful movement that no political contender can ignore. Socially, we have also gained the wealth of spiritual formation through relational theology, spiritual disciplines, religious media in books, online sources and movies, small group learning, retreats, and conferences. Our greatest spiritual wealth, however, comes from the real-life experiences that are unique to our personal story and testify to the richness of God’s grace. Every Christ-follower, even those with a minimum of financial resources, has a legacy of spiritual wealth to share with the next generation. In fact,
The poorest of the financial poor among us may be the richest in spiritual wealth. Surely the affluence of our spiritual heritage is worth as much consideration as the affluence of our financial heritage.

Dare we ask the same questions about our spiritual wealth that we ask about our financial wealth?

- What is our purpose?
- What are our priorities?
- What are the assets in our portfolio?
- What is our plan for distributing our wealth?
- How do we assure our heritage in perpetuity?

God pulls me up short with these questions. Although I have spent good dollars and many hours on estate planning for financial assets, I have not given my spiritual wealth more than a blink and a nod. To think about formalizing my purpose, priorities, and planning for the distribution of spiritual assets to my heirs came late in life. After giving so much time and attention to our estate plan, I remembered that Jesus said, “Do not store up for yourself treasures on earth…But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven….For where your treasure is, your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:19-21).

Jesus gives what might be considered inordinate attention to financial wealth or the treasure of riches. Through stories such as the Parable of the Talents and the Parable of the Widow’s Mite, and through encounters with wealthy people, such as the Rich Young Ruler and the Rich Man who appealed to Lazarus from hell, we might quickly conclude that Jesus condemned financial wealth as a counterforce to spiritual wealth and a stumbling block to eternal life. This is only half true. More accurately, it is not the accumulation of riches that Jesus condemns, but the attitude toward riches that makes
the difference. To the rich young man, He said, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then, come, follow Me” (Matthew 19:21). In just a few words, Jesus has drawn the distinction between financial wealth and spiritual wealth. Financial wealth carries the danger of being an end in itself driven by self-interest, while spiritual wealth is intended to be a means to an end, namely following Jesus in self-giving love for others.

**Introducing The Posterity Gospel**

Christians living in an affluent society must come to grips with our attitude toward both financial wealth and spiritual wealth. In financial wealth, our attitude has been pushed between two extremes. At one extreme, we have justified the love of financial wealth by embracing *The Prosperity Gospel* that makes receiving, growing, and keeping financial wealth a sign of spiritual favor. At the other extreme is *The Poverty Gospel* that condemns Christians who have financial wealth as colluders in the oppression of the poor. Either extreme distorts the message of Jesus because the Prosperity Gospel is motivated by self-interest and the Poverty Gospel is driven by a narrow reading of Scripture.

For me, the corrective for both financial wealth and spiritual wealth is *The Posterity Gospel* because:

…its *purpose* is eternal rather than temporal,
…its *nature* is spiritual rather than material,
…its *motive* is Christlikeness rather than self-interest,
…its *benefits* are for others rather than self-promotion, and
…its *glory* is to God rather than self-adulation.
One can readily see that our attitude toward Self makes all the difference. In *The Posterity Gospel*, self-exalting love gives way to self-giving love in the Spirit of Jesus Christ and for the glory of God. A “selfie” means more than an arm’s-length photo on a cell phone. We must be constantly aware that the culprit of Self can contaminate our treasures, whether earthly or heavenly.

The good news is that financial wealth is redeemable. In fact, I will propose later that we see its potential as spiritual wealth. If driven by self-interest, financial wealth becomes our net worth accumulated in stocks, bonds, and real property with a view toward meeting needs, pursuing wants, and enhancing self-image. Corrected by the motive of stewardship, however, financial wealth is transformed into assets accumulated in stocks, bonds, and real property for the purpose of meeting basic needs, limiting wants, and serving others for the common good.

Spiritual wealth also needs a corrective for the motive of self-interest. Jesus’ encounters with the Scribes and Pharisees are an ever-present warning that spiritual wealth is corruptible. What we believe, who we are, and what we do can never become ends in themselves and driven by self-interest. Daily and throughout life, we must focus and refocus on the end goal of growing in the likeness of Christ to serve others. With that corrective in action we say with confidence:

“Spiritual wealth is the sum of assets accumulated from experiences of what we believe, who we are and what we do in order to become more like Jesus, serve others and glorify God.”

Based on this definition, I return to my opening questions: “What do I want to leave as a spiritual inheritance for my
children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren?” and “How do I want to be remembered as a servant of Jesus Christ?”

**A Letter from Christ**

The Apostle Paul framed the way that I want to answer this question. With inspired words, he writes to the members of the Corinthian Church,

“You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.”

(2 Corinthians 3:2-3)

I take these words about our spiritual legacy as seriously as I take the legal documents of our last will and testament. What the Spirit of God writes on the tablets of our hearts will be known and read like a love letter from Christ.

We can also communicate that message on tablets of print. Through the ages, Christian authors have recorded their spiritual journeys in books, journals, and diaries that stand among the classics in human literature. When I think back upon the books that have had the greatest influence on my life, autobiographies of Christian authors lead the way—Augustine’s *Confessions*, St. John the Divine’s *Dark Night of the Soul*, Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress*, Wesley’s *Journal*, Lewis’s *Surprised by Joy*, Merton’s *Seven Storey Mountain*, Schweitzer’s *Out of My Life and Thought*, Elliot’s *Through Gates of Splendor*, Bonhoeffer’s *Letters from Prison*, Ten Boom’s *The Hiding Place*, Muggeridge’s *Chronicles of Wasted Time*, Hammersjold’s *Markings*, Trueblood’s *While It Is Day*, and Colson’s *Born Again*. 
Every person in whom Christ lives has a story to tell. John Wesley encouraged all of his converts to record the story of their spiritual journey in a journal, and the practice is still recommended for disciplines in spiritual formation today. We may not write a book that becomes a classic or keep a journal that is published for widespread reading, but each of us has made investments in the name of Christ that count as “treasures in heaven.” These are the assets that make up our spiritual wealth to be stewarded by management and transferred by distribution to the next generation.

**Strategy for Spiritual Stewardship**

After a deepening spiritual journey of 23 years in retirement, I am ready to write. *The Posterity Gospel: Managing Our Spiritual Wealth* is my contribution to the legacy of love that my generation owes to our heirs.

To begin, I create a framework based on biblical stewardship for the management of our spiritual wealth. Our resources include the wisdom of aging as we glean the meaning of our life experiences and the assets of inheritance and investment that make up our portfolio of spiritual wealth. Biblical stewardship then comes directly into play as the guiding principle for managing and transferring the legacy of our spiritual wealth to the next generation. Within this framework I tell my story. It begins before I was born as a child out of wedlock, raised as the son in a conflicted home, introduced to faith in a hyper-fundamentalist church, called to preach at an early age, awakened intellectually in a Christian college, given credibility by marriage to a prominent preacher’s daughter, led through graduate school to the highest level of learning, embarked on a career as president of three Christ-centered educational institutions, and retired early in order to write and consult in the field of leadership development. Each of these experiences comes through the process of God’s refining
fire—melting of the ore, purifying by the heat, shaping by discipline, purifying by skimming, and polishing by hand. Painful to be sure, but along with Job, I can say, “But He knows the way that I take; when He has tested me, I will come forth as gold” (Job 23:10). Gold nuggets of truth that have come through God’s refining fire make up our spiritual wealth.

Although I write in ink on tablets of paper, my prayer is that the message of The Posterity Gospel will be written by the Spirit of the Living God on the heart tablets of all who read. Most of all, I pray that my family, friends, and all other readers will find a way to write their own message of developing, stewarding, and transferring their spiritual wealth to the next generation.
As the years of retirement stretched into double digits, I began to write in my daily journal the insights and emotions that come with the realities of aging. Night after night, I awaken once or twice to read one of the books on my nightstand. Following my lifetime practice, I always have four or five books from which to choose. The order of reading begins with biographies, followed by history, complemented by theological studies, accented by leadership development, and relaxed by fiction. Then, before going back to bed, I stop in a moment of solitude to reflect upon what I have learned in my own lifetime and set up my prayer agenda for the next day.

My nighttime discoveries are astounding. In the quiet hours that I missed during the hurry-up years of growing up, raising a family, and leading an educational institution, I look back on the triumphs and traumas of experience that form a background for the insights of aging. During the day, Jan and I read our own spiritual journey into passages of Scripture from both the Old and New Testaments. Handwritten notes in my daybook record the discoveries of the day and the insights for tomorrow.

"Is not wisdom found among the aged? Does not long life bring understanding?"

(Job 12:12)
Solomon’s Sequence

Recently, I tried to write myself into the story of Solomon’s dream, when God gives the young king the best offer in human history, “Ask for whatever you want me to give you” (1 Kings 3:5). The boy king speaks for every young leader when he answers, “So give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong” (1 Kings 3:9). God honors Solomon’s response with the gift of a “wise and discerning heart” and then adds bonuses he doesn’t ask for—“both riches and honor” as well as the promise of “long life.” All Solomon has to do is obey the Lord.

Four gifts come to us in succession as we build the inheritance that we will leave for our children and grandchildren—riches, honor, long life, and wisdom. Solomon upsets the order of this inheritance by receiving the gift of wisdom first, not after the gift of long life. All of the rest of us have to work backwards. At the age of eighty-eight, I already have the gift of long life, twenty-two years longer than my mother and nineteen years longer than my father. Jan is eighty-six years old, and both her parents lived into their nineties. Our hope is that the genes of longevity will be passed on to our children.

After the gift of long life come the honors that accrue to leadership. A quick look at my vita shows earned and honorary degrees that go far beyond my youthful ambitions. I don’t think that these degrees have spoiled me, but still I often sing aloud the hymn that puts them in their proper place: “Go spread your trophies at His feet and crown Him Lord of all.” None of these awards can be passed on to the next generation, except the honor of the name that goes with them. When Alexander the Great confronted a traitor who was also named Alexander, he thundered, “Either change your name or change your character.” The honor of our name is
second only to wisdom in the heritage we leave for the next generation.

A check on our balance sheet reveals the gift of unexpected wealth. Early on, I adopted John Wesley’s maxim as a life motive, “Make all you can, save all you can, give all you can.” As a result, I have everything and need nothing. All of this for a child of the Great Depression from parents who did not graduate from high school and a marriage that finally broke apart with my father leaving me only a pocket watch and a rejected New Testament. No pity is asked. The Protestant work ethic, the principle of biblical stewardship, and the unmerited favor of God come together in financial prosperity that assures daily needs, long-term care, charitable gifts, and benefits for our children.

Wisdom, the final gift of aging, is another matter. None of us can claim the wisdom of Solomon, even after a lifetime of learning. His gift of wisdom from God was one of a kind. After God confers upon him a “wise and discerning heart,” He draws the line, “…so that there will never have been anyone like you, nor will there ever be” (1 Kings 3:12). Any claim to be wise at an early age is lost in those words. Solomon alone was given the gift of wisdom at the beginning of his career. The sequence of events in his personal history reads: (1) Wisdom; (2) Wealth; (3) Honor; and (4) Long life.

In contrast, our order of inheritance is: (1) Wealth; (2) Honor; (3) Long life; and then (4) Wisdom. We have to wait until the rough-and-tumble of life gives us the perspective of wisdom and the bumps and bruises of aging teach us discernment of right and wrong by practice. We have no choice. Because we are not Solomon, wisdom and discernment are gifts that come to us over long life and through life-long learning. Their value is not diminished by the reversal of the process. Wisdom and discernment gained in the final chapter of life still carry
highest value among the gifts of our inheritance. In fact, if Solomon had used wisdom in his old age, he would not have succumbed to the temptations of money, sex, and power that tore apart his kingdom.

**Job’s Revelation**

Whenever I think about wisdom my mind takes me back to Job, whose story I tried to interpret in writing the *Communicator’s Commentary on Job*.\(^{2}\) Traditionally, we tend to center on his physical, intellectual, and spiritual suffering while forgetting that through suffering he came to wisdom. By his own testimony he said, “Age should speak; advanced years should teach wisdom” (Job 32:7). We understand, then, why Job likens the human search for wisdom to probing deeper and deeper down a mineshaft in search of precious metals and gems. But when all of our efforts are exhausted the questions remain, “Where then does wisdom come?” and “Where does understanding dwell?” (Job 28:20). As far as human understanding is concerned, Job bottoms out in the reality that wisdom “… is hidden from the eyes of every living thing” (Job 28:21) and even Death and Destruction hear “only a rumor of it” (Job 28:22). A flash of revelation then comes through when Job acknowledges that God and God alone is the lode of wisdom for which we search and which we can only discover by the confession, “The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom” (Psalm 111:10).

In between his initial suffering and his final testimony of wisdom, Job is on a journey that asks critical questions, raises honest doubts, defies answers, rebels against God, and finally surrenders with a mouth that is shut and an ego that is humbled. It is a tortured process, to be sure, but not without mining the nuggets of wisdom. As I traced Job’s journey into the depths of intellectual, psychological, and spiritual despair, it became apparent that the deeper he went into doubt, the
higher he rose in faith. Out of the depths, he cried, "Though He slay me, I will trust Him" (Job 13:15 KJV) and "When he has tested me, I will come forth as gold" (Job 23:10). I can only conclude that the path to wisdom goes through physical suffering, intellectual doubt, emotional despair, and spiritual alienation. But, with the assurance of God's presence as we change and grow through these experiences, we enter into the courts of wisdom where a modest word may have profound meaning.

It is with modest words of wisdom that I try to speak in this book. Boldly, but not brashly, I dare to give the book the title, "The Posterity Gospel." It is more than a play on words. It is my protest against the attempts to define our spiritual legacy in terms of man-made wealth rather than God-given wisdom. At the same time, I am quick to recognize that any claim to wisdom is a show of arrogance. Like Job, the gift of wisdom comes when we shut our mouth before the fear of the Lord and, like Galileo, confess that the bits of wisdom we claim are like pebbles that we pick up along the seashore of God’s immense sea. So, let the chapters of this book be read as pebbles of wisdom smoothed by the waves of time and washed up on the beach of experience. One by one, we will pick them up, behold their beauty, and pass them on to the next generation.