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# Why Do We Need The Bible?

## 2 Timothy 3:16-17

### Introduction

1. Have you ever noticed how readily accessible the Bible is in today's world?
2. Many of us have at least one bound copy which we bring to Bible study and worship or keep somewhere handy in our homes, vehicles or at work.
3. You can also access any version of the Bible on the internet (KJV, NKJV, ESV, NASB, NIV, etc.)
4. No doubt a number of you have a copy of it on your phone or tablet which also provides you with certain search capabilities.
5. The question I would like for you to consider tonight is this: "Why do we need the Bible?"
  - a. Why is it so important to us?
  - b. What is it about the Bible that makes it stand out from any other book you will ever pick up and read?

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6. To answer these questions, and perhaps some others you may have, I would like for us focus on something which Paul wrote in his final letter to Timothy.

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16–17, NKJV)

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"All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16–17, NASB95)

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for

correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:16–17, ESV)

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## **I. We Need The Bible Because Of It’s Supernatural Source**

“All Scripture is inspired by God” (v. 16a)

### **A. “ALL SCRIPTURE”**

1. The word translated “Scripture” (graphe) is used 51 times in the New Testament and always refers to some part of the Bible.

a. The entire Old Testament (Luke 24:45; John 10:35).

“Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,” (Luke 24:45, NASB95)

“If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken),” (John 10:35, NASB95)

b. A specific section of the Old Testament (Matthew 26:56).

“But all this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures of the prophets.” (Matthew 26:56a, NASB95)

c. A particular Old Testament passage (Luke 4:21).

“And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.”” (Luke 4:21, NASB95)

1) When Jesus spoke these words, He was referring to something which he had just read in the synagogue in Nazareth.

2) The “Scripture” from which Jesus read is Isaiah 61:1-2a in our Bibles.

d. Quotations from both the Old and the New Testament (1 Timothy 5:18).

“For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing,” and “The laborer is worthy of his wages.”” (1 Timothy 5:18,

NASB95)

- 1) "You shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing," (Deuteronomy 25:4)
  - 2) "The laborer is worthy of his wages." (Luke 10:7)
- e. A larger portion of the New Testament (i.e., Peter's reference to Paul's letters as Scripture (2 Peter 3:16).

"as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction." (2 Peter 3:16, NASB95)

2. Here, in 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Paul was referring to the entire Old Testament and probably also certain New Testament books, including his own writings, which had been written by the time he wrote this second letter to Timothy.
3. The only New Testament books written after Paul wrote 2 Timothy were 2 Peter, Hebrews, Jude, John's letters and Revelation.

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### B. "INSPIRED BY GOD"

1. This phrase is a translation of one Greek word, *Theopneustos*, which literally means "breathed out by God" or "God breathed" (*Theo* = "God" and *pneustos* = "breath")
2. The Scriptures find their origin in God.
  - a. They are not the result of human religious genius.
  - b. Neither are they great ideas which God simply approved.
3. In his second letter, Peter wrote that "no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." (2 Peter 1:21, NASB95)
  - a. "that supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit whereby the sacred writers were divinely supervised in their production of Scripture, being restrained from error and guided in the choice of words they used, consistently with

their disparate personalities and stylistic peculiarities”<sup>1</sup>

- b. “Inspiration was an influence of the Holy Spirit on the minds of certain select men which rendered them the organs of God for the infallible communication of His mind and will. They were in such a sense the organs of God that what they said God said”<sup>2</sup>

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- 4. This does not mean that every sentence of the Bible is true:
  - a. Yes, in the sense that the Bible truthfully records the lies and falsehood of its subjects at times.
  - b. You cannot lift a statement out of context and claim that it is true (e.g., parts of Job, Ecclesiastes, etc.)
    - 1) “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13).
      - a) This is commonly used for personal achievements (i.e., sports, business)
      - b) In context, Paul explains that he has learned to be content in all circumstances (i.e., hungry or full, having much or little)
    - 2) “Delight yourself in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart.” (Psalm 37:4)
      - a) Some have interpreted this to mean that will grant our personal desires.
      - b) Instead, David is saying when we delight ourselves in God, our desires will be those which conform to His will.
    - 3) “Train up a child in the way he should go, even when he is old he will not depart from it.” (Proverbs 22:6)
      - a) Some have interpreted this to mean that a child raised in the church will never leave the faith.
      - b) However, this is a proverb, a general principle, not a divine promise.
  - c. All this being said, when we take the Bible in its proper context, it proves

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<sup>1</sup> Carl F. Henry, *Expositor's Bible Commentary* [Zondervan], ed. By Frank Gaebelin, 1:25

<sup>2</sup> Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* [abridged ed., Baker], p. 77.

to be accurate and true record of the very words that God wished to record through the various human authors.

5. As a result, the Bible is totally reliable.

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## II. We Need The Bible Because It Is Useful For All of Life

“All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; ” (2 Timothy 3:16, NASB95)

### A. ALL SCRIPTURE IS . . . PROFITABLE (USEFUL)

1. Not only does Paul say that “all Scripture is inspired by God” but also that “all Scripture is profitable.”
2. This means that we must study all of both the Old and New Testaments.
  - a. In the Old Testament this includes the Law/Pentateuch (first five books of Moses), the books of history (Joshua - Esther), Poetry and Wisdom (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon), Major Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel) and Minor Prophets (Hosea - Malachi)
  - b. In the New Testament this includes the Gospels (Matthew -John), History (Acts), Paul’s Letters (Romans - Philemon), General Epistles (Hebrews - Jude), Prophecy (Revelation)

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### B. FOR TEACHING (DOCTRINE)

1. Scripture is useful for teaching God’s truth.

“Teach me Your way, O Lord; I will walk in Your truth” (Psalm 86:11).

2. God’s Word is the . . .
  - a. standard of truth
  - b. greatest source of truth
  - c. final source of truth

“The sum of Your word is truth, And every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting.” (Psalm 119:160, NASB95)

“Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.” (John 17:17, NASB95)

2. God’s Word conveys to us God’s wisdom concerning the great questions of human existence:
  - a. Is there a God? If so, what is He like?
  - b. How can we know Him?
  - c. Who are we? Where did we come from?
  - d. Why is there death and suffering? What happens after we die?
  - e. What does the future hold?
3. There are also principles and precepts in the Bible concerning all the practical matters we wrestle with every day:
  - a. How do I relate to my spouse? Others?
  - b. How do I raise my children?
  - c. How do I manage my money? Conduct my business? Make wise decisions?
  - d. How should I think?
  - e. How do I control my emotions: anger, depression, anxiety, impulsiveness?
  - f. How do I overcome temptation?
4. The fact that the Bible is profitable for teaching implies that it is necessary to study it.
  - a. God chose to communicate His truth in written form.
  - b. We desperately need to know the living God and ourselves as revealed in the Word of truth.

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**B. FOR REPROOF**

1. The Greek word for “reproof” can also mean to convict, to convince or to expose.
2. In the same way that a lawyer convinces a judge and jury of a defendant’s violation of the law, so the Bible exposes sin in our lives in order to convince us that we are wrong.
3. Why is this important? Because sin will ruin your life!

“The soul who sins will die.” (Ezekiel 18:4)

“For the wages of sin is death.” (Romans 6:23a)

4. It is only by exposing our sin that we can confess and forsake it and be careful to avoid it in the future.
5. It is also important that we are convicted of our sin because we have a tendency to justify our sin and blame others for the problems which our sin created.
6. “The foolishness of man ruins his way, and his heart rages against the Lord.” (Proverbs 19:3, NASB95)
7. If you are not using the Bible to confront your own sin, then you are not growing in righteousness as God would have you to do.

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### C. FOR CORRECTION

“But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth.” (Colossians 3:8, NASB95)

1. God’s Word doesn’t just show us where we are wrong, and leave us there.
2. It also tells us how to make things right with God, with others, and with ourselves.
3. It helps restore us to the proper path which God desires that we walk through life.
4. When we become aware of sin in our lives, it tells us how to . . .
  - a. confess it and seek God’s forgiveness,
  - b. be reconciled with those we have wronged,
  - c. overcome harmful habits,
  - d. break off harmful alliances,
  - e. mend broken family relationships.

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### D. FOR TRAINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS

“So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of

compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.” (Colossians 3:12–13, NASB95)

1. Once we are back on the right path, the Bible teaches us how to stay there and to grow spiritually.
2. The word “training” (*paideia*) literally means “child-training.”
3. This means that God teaches us how to deal with all of life.
4. Think about how you who are parents have worked with your children over the years to train them in various social graces, morals, relational skills, and other useful habits.
5. In the same way, God, through His Word, trains us in all areas of life so that we can know what pleases Him.

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### III. We Need The Bible Because of Its Final Result In Our Lives

“so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:17, NASB95)

#### A. IT MAKES US COMPLETE

1. “Adequate,” NASB; “perfect,” KJV; “complete,” NKJV, ESV
2. The Greek word, *artios*, means complete, capable, proficient.
3. Since God made you for His purpose, only His Word — not the world’s wisdom — is able to make us complete for that purpose.
4. The Bible will enable you to think and respond to all of life’s demands as God intends.
5. There is no way that a man or woman of God can be complete apart from the Word of God.

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#### B. IT EQUIPS US FOR SERVICE

1. “Equipped for every good work.”

2. “Equipped” means to be sufficient or fully qualified for something.
3. God’s Word fully qualifies us to minister to others.
4. Many of you through your own personal experiences in everyday life have found the principles and commandments in God’s Word to be trustworthy.
5. As a result, you can confidently share that truth with others, because you aren’t imparting your own ideas about life.
6. Instead, you are sharing the very words of God, which you have applied in your own life and found to be reliable.

## **Conclusion**

1. My longing for each of you here tonight, and for those either watching or listening to this lesson is that, through your own study and experience of God’s Word, you will find it essential in your life.
2. Ultimately, I pray that you will become a mature man or woman of God who is able to share the truths you find in His Word with others around you.
3. May this Word confront each of us with our own sin so that we seek His forgiveness and correction.
4. May it keep us on the path of righteous living which leads ultimately to an eternal home with our God.

[This sermon heavily borrowed from Steven Cole’s sermon by the title, *Why You Need the Bible* on [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org)]