



[2 Timothy 3:16-17](#)

(16) All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, (17) so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

New International Version

God's instruction is given so that we are well-supplied with knowledge, understanding, inspiration, and motivation to live actually and practically by [faith](#). Yielding to God's sovereignty is not merely the rationale for divine government. *Doctrine* means "teaching," and it is by means of these teachings that the great realities of our [God](#) and Savior are revealed to us. We are spiritually nourished by doctrine, and as we apply it, growth in the grace and knowledge of [Jesus Christ](#) occurs.

A couple of easily understood scriptures will help us understand how God's Word and [living by faith](#) work together to cause growth. [Romans 1:16-17](#) informs us:

For I am not ashamed of [the gospel](#) of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

Add to this Jesus' words in [John 6:63](#): "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life."

Jesus is characterized as the living Word of God. At the most basic level, like any book, the Bible is simply a collection of words. However, its words are specifically instructions from our Creator God who is Spirit and inhabits eternity. Because He lives and oversees our lives, the Bible's words are full of dynamic powers, if we believe them and use them. They will guide us to become like the eternal, spiritual God.

It is impossible to be formed into the image of Jesus Christ without His Word in us because we must voluntarily cooperate with God in His purpose in order for Him to do the forming. The forming must be accompanied by our knowing and understanding His will. We must never forget that Jesus says that truth sets free ([John 8:32](#)). God's truths set us free—free from ignorance of God and His purpose; free from the power of evil; free from the wiles of [Satan](#); free from human nature.

The doctrine of God's sovereignty is foundational to Christian life because, as we move through a life lived by faith, we must firmly, even absolutely, know where we stand in relation to Him and His purpose, or our human nature will rise up and resist conforming to His will. We must know that He is close, that He is love, that He is wisdom, and that He has power over every situation in our lives. God says through [Moses](#) in [Deuteronomy 8:3](#):

So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the LORD.

Notice how God's supplying of manna—symbolic of food and therefore implying eating—shows a spiritual need met in the wilderness. God's Word is just as essential to spiritual life as food is to physical life. Just as one must discipline himself to provide and eat physical food, so must one exercise discipline to seek, provide, and ingest spiritual food. If one will not do this, just as physical health will decline without adequate food, an inadequate spiritual diet will lead to spiritual weakness and disease.

God provides the Bible to promote righteous living and to motivate us to subjugate our carnal natures to His will. A major effect of [seeking God](#) and

grasping His sovereignty, then, is that it promotes humility by means of the admiration and appreciation gained from comparing our puny lives and characters to His.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[Fully Accepting God's Sovereignty, Part Three: The Fruits](#)

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