



# Catholicism

Scriptures & Authority



# Resources

## Books

- “10 Most Important Things You Can Say to a Catholic” - Ron Rhodes
- “The Gospel According to Rome” - James G. McCarthy
- “The Roman Catholic Controversy” - James R. White
- “The Fatal Flaw” - James R. White
- “Answers to Catholic Claims” - James R. White

## Audio/Video

- <http://calvarysouthaustin.com/sermons/reliability-of-the-scriptures-pt-1/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL7CwA6quQSmnO3mgCHqZ2Qu0i2v-tMiTN>



# Scripture Alone



# Scripture Alone

## What Scripture Alone is not

- Not the assertion that the Bible contains all knowledge
- Not the claim that the bible is an exhaustive catalog of all religious knowledge
  - **John 21:25 NKJV** - And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.
- Not a denial of the authority of the church to teach God's word
  - **1 Timothy 3:15 NKJV** - but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.



# Scripture Alone

## What Scripture Alone is not

- Not a denial that God's word has at times been in oral form
- Not a rejection of every kind or form of "tradition"
- Not a denial of the Holy Spirit leading/guiding the church.
  - **2 Timothy 2:7 NKJV** - Consider what I say, and may the Lord give you understanding in all things.
- Does not claim there will be unanimity of opinion just because God has given us his word



# Scripture Alone

## What Scripture Alone is

- Scriptures alone are sufficient to function as the infallible rule of faith for the Church.
  - **2 Timothy 3:16 NKJV** - All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,
- All that one must believe to be a Christian is found in Scripture and no other source
- That which is not found in Scripture – either directly or by direct implication – is not binding on the Christian



What does Catholicism teach  
on Scripture & Authority?



# The Catholic Catechism

“I [Pope John Paul II] declare it to be a sure norm for teaching the faith...”

“That it may be a sure and authentic reference text for teaching Catholic doctrine...”

“Offered to every individual who asks us to give an account of the hope that is in us (1 Peter 3:15) and who wants to know what the Catholic Church believes.”





# The Catholic Catechism

**76** In keeping with the Lord's command, the Gospel was handed on in two ways:

- *orally* "by the apostles who handed on, by the spoken word of their preaching, by the example they gave, by the institutions they established, what they themselves had received - whether from the lips of Christ, from his way of life and his works, or whether they had learned it at the prompting of the Holy Spirit";

- *in writing* "by those apostles and other men associated with the apostles who, under the inspiration of the same Holy Spirit, committed the message of salvation to writing".



# The Catholic Catechism

**78** This living transmission, accomplished in the Holy Spirit, is called Tradition, since it is *distinct* from Sacred Scripture, though closely connected to it. Through Tradition, "the Church, in her doctrine, life and worship, perpetuates and transmits to every generation all that she herself is, all that she believes." "The sayings of the holy Fathers are a witness to the life-giving presence of this Tradition, showing how its riches are poured out in the practice and life of the Church, in her belief and her prayer."

**80** "Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture, then, are bound closely together, and communicate one with the other. For both of them, flowing out from the same divine well-spring, come together in some fashion to form one thing, and move towards the same goal."



# The Catholic Catechism

**82** As a result the Church, to whom the transmission and interpretation of Revelation is entrusted, "does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone. Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence."

**\*83** Tradition is to be distinguished from the various theological, disciplinary, liturgical or devotional traditions, born in the local churches over time. These are the particular forms, adapted to different places and times, in which the great Tradition is expressed. In the light of Tradition, these traditions can be retained, modified or even abandoned under the guidance of the Church's Magisterium.



# The Catholic Catechism

85 "The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone. Its authority in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ." This means that the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome.

\*86 "Yet this Magisterium is not superior to the Word of God, but is its servant. It teaches only what has been handed on to it. At the divine command and with the help of the Holy Spirit, it listens to this devotedly, guards it with dedication and expounds it faithfully. All that it proposes for belief as being divinely revealed is drawn from this single deposit of faith."

# The Catholic Catechism

97 "Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture make up a single sacred deposit of the Word of God"





# The Catholic Catechism

**119** "It is the task of exegetes to work, according to these rules, towards a better understanding and explanation of the meaning of Sacred Scripture in order that their research may help the Church to form a firmer judgement. For, of course, all that has been said about the manner of interpreting Scripture is ultimately subject to the judgement of the Church which exercises the divinely conferred commission and ministry of watching over and interpreting the Word of God."



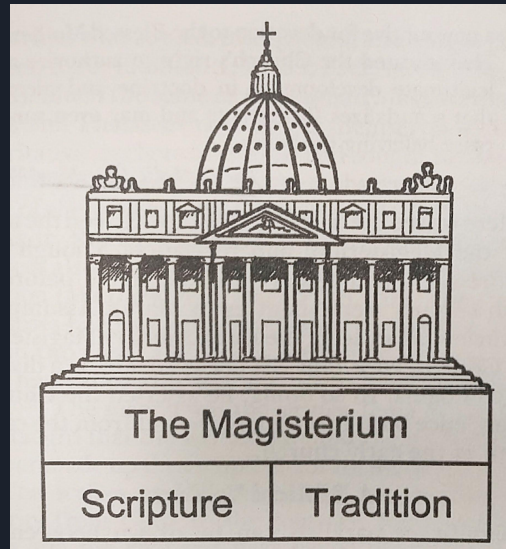
# The Catholic Catechism

**2034** The Roman Pontiff and the bishops are "authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the authority of Christ, who preach the faith to the people entrusted to them, the faith to be believed and put into practice.

**2035** The supreme degree of participation in the authority of Christ is ensured by the charism of infallibility. This infallibility extends as far as does the deposit of divine Revelation; it also extends to all those elements of doctrine, including morals, without which the saving truths of the faith cannot be preserved, explained, or observed.

# The Catholic Catechism

95 "It is clear therefore that, in the supremely wise arrangement of God, sacred Tradition, Sacred Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church are so connected and associated that one of them cannot stand without the others."







How does Rome defend  
Scripture, Tradition, &  
Magisterium?



# Scripture, Tradition, & Authority

## 1. Scripture

- a. Both agree in inspiration and infallibility of Scriptures
- b. Can argue about what books constitute Scripture
  - i. See apologetics audio link at end of slides

## 2. Magisterium

- a. Primary argument is inheritance
  - i. Christ gave teaching authority to church
  - ii. Apostle handed down teaching authority to successors
- b. Will be dealt with more deeply in coming weeks
- c. Summary
  - i. Misinterpretation of related scriptures
  - ii. Not found in scripture
  - iii. Historical/logical problems



# Scripture, Tradition, & Authority

**1 Corinthians 11:2 NKJV** - Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you.

- Look at context
- **1 Corinthians 10:27-33 NKJV** - If any of those who do not believe invites you to dinner, and you desire to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake. But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake; for "the earth is the LORD's, and all its fullness." "Conscience," I say, not your own, but that of the other. For why is my liberty judged by another man's conscience? But if I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of for the food over which I give thanks? Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God, just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things and keep the traditions just as I delivered them to you.
- Assumption being made that what is tradition is fundamentally different in substance than what is written down.



# Scripture, Tradition, & Authority

**2 Thessalonians 2:15 NKJV** - Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

- Look at context
- **2 Thessalonians 2:1-4, 13-15 NKJV** - Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. ... But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.



# Scripture, Tradition, & Authority

**2 Thessalonians 3:6 NKJV** - But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us.

- **2 Thessalonians 3:6-10 NKJV** - But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us. For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.



# Scripture, Tradition, & Authority

**John 21:25 NKJV** - And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.

- Equating “everything that Jesus said/did” with “sufficient rule of faith”
- Why must this be the case?
- Not what Scripture Alone is
- John give us reason for including accounts he did
  - **John 20:30-31 NKJV** - And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.



# Rome's Rejection of Scripture Alone



# Rome's Rejection of Scripture Alone

“Scripture Alone’ is not taught in the bible”

- **2 Timothy 3:16-17 NKJV** - 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.
- Remember, Scripture is God-breathed, making it capable and infallible.
- Paul is referring to *origin/nature* of Scripture, not *extent* of it.
- Scripture is able to *thoroughly (fully)* equip the believer for *every* good work.
  - No need to look to other source





# Rome's Rejection of Scripture Alone

“Scripture Alone’ has resulted in 30,000+ denominations”

- Not what Scripture Alone is
- Abuse of a sufficient source is not an argument against the validity of it
- Catholicism is not immune to this either
  - Once Rome speaks the fallible person must interpret the supposed infallible interpretation
  - A person makes a fallible decision to follow Rome's claimed absolute authority over JW or Mormonism



# Other Responses



# Other Responses

- What exactly is Sacred Tradition?
  - “Tradition is the word living continuously in the hearts of the faithful” - **The Church’s Confession of Faith**
  - “This deposit in fact is not an inanimate thing passed from hand to hand; it is not, properly speaking, an assemblage of doctrines and institutions consigned to books or other monuments...it must be represented as a current of life and truth coming from God through Christ and through the Apostles to the last of the faithful who repeats his creed and learns his catechism.” - **Catholic Encyclopedia**
  - “The way in which the faith is transmitted can take almost any form in the church: the sign of the cross that the mother traces on the forehead her child; teaching the basic prayers of Christianity, especially the Our Father, in the home and in religious instruction; living, praying, singing in the local congregation, into which the young person grows; Christian example in everyday life and Christian action even to the point of martyrdom; the witness given by Christian music (especially hymns and chorales), by architecture and the plastic arts (especially representations of the cross, which is considered a privileged Christian symbol), and, not least, by the liturgy of the Church.” - **The Church’s Confession of Faith**



# Other Responses

- Jesus' view of Scripture
  - **Matthew 22:29-32 NKJV** - Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God. "For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven. "But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."
    - Citation of scripture is enough to end debate; Jesus is holding them responsible for the revelations made by God to them
  - **John 17:17 NKJV** - "Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth."
    - Jesus never indication that the Church would rule over the Scriptures, or be the "mother" of them



# Other Responses

- What did Jesus teach about tradition?
  - **Matthew 15:1-6 NKJV** - Then the scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Jesus, saying, "Why do Your disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread." He answered and said to them, "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? "For God commanded, saying, 'Honor your father and your mother'; and, 'He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.' "But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother, "Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God"-- 'then he need not honor his father or mother.' Thus, you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.
  - **Mark 7:8-9 NKJV** - "For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men--the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do." He said to them, "All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.
- Parallels between Jewish view of tradition and Catholicism's view



# Other Responses

- Don't go beyond what is written
  - **1 Corinthians 4:6 NKJV** - Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.
  - **Deuteronomy 4:2 NKJV** - "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you.
  - **Proverbs 30:5-6 NKJV** - Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, Lest He rebuke you, and you be found a liar.
  - **Revelation 22:18-19 NKJV** - For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.



# Advice on Conversing with a Catholic



# Advice on Conversing with a Catholic

- Ask questions to find out what that specific individual believes
  - First Thursday – we talked to 3 individuals who claimed to be Catholic, however, after asking them a few questions about their faith, it became clear they didn't even know/believe what the church taught
- Refer to “Catholicism” rather than “Catholics”
- Try not to get stuck in the secondary issues (Mary, purgatory).
  - Keep the main thing the main thing - Gospel!
- Read the Catechism and quote it.





Questions?



# BACKUP SLIDES



# The Catholic Catechism

**67** Throughout the ages, there have been so-called "private" revelations, some of which have been recognized by the authority of the Church. They do not belong, however, to the deposit of faith. It is not their role to improve or complete Christ's definitive Revelation, but to help live more fully by it in a certain period of history. Guided by the Magisterium of the Church, the *sensus fidelium* knows how to discern and welcome in these revelations whatever constitutes an authentic call of Christ or his saints to the Church.

**88** The Church's Magisterium exercises the authority it holds from Christ to the fullest extent when it defines dogmas, that is, when it proposes, in a form obliging the Christian people to an irrevocable adherence of faith, truths contained in divine Revelation or also when it proposes, in a definitive way, truths having a necessary connection with these.



# The Catholic Catechism

**2039** Ministries should be exercised in a spirit of fraternal service and dedication to the Church, in the name of the Lord.<sup>81</sup> At the same time the conscience of each person should avoid confining itself to individualistic considerations in its moral judgments of the person's own acts. As far as possible conscience should take account of the good of all, as expressed in the moral law, natural and revealed, and consequently in the law of the Church and in the authoritative teaching of the Magisterium on moral questions. Personal conscience and reason should not be set in opposition to the moral law or the Magisterium of the Church.



# Council of Trent

## Fourth session

Furthermore, to check unbridled spirits, it decrees that no one relying on his own judgment shall, in matters of faith and morals pertaining to the edification of Christian doctrine, distorting the Holy Scriptures in accordance with his own conceptions, presume to interpret them contrary to that sense which holy mother Church, to whom it belongs to judge of their true sense and interpretation, has held and holds, or even contrary to the unanimous teaching of the Fathers...

...and seeing clearly that this truth and discipline are contained in the written books, and the unwritten traditions which, received by the Apostles from the mouth of Christ himself, or from the Apostles themselves, the Holy Ghost dictating, have come down even unto us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand



# Council of Trent

## Fourth session

...(the Synod) following the examples of the orthodox Fathers, receives and venerates with an equal affection of piety, and reverence, all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament--seeing that one God is the author of both --as also the said traditions, as well those appertaining to faith as to morals, as having been dictated, either by Christ's own word of mouth, or by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession.



# Early Church Fathers

For I choose to follow not men or men's doctrines, but God and the doctrines [delivered] by Him.

-Justin Martyr

We have learned from none others the plan of our salvation, than from those through whom the Gospel has come down to us, which they did at one time proclaim in public, and, at a later period, by the will of God, handed down to us in the Scriptures, to be the ground and pillar of our faith

-Irenaeus of Lyons



# Early Church Fathers

The holy and inspired Scriptures are sufficient of themselves for the preaching of the truth.

-Athanasius of Alexandria

Let this, then, Christ-loving man, be our offering to you, just for a rudimentary sketch and outline, in a short compass, of the faith of Christ and of His Divine appearing to usward. But you, taking occasion by this, if you light upon the text of the Scriptures, by genuinely applying your mind to them, will learn from them more completely and clearly the exact detail of what we have said. For they were spoken and written by God, through men who spoke of God.

-Athanasius of Alexandria





# Early Church Fathers

"... for the tokens of truth are more exact as drawn from Scripture, than from other sources."

-Athanasius of Alexandria

But since holy Scripture is of all things most sufficient for us, therefore recommending to those who desire to know more of these matters, to read the Divine word, I now hasten to set before you that which most claims attention, and for the sake of which principally I have written these things.

-Athanasius of Alexandria



# Early Church Fathers

Let us, therefore, foresake the vanity of the crowd and their false teachings, and turn back to the word delivered to us from the beginning.

-Polycarp of Smyrna

If custom is to be taken in proof of what is right, then it is certainly competent for me to put forward on my side the custom which obtains here. If they reject this, we are clearly not bound to follow them. Therefore let God-inspired Scripture decide between us; and on whichever side be found doctrines in harmony with the word of God, in favour of that side will be cast the vote of truth.

-Basil of Caesarea



# Early Church Fathers

Whence is that tradition? Whether does it descend from the authority of the Lord and of the Gospel, or does it come from the commands and the epistles of the apostles? For that those things which are written must be done, God witnesses and admonishes, saying to Joshua the Son of Nun: The book of this law shall not depart out of your mouth; but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written therein. ... If, therefore, it is either prescribed in the Gospel, or contained in the epistles or Acts of the Apostles, that those who come from any heresy should not be baptized, but only hands laid upon them to repentance, let this divine and holy tradition be observed.

-Cyprian



# Early Church Fathers

Let us not hear, 'This I say, this you say' but 'Thus says the Lord.' Surely it is the books of the Lord on whose authority we both agree and on which we both believe. Therefore, let us seek the church. There let us discuss our case in the Scriptures.

-Augustine

Let those things be removed from our midst which we quote against each other, not from divine, canonical books but from elsewhere. Some may perhaps ask, 'Why do you want to remove these things from our midst?' Because I do not want the Holy Church proved by human documents but by divine oracles.

-Augustine



# Early Church Fathers

What more shall I teach you than what we read in the apostles? For Holy Scripture fixes the rule for our doctrine, lest we dare be wiser than we ought. Therefore I should not teach you anything else except to expound to you the words of the Teacher.

-Augustine