

# STRENGTHENING YOUR GRIP

## HOW TO BE GROUNDED IN A CHAOTIC WORLD

### STUDY THREE

## Strengthening Your Grip on Encouragement

*Hebrews 10:19–25*

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*Some people just seem to have a knack for encouraging others, don't they? They sense when our spirit needs lifting. They sense when we are depressed or just downright discouraged, and they come alongside us with words of encouragement. Those words refresh us like a tall glass of iced tea on a hot, sunny day in midsummer. Encouragement, however, is not limited to just those with a special knack. God wants all of us to encourage one another.*

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

**A**FATHER opens his arms to coax his wobbly one-year-old to take a first step. A teacher commends the struggling student to urge him or her on to graduation. A crowd erupts into cheers as the bruised athlete runs the last lap. We all can encourage!

Every day they cross our paths—disheartened people limping through all kinds of adversity. A sense of defeat often creeps into the family of God. New believers' enthusiasm wears off as they struggle to take their first steps of faith. Growing Christians lose the heart to persevere in the face of trials. Even the feet of the mature stumble under heavy loads. But God has gifted all of us with something to help.

In our previous *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, we saw why it is essential for each one of us to get involved in God's eternal business. Now, we'll discover the *language* that keeps the Christian community healthy and thriving. Embracing the ministry of encouragement enables us *all* to help each other run faith's race and finish well.

*We can do it!*



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## PREPARE YOUR HEART

Prayer is an essential part of getting ready to prepare our spiritual meal. Take time now to express your dependence on God. Like the psalmist in his prayer, “Help me understand the meaning of your commandments, and I will meditate on your wonderful deeds” (Psalm 119:27), thoughtfully record your request to God for wisdom and understanding.



## TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Pastor Chuck Swindoll emphasizes four crucial steps for studying any Bible passage: *observation*, *interpretation*, *correlation*, and *application*.<sup>1</sup> Learning the context is essential for observation. So, read [Hebrews 10](#) in its entirety to grasp how our passage fits within the author’s flow of thought.

The letter of Hebrews was written to first-century Jewish converts who were suffering under Nero’s empire-wide persecution. Thrown in prison and their possessions confiscated, these discouraged believers teetered on the brink of giving up and returning to Judaism ([Hebrews 10:34; 13:3](#)). Hebrews puts an arm around these wounded believers and bandages their faith with truth about Jesus, who went before them in suffering and understands their plight . . . and ours.



## Observation: A Message of Encouragement

Carefully read [Hebrews 10:19–25](#) in different translations and observe the entire passage. Record a few of your initial observations below.

According to [Hebrews 10:19–21](#), what do these Christians possess that can’t be taken away?

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Observe *Hebrews 10:19* again in the NLT, the NASB, and the Living Bible. Why could they boldly enter heaven’s Most Holy Place?

According to *Hebrews 10:21*, what else does this community of Jewish believers have?

Having Jesus as their “great High Priest,” these believers could confidently do what three things, according to *Hebrews 10:22–25*? List these actions below.

*10:22*: \_\_\_\_\_

*10:23*: \_\_\_\_\_

*10:24–25*: \_\_\_\_\_

Write down the two ways they were to encourage one another in *10:25*.

Light is already breaking at the dawn of Christ’s return. Straighten your back, lift your eyes, tighten those weak hands, and strengthen those shaky knees! This present darkness assaults our vision of God’s promise, which can so easily sap our vigor. But the One who sits on His throne is our ever-present help in times of trouble, and our hope in Him is sure. Christ, our High Priest, made it certain.

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## Interpretation: Encouragement Explained

Believers have a great High Priest, whose sacrifice opens the door to God's presence. Look up *priest/priesthood* in a Bible dictionary. An online resource is *Baker's Evangelical Dictionary* at biblestudytools.com. Scroll down to the section titled "The High Priesthood. Special Obligations." Write down how Christ's priestly work is superior to the Old Testament priests' work.

*We have confidence that we can approach God directly and immediately with no blood sacrifice. Jesus Christ once for all paid that price.*

—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

In the sacrificial system, it was "not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins" (Hebrews 10:4). Jesus' sacrifice, however, did the impossible because He is the Son of God. According to *Hebrews 10:22* in the NIV, the Living Bible, and the NASB translations, explain the significance and meaning of Christ's sacrifice.

*Child of God, we are not held at arm's length by the Father. His arms are open, and the gesture is, "Come in. I invite you to come in close."*

—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

Write your own paraphrase of *10:23* from the NIV, the Living Bible, and the NASB translations.

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The Greek word, *katanoeo*, translated “consider” in Hebrews 10:24 NASB, means “to pay attention, notice, observe,” according to the Greek lexicon available at [billmounce.com](http://billmounce.com). The Message captures the spirit of the word, “Let’s see how inventive we can be in encouraging love and helping out.” The Living Bible adds, “Let us outdo each other in being helpful and kind.” What’s the implication for believers?

Our English word, *encourage*, is based on a French word that means “to put courage into.” Note the definition of *encourage* in the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*. The definition of the Greek word for “encourage,” *parakaleo*, at [billmounce.com](http://billmounce.com) includes the synonyms, “exhort, persuade, entreat, implore, comfort, console, to be cheered.”

Imagine coming to church not just to worship and to learn but also to *encourage* someone. It would invigorate your Sunday morning experience, wouldn’t it? Rewrite [Hebrews 10:24–25](#) in your own words based on what you learned about encouragement.

*Our desire in encouraging other people is to stimulate them toward excelling in greater love and increasing in good deeds. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*



## **Correlation: Encouragement Exemplified**

The ultimate encourager is God Himself. Compare [Romans 15:5–6](#) with [2 Corinthians 1:3–4](#). Note below the various purposes of God’s comfort and encouragement in our lives.

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In *John 14:16–18*, Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit as our encourager, *paracletos*, in Greek. *Paracletos* shares the same root with the verb *parakaleo*. Why is this name for the Spirit important for our ministry of encouraging one another?

Read *Proverbs 12:18* and *12:25*. Write below in your own words the simplicity and the value of encouragement.

Meet some of the encouragers in the Bible. Write the name of each encourager, whom they encouraged, and how they encouraged them.

*Exodus 17:10–13*: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Deuteronomy 31:7–8*: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*1 Samuel 23:15–18*: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Acts 4:32–37* and *9:26–30*: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*2 Timothy 1:3–7*: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Which of these examples inspires you the most? Why?



## **Application: We Can Do it!**

The crowning step of this process is application. As Pastor Chuck notes, “When we apply what we’ve observed, interpreted, and correlated, Scripture bursts to life!”<sup>2</sup>

Now, *consider*. Put your mind to it . . . be inventive! What are some practical ways you can accomplish the ministry of encouragement throughout your daily routine?

*Do you realize that some people are dangerously near the edge of defection? Do you realize that a word of encouragement given in due season will be what is needed to put them back on track? —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*

One suggestion is to observe admirable qualities in a relative, a church member, a classmate, or a coworker. Write down this person’s name and qualities, and then share them with him or her.

Another suggestion is to establish correspondence and offer small gifts with a note of appreciation at an unexpected time. Write down the name of someone to encourage in that way and create a simple plan for making it happen.

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Let's accept the challenge to “outdo each other being helpful and kind to each other” (Hebrews 10:24 TLB). Let's be true encouragers in the name of Jesus wherever we go and with whomever we meet. *We can do it!*

*In the body of Christ, think of a way to encourage at least one person every day. It'll change your life. I promise you. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll*



## A FINAL PRAYER

*Father, thank You for the Holy Spirit, our Paraclete, our Encourager. Thank You for Your precious Word. Thank You for teaching me or reminding me the value of a timely word in due season. Help me grow deeper in noticing and caring for others. Show me how to come alongside those who are lonely, timid, hurting, disheartened, or bruised. Help me whisper words of courageous love that You communicated to my heart by the death of Your one and only Son. In Jesus' strong name. Amen.*

## ENDNOTES

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, "[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)"
2. Charles R. Swindoll, *Searching the Scriptures: Find the Nourishment Your Soul Needs* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2016), 109.

For the 2025 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Mirlenda Noëlliste in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 1980, 2025 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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