

# GOD'S WORD FOR YOU

*AN INVITATION  
TO FIND THE NOURISHMENT  
YOUR SOUL NEEDS*



## CHARLES R. SWINDOLL



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NOURISHMENT YOUR SOUL NEEDS



CHARLES R.  
SWINDOLL

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*God's Word for You: An Invitation to Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs*

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Content taken from *Searching the Scriptures* by Charles R. Swindoll, published in 2016 by Tyndale House Publishers under ISBN 978-1-4143-8066-7.

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Designed by Beth Sparkman

Edited by Stephanie Rische

Published in association with Yates & Yates, LLP ([www.yates2.com](http://www.yates2.com)).

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ISBN 978-1-4964-3022-9

Printed in China

24	23	22	21	20	19	18
7	6	5	4	3	2	1

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# INTRODUCTION

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**F**OR MORE THAN SIXTY YEARS I have cultivated a love for the Bible and have pursued an understanding of it. My purpose in writing this book is to help you do the same.

First, I'd like to offer an explanation of how this love affair started. As early as my late teens, I was drawn to the truths of God's Word and captivated by its wisdom—in large part because I was reared by a mother and a father who believed in God and respected the Scriptures. They used the Bible's counsel as a guideline for our home, often quoting

from its pages as my older brother, Orville; my older sister, Luci; and I were growing up.

Having grown up in that type of environment, I was interested in cultivating a relationship with a woman who had standards similar to mine. When Cynthia and I met, I quickly realized that she was the one, and we found a mutual interest in digging into the Scriptures. We regularly attended Bible studies together in order to establish our home on the rock-solid foundation of the Bible.

Shortly after we were married, I had a sixteen-month stint overseas with the Marine Corps, where I intensified my study of the Bible, thanks to a man named Bob Newkirk, a representative of the Navigators. It became clear to me during that time that I should pursue an even deeper study of Scripture at a seminary. Within weeks after my discharge from the Marine Corps, in the summer of 1959, Cynthia and I were on our way to Dallas Theological Seminary.

It was during that time that I became acquainted with Dr. Howard G. Hendricks, who taught a course called Bible Study Methods. Even though I had been a student of the Bible since my late-teen years, I began to realize how incomplete my approach to the Scriptures had been. Thanks to

what I learned in this magnificent course of study from “Prof” Hendricks, I finally discovered how to engage in a meaningful and reliable process of searching the Scriptures.

For me, opening up God’s Word became like a banquet feast. Because these principles have served me so well for more than fifty years of ministry, I want to pass them on to others—*including you*. As a result of learning them and putting them into practice, you, too, can know the fulfillment of opening the pages of your Bible without feeling fearful or intimidated. You, too, can share confidently with others what you glean from your study of the Scriptures.

This book includes thirty daily readings to help you begin to study and apply Scripture. They will give you an overview of the Bible as well as an understanding of why God’s Word is as vital to us as breathing.

The process of getting God’s Word into your head and heart is like passing a baton in a relay. The aging missionary Paul wrote these words to Timothy: “Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others” (2 Timothy 2:2). God’s design is to equip us to search the Scriptures on our own and then



GOD'S WORD FOR YOU

to pass on the baton to others with great joy and quiet confidence.

God's Word is indeed for you!

*Chuck Swindoll*  
FRISCO, TEXAS

# A BALANCED SPIRITUAL DIET

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*The Bible is worth all other books  
which have ever been printed.*

PATRICK HENRY

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**N**O ONE CAN DENY the importance of bodily nutrition. Our energy levels, our ability to cope with life's challenges, and even our mental attitudes are directly linked to our intake of the right foods, eaten regularly and in proper amounts. If we eat an unbalanced diet or skip a meal altogether, we may feel sick or light headed, or we may become irritated, edgy, and even depressed.

The same is true when it comes to spiritual matters. Without sufficient and regular biblical nutrition, our inner lives begin to suffer the consequences. Our souls long to be fed, nourished, and energized by the Scriptures on a regular basis. When we fail to set aside time to digest healthy spiritual food, it isn't long before the consequences start to kick in . . . and it's not a pretty sight. We start to operate out of the flesh rather than under the control of God's Spirit. We become shallow and selfish, more demanding, and less gentle. We react impatiently, rashly, and angrily. These are telltale signs of inner malnutrition.

In order to make sure our souls are properly nourished, we need to prepare nutritious spiritual meals for ourselves. Delicious meals served in fine restaurants never just happen. They take time and a great deal of effort. The result is reliable: the meal

is succulent, and those who enjoy it are satisfied and grateful. Chances are good that everyone who shared the meal will return again and again.

This is precisely the pattern we need to follow when we come to the Scriptures. Before we dive into the Bible, we need to make the necessary preparations. It's not enough to have a pastor or a teacher feed us once a week; we need to be able to prepare our own spiritual meals on a daily basis. Are you ready to dig into the Word of God?

## REFLECT

*What is your background with Scripture? Is there someone who taught or modeled studying the Bible? What tends to hold you back from digging into the Word?*

*Study this Book of Instruction continually. Meditate on it day and night so you will be sure to obey everything written in it. Only then will you prosper and succeed in all you do.*

JOSHUA 1:8



# SOUL-LEVEL REFRESHMENT

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*May not the inadequacy of much of our spiritual experience be traced back to our habit of skipping though the corridors of the kingdom like children through the marketplace, chattering about everything but pausing to learn the true value of nothing?*

A. W. TOZER

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**W**E'VE ALL BEEN IN A HURRY at some point and grabbed fast food instead of planning and cooking a balanced meal. We barely stop to enjoy the food as we wolf it down on the go. It may satisfy our hunger for a while, but it provides little nourishment. Spiritual fast food presents the same problem. A quick glance at a verse or two on the way out the door doesn't give us long-term growth or satisfaction. Our spiritual food needs to be carefully prepared so it will sustain us and refresh us and satisfy the deepest longings of our souls.

While we long to dive deep into the things of God, it's difficult to carve out time to do that in our fast-lane world. We tend to dash from one event to another, not giving much thought to what has happened or what might occur . . . or what will happen as a result of what we're doing.

God doesn't want us to merely scratch the surface of life, unsure of why we're feeling so empty. He longs for us to dig deeper so we can find out what He may be saying to us in the middle of our busy lives.

This world offers so much in the way of distraction and entertainment—often to the point that we become numb to our need for soul nourishment. It's easy to spend our days seeking to be

entertained. But there is something that satisfies the soul much more fully: when we think deeply and nourish our souls with spiritual truth.

REFLECT

*As you look back over the time you have known Christ, is there any measurable difference in your walk, your growth, and your depth? As you've grown older, have you measurably grown up?*

*O God, you are my God; I earnestly search for you. My soul thirsts for you; my whole body longs for you in this parched and weary land where there is no water.*

PSALM 63:1





# GROWING UP IN GOD

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*The Bible was composed in such a way that as  
beginners mature, its meaning grows with them.*

AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO

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WHEN CYNTHIA AND I were young adults, we realized that if we remained at the church we were in, we would continue to be stunted in our growth. We weren't being challenged to learn; we were being fed milk, like babies on bottles. We determined that our wisest course of action was to break free from the tradition we'd been a part of all our lives and to seek a church where we'd be challenged to think deeply and begin to grow in our faith. We did that, and oh, the difference it made!

The writer of Hebrews was concerned that his audience hadn't made the decision to grow up in their faith. They were willing to remain stuck in the nursery: "You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food" (Hebrews 5:12).

Milk is a wonderful thing when it's placed in the mouth of a tiny newborn. But bottle-fed milk is not meant for adults. The writer of Hebrews comes to this eloquent conclusion about the believers he was writing to: they weren't growing, and they were responsible (see Hebrews 5:11-14).

Spiritual maturity enables us to discern right and wrong on our own. We learn to think clearly and correctly to determine what is good and what is bad. Such discernment isn't encouraged in a politically correct society. We are even discouraged

from using words like *right* and *wrong*, because everyone's opinion is supposed to get equal time. When we are spiritually mature, however, we don't have to accept that type of inaccurate thinking. Why? Because our senses have been trained to recognize both good and evil.

God calls us to grow up and mature in our faith. Only then will we be able to know what is right—and do what is right.

## REFLECT

*Spiritually speaking, are you drinking milk or eating solid food? Are you able to nourish your own soul? If not, what steps can you take toward going deeper? If so, who else can you help to dig into God's Word?*

*Solid food is for those who are mature, who through training have the skill to recognize the difference between right and wrong.*