

HOW DO WE KNOW TRUTH?

A Biblical Study of The Catechism of the Catholic Church:

Bible Answers to the Most Frequently Asked Questions

about Catholic Beliefs and Practices

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Passages of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* to Consider:

- “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.’ Each of them makes present and fruitful in the Church the mystery of Christ, who promised to remain with his own ‘always, to the close of the age’” (CCC 80)
- **“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’ (CCC 82)**
- “to the Church belongs the right always and everywhere to announce moral principles, including those pertaining to the social order, and to make judgments on any human affairs” (CCC 2032)
- “The Roman Pontiff and the bishops are ‘authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the authority of Christ, who preach the faith to be believed and put into practice’ (CCC 2034)

Scriptures to Consider:

- 1 Timothy 6:3–5 “If anyone teaches **a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ** and the teaching that accords with godliness, [4] he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, [5] and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.” (ESV)
- 2 Timothy 3:16–17 **“All Scripture is breathed out by God** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, [17] **that the man of God may be complete**, equipped for every good work.” (ESV)
- **Acts 17:11 “Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.”**
- 1 Corinthians 4:6 “I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, that you may **learn by us not to go beyond what is written**, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another.”
- 2 Timothy 4:2 “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.”
- **2 Corinthians 13:5 “Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?— unless indeed you fail to meet the test!” (ESV)**
- Galatians 5:19–24 “Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, [20] idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, [21] envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. [22] But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, [23] gentleness, self-control; against such things there is

no law. [24] And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.” (ESV)

- 1 John 2:3–6 “And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. [4] Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, [5] but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: [6] whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.” (ESV)
- Matthew 13:18–23 “Hear then the parable of the sower: [19] When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path. [20] As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, [21] yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away. [22] As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful. [23] As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.” (ESV)
- Ephesians 3:16–17 “that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, [17] so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love” (ESV)
- Colossians 3:16 “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” (ESV)
- John 14:16–17 “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, [17] even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.” (ESV)

Questions to Consider:

- Why does the Catechism claim a necessity for Scripture to be supported by Tradition?
- How do we know whose claims to authority are correct? How do we know if the claims of the Orthodox churches are superior to the Roman Catholic claims? What about Protestant traditions?
- Why is Tradition to be “accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence”?
- **How does 2 Timothy 3:16-17 describe the Bible?**
- Why is it so serious and dangerous to go beyond the teachings of God in the Bible?
- Why is there so much arrogance when talking through these differences?
- What does 2 Corinthians 13:5 say about salvation? How do we test ourselves according to Scripture?
- Would Galatians 5:19-24 be a good test, why?
- How would the book of 1 John help to test the genuineness of our faith?
- How does the parable of the sower help us to understand what salvation looks like? (Matthew 13:18–23)
- Why are conversations about our differences so important?
- How do we get prepared to explain our faith to others?
- **Who is our ultimate Helper in understanding truth according to John 14:16-17?**
- What other Bible passages would you add to this list? Why?