

NOURISHED BY DESIGN

A 5-STEP DEVOTIONAL COMPANION GUIDE

Thank you for taking the time to explore this companion guide to *Nourished by Design*. These five steps are drawn directly from the key themes of the book and are intended to be used as a ready reference and practical implementation plan. While much of the content reflects what you'll find in the full manuscript, this guide also includes expanded insights and actionable tips not found in the book—designed to help you take the next faithful step on your health journey.

My prayer is that these reflections encourage you to walk in God's design in every area of life—especially in your relationship with food—recognizing that physical hunger is a tangible expression of our deeper, whole-person need for God. True strength for life is found when our daily habits align with His design, and we walk forward in faith, gratitude, and wisdom.

If this resource has been a blessing to you, I'd be deeply grateful if you would consider sharing the book with others and leaving a short review on Amazon. Each review helps the message reach more people—people like you who are longing for a deeper connection between faith and health.

With gratitude,



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STEP 1 FIND YOUR “WHY”

“Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.”

– Romans 12:1

Reflection: Before making changes to how you eat, move, or rest, take time to reflect on *why* health matters. Scripture never idolizes the body—but it does call believers to steward it faithfully for God’s purposes. The apostle Paul could have said, “Present your lives as a living sacrifice,” yet he intentionally chose the word *bodies* (Rom. 12:1), grounding his exhortation in the physical reality of our daily lives. Health isn’t about appearance or control; it’s about having the strength and vitality to live the life God has entrusted to you.

Questions to Consider:

- What are your roles in life?
- How are each of these roles advanced because of healthy living?
- Do you feel empowered to impact your own health journey in partnership with God’s design?
- What unhealthy habits—past or present—do you need to repent of?
- What limiting beliefs about your health do you need to overcome to start living according to God’s design? Here are some common examples:
 - “I don’t have the discipline to change my habits.”
 - “I have bad genes and there’s nothing I can do about it.”
 - “Poor health is just a normal part of getting older.”

Action:

1. **Confront and challenge your limiting beliefs:** Ask yourself, *“Is this truly accurate, or simply assumed?”*
2. **Replace them with truth:** Remember, your body is designed to heal when your cells receive the nourishment and support they need.

“For as he thinks within himself, so is he.” – Proverbs 23:7



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STEP 2 MEASURE WHAT MATTERS

"If you can't measure it, you can't improve it." – Peter Drucker

Reflection: Just as the Psalms measure days and the Proverbs measure wisdom, we can track data to inform wise stewardship. God designed the body with rhythms, feedback loops, and early warning signs. Biomarkers—like blood pressure, fasting insulin, ferritin, and mineral ratios—can reveal imbalances long before disease symptoms appear. Routinely “checking under the hood” helps identify what to maintain, what to improve, and how daily habits are shaping long-term metabolic health.

Action: Establish a habit of diagnostic testing.

1. **Blood Work.** Aim for semi-annual blood tests that include key metabolic markers. Markers marked with an asterisk (*) are not always included in standard physician-ordered panels, but are commonly available through functional health practitioners or direct-to-consumer services such as Function Health, InsideTracker, Gevity, and others.

- **Hemoglobin A1c (HbA1c)*:** Optimal: < 5.4%
- **Fasting Insulin*:** Optimal: 2–5 µIU/mL
- **Fasting Triglycerides:** Acceptable: < 100 mg/dL | Optimal: < 70 mg/dL
- **Fasting High-Density Lipoprotein (HDL):**
 - Men: Good: ≥ 50 mg/dL | Optimal: ≥ 60 mg/dL
 - Women: Good: ≥ 60 mg/dL | Optimal: ≥ 70 mg/dL

Note: HDL levels ≤ 90 mg/dL may, paradoxically, indicate dysfunctional lipid transport and should be reviewed.

- **Triglycerides/HDL Ratio:**
 - > 2: Strong indicator of insulin resistance
 - ≤ 1.5: Good | ≤ 1: Optimal
- **Comprehensive Iron Panel (e.g., serum ferritin, transferrin saturation, total iron-binding capacity)*:** Have this panel reviewed by an iron-literate health professional
- **Comprehensive Thyroid Panel (e.g., TSH, Free T4, Free T3, Thyroid Antibodies)*:** Have this panel reviewed by a thyroid-literate health professional
- **High-Sensitivity C-Reactive Protein (hs-CRP)*:** Good: < 1 mg/L | Optimal: ≤ 0.2 mg/L
- **Liver Health Markers (e.g., AST, ALT, GGT):** AST & ALT < 25 U/L (women) or < 30 U/L (men); GGT < 20 U/L optimal



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2. **Hair Tissue Mineral Analysis (HTMA).** HTMA complements bloodwork by providing insights into long-term trends in mineral status. This test is unique in that it measures mineral levels at the cellular level, often a better indicator of chronic deficiencies or toxicities. It's also less invasive and more affordable than blood work, typically needing to be repeated only every 1–2 years. This should be interpreted by a holistic health practitioner, preferably one trained in the “Root Cause Protocol.”



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STEP 3 DITCH THE PRIME CULPRITS OF METABOLIC DYSFUNCTION

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us” – Hebrews 12:1

Reflection: Just as “weights” and sins quietly entangle the soul, modern food-like substances can silently entangle the body. These ingredients—now standard in the Western diet—are deeply familiar in our daily routines, yet they are utterly foreign to the body’s design. Not coincidentally, chronic disease has become a hallmark of modern life, despite being rare in traditional societies that ate closer to the land.

Simply put, many of the inputs we now consider “normal” were never part of God’s intended provision—and they keep millions trapped in cycles of metabolic dysfunction. While some harmful agents—such as artificial dyes and fluoridated water—are slowly being reevaluated under new public health scrutiny, several major categories of substances continue to dominate the food system.

Action: Remove or greatly reduce these culprits from your diet:

- **Refined Carbohydrates.** Refined carbohydrates are any carb sources that have been stripped of the fiber, nutrients, and structure that accompany them in their natural state. This includes commercially produced flour, fruit juices of all kinds, and table sugar. These foods digest rapidly, spike blood sugar, and place undue stress on metabolic systems. Instead, prioritize whole carbohydrate sources like sweet potatoes, fruits, vegetables, and traditionally prepared breads made with freshly milled grains—always in proportion to your activity level. Repairing your relationship with carbohydrates is perhaps the single most important step in stabilizing blood sugar, reducing glycation and inflammation, and easing the burden on your metabolism.
- **Ultra-Processed Oils.** Often labeled as “vegetable oils,” “seed oils,” or generic “cooking oil,” these industrial fats include Dr. Cate Shanahan’s “Hateful Eight”: corn, cottonseed, canola, sunflower, safflower, soybean, grapeseed, and rice bran oils. These should be eliminated entirely. If they appear in your pantry or in the ingredient list of your sauces and dressings, toss them. Despite industry-backed claims suggesting these oils provide essential fatty acids (like linoleic acid), the logic falls apart when you consider that obtaining these fats requires intensive chemical processing and results in the creation of inflammatory byproducts. It’s hard to imagine that God’s provision for essential nutrients would depend on such unnatural means.
- **Pesticides and Herbicides.** Synthetic agricultural chemicals—especially glyphosate (the active ingredient in Roundup)—are now sprayed at staggering rates across millions of acres each year. These toxins have been linked to a host of chronic conditions, including gut dysfunction, hormonal imbalance, and neurological issues. Often, it’s not the grains themselves that are the problem, but the residues of what’s sprayed on them. When possible, opt for organic foods and consult the Environmental Working



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Group’s annual “Dirty Dozen” and “Clean Fifteen” lists to make more informed produce choices (shown on the next page).

- **Misguided Micronutrients.** Avoid common multivitamins (including prenatal vitamins), and these supplements, which are often recommended to people but may do more harm than good.
 - Supplemental Iron (including “fortified” or “enriched” flours and other processed foods)
 - Synthetic Vitamin C (i.e., ascorbic acid)
 - Calcium
 - Zinc
 - Vitamin D₃

Dirty Dozen (2024)¹: Conventionally growth produce with the *most* pesticide residues

1. Strawberries
2. Spinach
3. Kale, collard, & mustard greens
4. Grapes
5. Peaches
6. Pears
7. Nectarines
8. Apples
9. Bell and hot peppers
10. Cherries
11. Blueberries
12. Green beans

Clean 15 (2024): Conventionally grown produce with the *least* pesticide residues

1. Avocados
2. Sweet Corn
3. Pineapple
4. Onions
5. Papaya
6. Sweet peas (frozen)
7. Asparagus
8. Honeydew melon
9. Kiwi
10. Cabbage
11. Watermelon
12. Mushrooms
13. Mangoes
14. Sweet Potatoes
15. Carrots

¹ Source: <https://www.ewg.org/foodnews/full-list.php>



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STEP 4 FOCUS ON THE 5 PILLARS OF THE PLATE

“He makes grass grow for the cattle and plants for people to cultivate—bringing forth food from the earth.”

– Psalm 104:14

Reflection: God designed the earth to feed us well. In a world of fragmented nutrition advice, these five food pillars are common to almost all effective diet protocols, reflecting God’s good provision and serving as foundational categories for building metabolic health. They don’t just nourish—they teach gratitude, restraint, and joy.

Action: Build a diet based on these five pillars, and supplement as necessary for targeted support or for lacking nutrients:

- **Protein.** While debates often center around carbs and fats, nearly all health experts agree on the essential role of protein. It supports muscle repair, hormonal balance, satiety, immune function, and more. Yet most nutritional guidelines vastly understate how much protein is needed to truly thrive. A good target is around 1 gram of high-quality protein per pound of lean body weight. For the elderly, pregnant or nursing women, or highly active individuals, aim for 1 gram per pound of ideal body weight. For most people, this equates to 30–50 grams per meal.
- **Natural Fats.** Nature makes no "bad" fats. Period. Unprocessed fats not only add flavor but serve as a valuable, stable source of energy. Cook with coconut oil, tallow, avocado oil, or extra virgin olive oil (best for lower heat). Embrace real foods like grass-fed butter, the cream in your coffee, or the fat on your steak—with moderation and purpose. Fat is the most energy-dense macronutrient, so be mindful, but don’t be afraid to enjoy it as part of a nutrient-dense meal.
- **Fiber.** Fiber is a foundational nutrient for digestion, blood sugar balance, and gut health—yet most people get far too little. This is where whole fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts, seeds, and freshly milled grains shine. Aim for at least 25–30 grams of fiber daily, roughly the equivalent of five servings of fiber-rich foods spread throughout the day.
- **Fermented Foods.** These probiotic-rich powerhouses not only benefit the gut microbiome but can also elevate your meals with unique flavor and texture. Include 2–3 daily servings of foods like yogurt, kefir, kombucha (opt for low-sugar varieties), sauerkraut, kimchi, or naturally fermented pickles.
- **Essential Vitamins and Minerals.** While this list is not exhaustive, it highlights several key micronutrients that are commonly deficient in modern diets or play a critical role in supporting resilience against today’s lifestyle stressors.
 - **Vitamin C Complex:** Found in citrus fruits, kiwis, strawberries, and raw vegetables like bell peppers and broccoli. Supports immune function, collagen production, and antioxidant defense.



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- **Magnesium:** Present in pumpkin seeds, dark leafy greens, nuts, seeds, dark chocolate, and legumes. Supports muscle relaxation, sleep, stress response, and over 300 enzymatic reactions.
- **Electrolytes (e.g., Potassium and Sodium):** Bananas, avocados, potatoes, and beans are rich in potassium, while unrefined sea salt and mineral-rich broths help provide sodium and trace minerals necessary for hydration and nerve function.
- **Retinol (Real Vitamin A):** Best sources include liver, cod liver oil, cheese, butter, heavy cream, and egg yolks. Essential for vision, immunity, reproduction, and managing iron.
- **B Vitamins:** Especially abundant in bee pollen and grass-fed liver. Support energy metabolism, neurological health, and cellular repair.
- **Iodine:** Seaweed is the richest natural source. Additional support comes from seafood, dairy, and eggs. Crucial for thyroid hormone production and metabolic regulation.
- **Copper:** Found in organ meats (especially liver and kidney), shellfish, cocoa, nuts, seeds, and whole grains. Works synergistically with iron and supports mitochondrial health.
- **Selenium:** Just 2 Brazil nuts per day should provide sufficient selenium. Also found in seafood, organ meats, eggs, and whole grains. Key for thyroid function and antioxidant protection.
- **Zinc:** Rich in shellfish, red meat, poultry, nuts, seeds, and dairy products. Important for immunity, wound healing, and hormone production.
- **Boron:** Found in avocados, as well as many fruits, vegetables, nuts, and legumes. Supports bone health, hormone balance, and nutrient absorption.
- **Foundational Supplements.** These supplements provide essential nutrients commonly lacking in the Western diet and offer broad support for metabolic health. Most people will benefit from including some or all of the following:
 - **Magnesium:** ~ Aim for approximately 3–5 mg of elemental magnesium per pound of body weight per day, preferably in bioavailable forms such as magnesium malate or magnesium bisglycinate.
 - **Vitamin C Complex:** Take 300–500 mg daily from high-quality whole-food sources—not synthetic ascorbic acid—to support immune function, collagen production, and antioxidant defense.
 - **Electrolytes:** Supplement as needed to achieve 3,000–6,000 mg of sodium per day, depending on taste, climate, and activity level. Balance with adequate potassium and avoid added sugars. Redmond’s Re-Lyte and LMNT are top-quality options.
 - **Cod Liver Oil:** Take ~1 tsp daily to support vitamin A (retinol), EPA, and DHA. Nordic Naturals offers palatable, high-quality varieties.



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- **Bee Pollen:** Consume 1–3 tsp daily, added to smoothies, yogurt, or oatmeal, for a rich source of B vitamins, enzymes, and antioxidants.
- **Other Supplements to Consider.** These additional options help fill dietary gaps, especially for those with specific needs or dietary restrictions:
 - **Protein Powder:** Use as needed to meet daily protein goals. Choose minimally processed options with clean, whole-food ingredients, whether plant-based or animal-based.
 - **Desiccated Beef Organs:** Ideal for those who don't regularly eat organ meats. Grass-fed organ supplements offer a highly bioavailable source of vitamins and minerals.
 - **Collagen:** Support joint, skin, and gut health with high-quality bone broth or minimally processed collagen powders.
 - **Basil Seeds:** Excellent for boosting fiber and omega-3 fatty acid intake. Take 1–2 tbsp daily, hydrated in beverages, overnight oats, or puddings.



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STEP 5 EAT EUCHARISTICALLY

“If you receive them well, you are what you receive.” – Augustine

Reflection: To eat Eucharistically is to eat with the understanding that food is one of the most potent reminders that life comes to us as a gift, and it’s our job to receive it well. Your food should be a testament to the love of the Creator, causing a delight that spills over into genuine thanksgiving. It should also remind you that you are only a part of complex web of creation, and that the logic of this grand design includes the contingency that your flourishing depends on the mutual flourishing of countless people, plants, animals, and microbes.

Action: Reflect on and become familiar with some pre-meal blessings from church history.

- **Martin Luther – Traditional German Blessing²**

“The eyes of all look to You, O Lord, and You give them their food in due season.

You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.

Bless us, O Lord, and these Your gifts, which we receive from Your bountiful goodness, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.”

(Combines Psalm 145:15–16 with a classic Reformation blessing)

- **Augustine – A Heart-Oriented Thanksgiving³**

“O Lord, You feed us daily with the bread of life.

May we hunger more for Your Word than for this world’s bread,

and in partaking of this food, may we not forget the Giver.

Let our hearts be filled with gratitude and our lives with praise.

Through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

(Attributed to Augustine’s writings and paraphrased into meal format.)

- **John Calvin – Simple Table Prayer⁴**

“O Lord, as we are about to take this food,

grant us also the spiritual nourishment of Your Word.

May this meal strengthen our bodies for service

and our hearts for obedience to Your will.

In Jesus’ name. Amen.”

(Reflects Calvin’s theology of physical and spiritual nourishment working together.)

² *Luther’s Small Catechism* (1529), “Table Blessings” section.

³ This is not a direct Augustine quote but is loosely paraphrased from themes in *Confessions* and *Sermons on the New Testament*.

⁴ This is not a direct Calvin quote, but a Theological paraphrase based on Calvin’s views in the *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (esp. 4.17.44)



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- **Traditional Hebrew Blessing (adapted)⁵**

“Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the universe,
who brings forth bread from the earth.
We thank You for Your provision and goodness.”

(This blessing—“Baruch atah Adonai...”—was likely prayed by Jesus Himself and remains a foundation for Eucharistic imagery.)

- **Puritan Table Blessing⁶**

“Lord, bless this food to our use and us to Your service.
Let it nourish our bodies, even as Your Word nourishes our souls.
May we eat with gratitude, and live with purpose.
Through Jesus Christ, our Bread of Life. Amen.”

(Reflects the Puritan desire for simplicity, gratitude, and sanctification.)

Action: Consider how you can support brands that are doing things the right way. While building a relationship with a local farmer is always ideal, many regional and national brands are also producing high-quality, ethically sourced foods. Below is a curated list of some of the best regenerative, organic, and pasture-raised food and supplement companies—each committed to providing nutrient-dense products rooted in integrity and sustainability.

- **Meat & Animal Products**

- **Wild Pastures:** Monthly subscription boxes of 100% grass-fed beef, pasture-raised chicken, and pork sourced from regenerative farms. Partnered with Paleovalley.
- **Polyface Farm:** Joel Salatin’s iconic farm offering regenerative beef, chicken, pork, and eggs, available via pickup or regional delivery. Model of local, chemical-free, rotational grazing.
- **White Oak Pastures:** Regenerative Georgia farm offering a wide variety of grass-fed meats, tallow products, pet foods, and artisan goods. Also offers tours and education.
- **Force of Nature Meats:** Offers regenerative beef, bison, elk, venison, wild boar, and ancestral blends. Ships nationwide.
- **REP Provisions:** Regenerative ranch providing meat boxes, jerky, and snack sticks. Focus on soil regeneration and carbon sequestration.
- **Seven Sons:** A family-owned farm offering pasture-raised beef, pork, poultry, and eggs from animals raised regeneratively without GMOs, antibiotics, or hormones.

⁵ HaMotzi, the traditional Jewish blessing over bread

⁶ While not attributed to a specific author, this form of blessing is consistent with prayers found in *The Valley of Vision* (ed. Arthur Bennett) and the writings of Richard Baxter and other Puritans.



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- **Kalona SuperNatural:** Organic, minimally processed milk, kefir, butter, cream, and yogurt from Amish and Mennonite family farms using traditional practices. While local, raw dairy is the best option, their low-temp pasteurized and non-homogenized options are a good runner-up.

- **Snacks & Supplements**

- **Paleovalley:** Offers 100% grass-fed beef sticks, organ complex supplements, turmeric complex, vitamin C complex, bone broth protein, and more. Clean, transparent sourcing and no fillers.
- **Just Ingredients:** Offers clean, non-toxic supplements, protein powders, and personal care products made with whole-food, ethically sourced ingredients—designed to support health without compromise.
- **Ancestral Supplements:** Offers freeze-dried, grass-fed organ meat capsules from New Zealand cattle to support targeted, ancestral-based nutrition.
- **Heart & Soil:** Desiccated organ supplements (liver, heart, bone marrow, thyroid support) from grass-fed cattle. Founded by Dr. Paul Saladino.
- **Kettle & Fire:** Offers slow-simmered bone broths and soups made from grass-fed bones and organic ingredients, supporting gut health, joint function, and whole-body nourishment.
- **Lesser Evil:** Offers organic, minimally processed snacks like popcorn and paleo-friendly puffs, made with simple ingredients and cooked in healthy fats like coconut oil.
- **Siete Foods:** A family-owned, mission-driven company offering grain-free chips and tortillas made with wholesome ingredients.

- **Plant-Based & Specialty Foods**

- **Zen Basil:** Unique basil seed-based hydration drinks and powders. High in fiber, omega-3s, and polyphenols. Organic and gut-friendly.
- **Azure Standard:** Family-owned bulk food co-op with organic grains, legumes, raw dairy, oils, pantry items, and clean household products. Delivers by truck route.
- **Bread Beckers:** Sue Becker's famous cooking store in Woodstock, GA sources high-quality grains and other ingredients.
- **Redmond's Real Salt:** Offers unrefined, ancient sea salt, electrolyte powders, and other products mined in Utah, free from additives and rich in naturally occurring trace minerals—an ideal whole-food alternative to modern processed salt.
- **Seven Weeks Coffee:** A pro-life coffee company that sources ethically grown, specialty-grade beans while donating 10% of every purchase to pregnancy care centers across the U.S.



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- **Beekeeper's Naturals:** Offers clean, science-backed wellness products made from sustainably sourced bee ingredients like propolis, royal jelly, and raw honey to support immune health and cognitive function.

