

The Sufficiency of Scripture (Part 1)

Rocky Wyatt | January 8, 2017

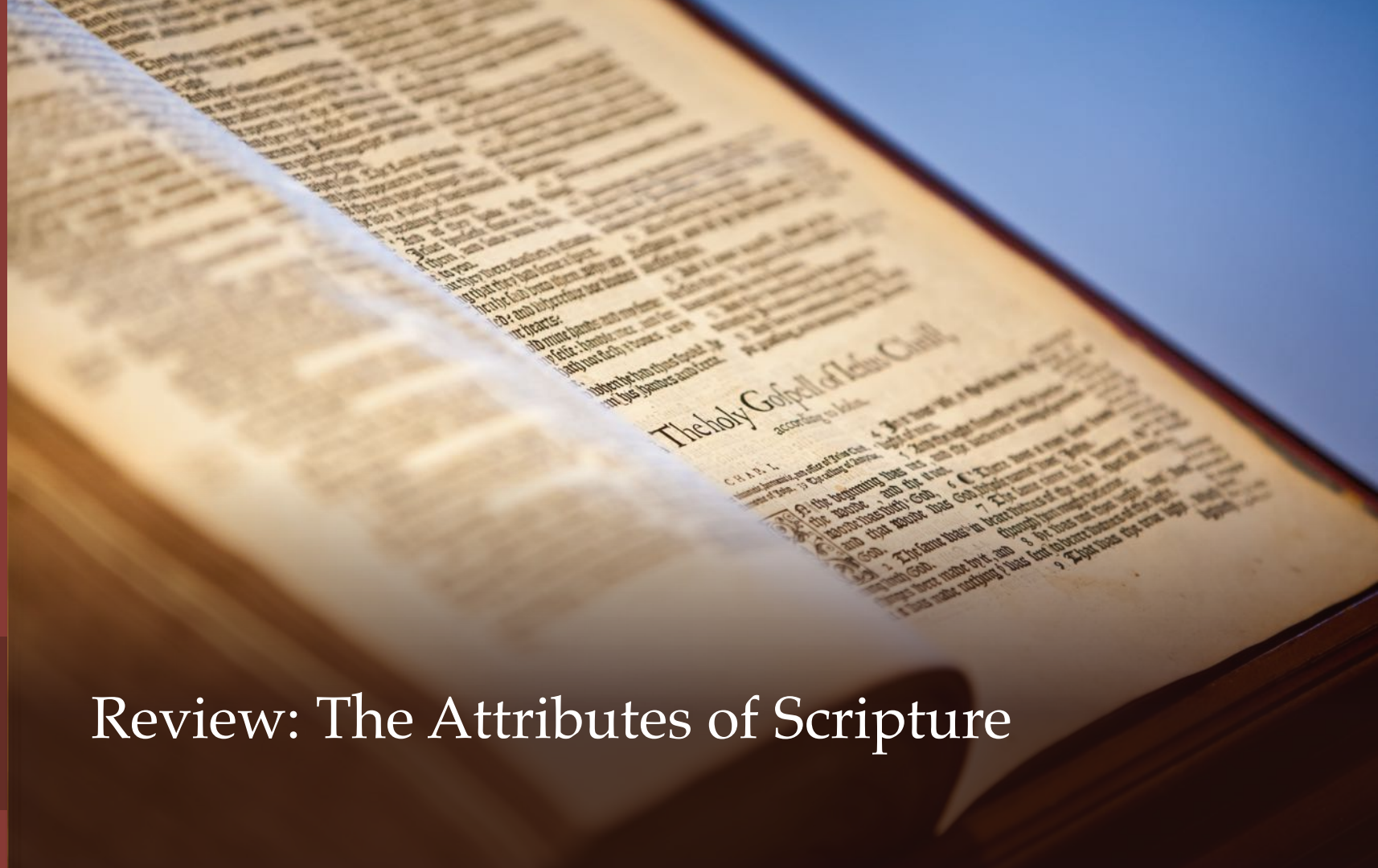


SECTION 1

Bibliology & Old Testament Survey



Review: The Attributes of Scripture



The Attributes of Scripture

- Authority
- Clarity (Perspicuity)
- Necessity
- Sufficiency



The Attributes of Scripture

- Authority
- Clarity (Perspicuity)
- Necessity
- Sufficiency



Authority Defined

By authority of the Bible we mean that the Bible, as the expression of God's will to us, possesses the right supremely to define what we are to believe and how we are to conduct ourselves.

- *Erickson*



Clarity (Perspicuity) Defined

God is fully in control of His communications to human beings. When He intends to communicate with a human being, he is always able to do it successfully. But another name for successful communication is clarity. An unclear word is one that does not succeed, that fails to accomplish its purpose. But we know that God's word always accomplishes its purposes (Isa 55:10-11) Therefore, his word is always clear.

- *Frame*



Clarity (Perspicuity) Defined

Isaiah 55:10–11

For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.



Necessity Defined

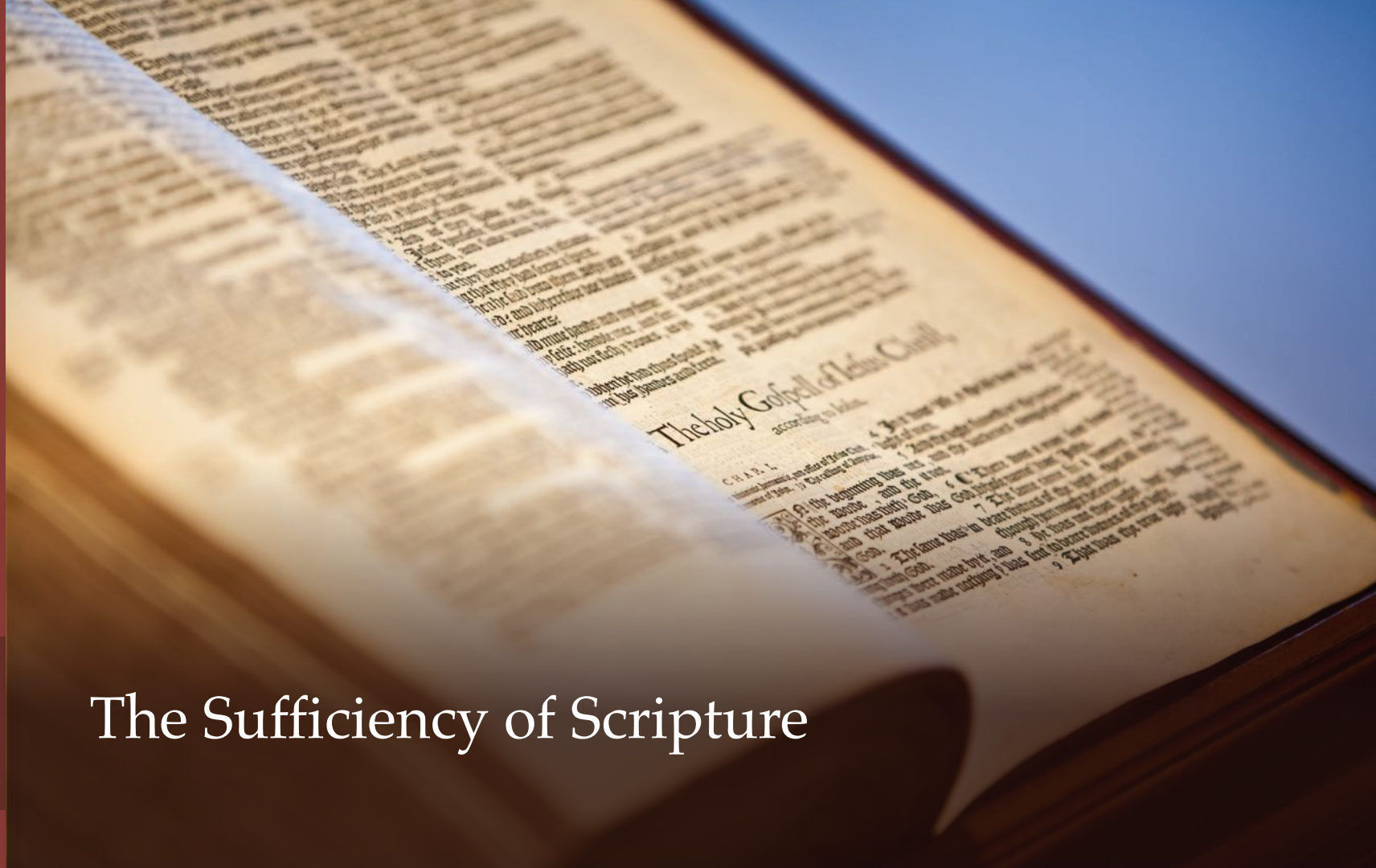
The necessity of Scripture means that the Bible is necessary for knowing the gospel, for maintaining spiritual life, and for knowing God's will, but is not necessary for knowing that God exists or for knowing something about God's character and moral laws.

- *Grudem*





The Sufficiency of Scripture



Sufficiency Defined

The sufficiency of Scripture means that Scripture contained all the words of God he intended his people to have at each stage of redemptive history, and that it now contains everything we need God to tell us for salvation, for trusting him perfectly, and for obeying him perfectly.

- *Grudem*



Sufficiency Defined

The Bible is a finished and complete revelation entirely sufficient for its divinely intended purpose. It need not be supplemented by reason, experience, tradition, other religions, or anything else. It does not wait to be sufficient until it encounters the individual nor does it cease to be sufficient when rejected or ignored by the same.

- *Grudem*



Sufficiency Defined

The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men. Nevertheless, we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word: and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.

- *Westminster Confession of Faith*



General Sufficiency

I use this phrase to refer to the principle that at any point of redemptive history, the revelation given at that time is sufficient. After Adam and Eve sinned, God revealed to them how they would be punished, and he also, remarkably, revealed to them the coming of a deliverer, a seed of the woman, who would crush the serpent's head (Gen. 3:15). This revelation, extensive as it is, is not nearly as extensive as the revelation available to us in the completed biblical canon. Was this revelation sufficient for them? Yes, it was. Had they failed to trust this revelation, they could not have used as an excuse that it wasn't full enough. In this revelation, they had all the divine words they needed to have. So that revelation was sufficient.

- *Frame*



Particular Sufficiency

When redemption is final, revelation is also final. Hebrews 1:1–4 draws this parallel: Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

- *Frame*



The Insufficiency of God's Word

...there is a sense in which we might say that Protestants believe in the insufficiency of Scripture: we acknowledge that Scripture is insufficient for many of the details of everyday life, such as motorcycle maintenance and cooking curries. It is even insufficient for the day-to-day running and good health of the church: we need elders, deacons and forms of sound words. What it is sufficient for, however, is for regulating the doctrinal content of the Christian faith and the life of the church at a principal level. That is Paul's point in 2 Timothy 3:16. In other words, to speak of scriptural sufficiency is one way of speaking about the unique authority of Scripture in the life of the church and the believer as the authoritative and sufficient source for the principles of faith and practice.

- *Carl Trueman*





Tradition and Sufficiency



Sola Scriptura

Sola Scriptura has to do with the sufficiency of Scripture as our supreme authority in all spiritual matters. Sola Scriptura simply means that all truth necessary for our salvation and spiritual life is taught either explicitly or implicitly in Scripture...



Sola Scriptura

...It is not a claim that all truth of every kind is found in Scripture. The most ardent defender of sola Scriptura will concede, for example, that Scripture has little to say about DNA structures, microbiology, the rules of Chinese grammar, or rocket science...



Sola Scriptura

...there are many important questions on which Scripture is silent. Sola Scriptura makes no claim to the contrary. Nor does sola Scriptura claim that everything Jesus or the apostles ever taught is preserved in Scripture. It only means that everything necessary, everything binding on our consciences, and everything God requires of us is given to us in Scripture.

- MacArthur



Tradition and Judaism

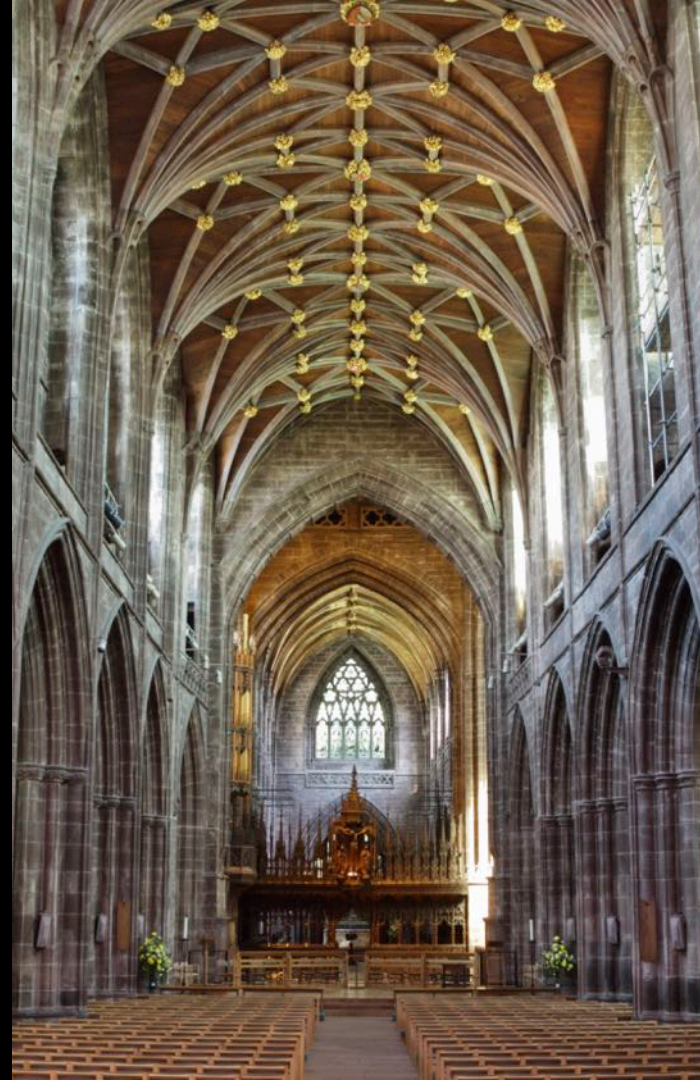
...traditional Judaism ...“follows the Scripture-plus-tradition paradigm. The familiar books of the Old Testament alone are viewed as Scripture, but true orthodoxy is actually defined by a collection of ancient rabbinical traditions known as the Talmud. In effect, the traditions of the Talmud carry an authority equal to or greater than that of the inspired Scriptures.

- John MacArthur, *Sola Scriptura*, P. 152



Tradition and the Catholic Church

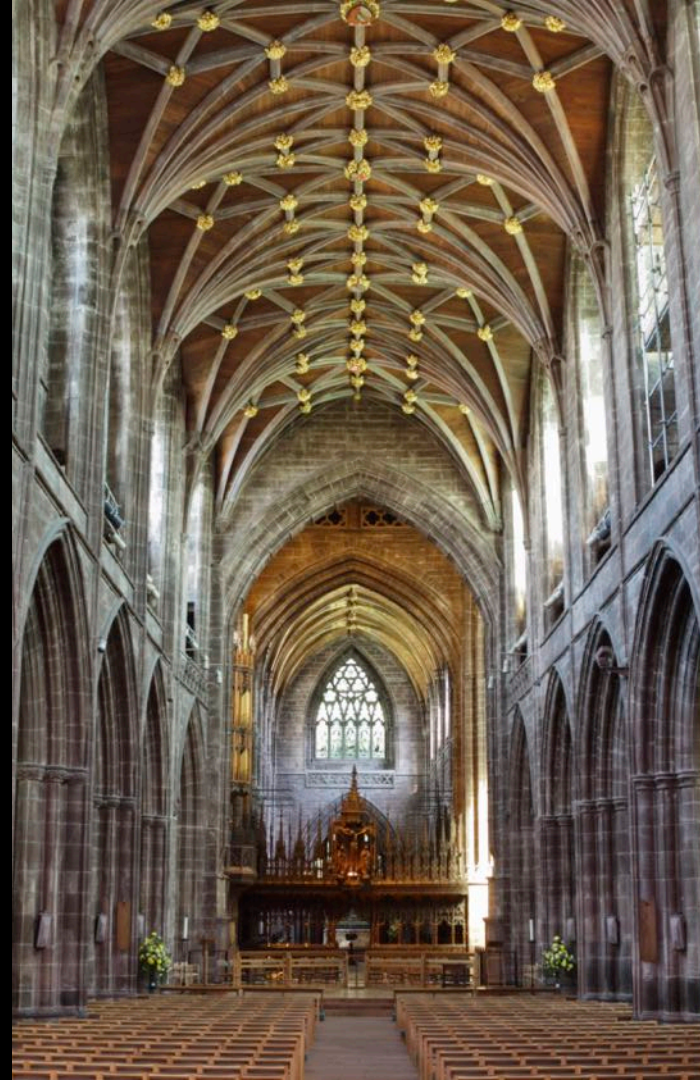
In traditional post-Reformation Roman Catholicism, Scripture and tradition are two sources of revelation, equal in authority. But again, in more recent Catholicism (especially since the Second Vatican Council of the 1960s), theologians speak of “one source” of revelation, which sounds better to Protestants...



Tradition and the Catholic Church

...Yet the one source is tradition, and this theology considers Scripture to be only one part of this tradition. So plainly Roman Catholicism continues to differ from the Protestant doctrine of scriptural sufficiency.

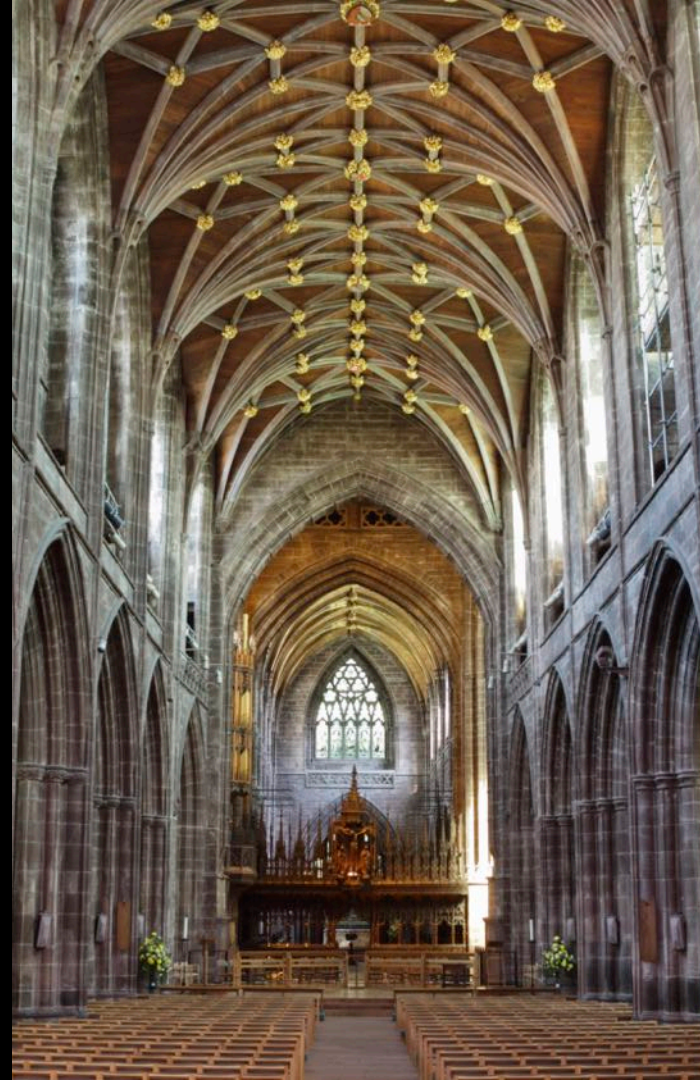
- Frame, J. M. (2010). (p. 233).
Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing.



Tradition and the Catholic Church

"The Catholic Church "does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scripture alone. Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence."

- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
page 82



Tradition and the Catholic Church

The Catholic Claim:

The Bible nowhere teaches that it is the sole authority in matters of belief. In fact, the Bible teaches that Tradition – the oral teachings given by Jesus to the apostles and their successors, the bishops – is a parallel source of authentic belief (2 Thes. 2:15; 1 Cor. 11:2).

The Bible actually denies that it is the complete rule of faith. John tells us that not everything concerning Christ's work is in Scripture (John 21:25), and Paul says that much Christian teaching is to be found in the tradition that is handed down by word of mouth (2 Timothy 2:2)...



Tradition and the Catholic Church

The Catholic Claim:

He instructs us to “stand fast, and hold the traditions which you have learned, whether by word or by our epistle” (2 Thessalonians 2:15). We are told that the first Christians “were persevering in the doctrine of the apostles” (Acts 2:42), which was the oral teaching given long before the New Testament was written – and centuries before the canon of the New Testament was settled.”

- *Karl Keating, Catholicism and Fundamentalism, p. 136*



Responding to Catholic Claims

2 Timothy 2:2

The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

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- *Karl Keating, Catholicism and Fundamentalism, p. 136*



Responding to Catholic Claims

Acts 2:42

They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer

1. There is no hint of apostolic succession
2. There is no hint or suggestion that they are passing on an infallible tradition with authority equal to the Word of God.
3. The apostles teaching was their rule of faith



Paul and Tradition

1 Corinthians 11:2

Now I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold firmly to the traditions, just as I delivered them to you.

2 Thessalonians 2:15

So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.

2 Thessalonians 3:6

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us.



The Danger of Tradition

Mark 7:3-7

(For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they carefully wash their hands, thus observing the traditions of the elders; and when they come from the market place, they do not eat unless they cleanse themselves; and there are many other things which they have received in order to observe, such as the washing of cups and pitchers and copper pots.) The Pharisees and the scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat their bread with impure hands?" And He said to them, "Rightly did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'THIS PEOPLE HONORS ME WITH THEIR LIPS, BUT THEIR HEART IS FAR AWAY FROM ME. 'BUT IN VAIN DO THEY WORSHIP ME, **TEACHING AS DOCTRINES THE PRECEPTS OF MEN.**'



The Danger of Tradition

Mark 7:8-13

“Neglecting the commandment of God, you hold to the tradition of men.” He was also saying to them, “You are experts at setting aside the commandment of God **in order to keep your tradition**. “For Moses said, ‘HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER’; and, ‘HE WHO SPEAKS EVIL OF FATHER OR MOTHER, IS TO BE PUT TO DEATH’; but you say, ‘If a man says to his father or his mother, whatever I have that would help you is Corban (that is to say, given to God),’ you no longer permit him to do anything for his father or his mother; thus invalidating the word of God by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that.”



The Danger of Tradition

Colossians 2:8

See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.



The Sufficiency of Scripture

2 Timothy 3:15-17

...and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 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.



The Sufficiency of Scripture

“God’s own representatives...fearlessly set God’s word against all merely human viewpoints. Think of Moses before Pharaoh, Elijah before Ahab, Isaiah before Ahaz, Jonah before Nineveh, Paul before Agrippa, Felix, and Festus. Consider Jesus, who spoke with the same boldness before the Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, Herod, and Pilate. Those who are armed with God’s Word, the sword of the Spirit, are free from the tyranny of human opinion!...



The Sufficiency of Scripture

...So Paul, in his famous statement about biblical inspiration, speaks of sufficiency as well: 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 competent, equipped for every good work. (2 Tim. 3:16–17) “Every” refers to sufficiency. “

- Frame, J. M. (2010). *The Doctrine of the Word of God* (p. 225).
Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing.



The Sufficiency of Scripture

- 1. The sacred writings**
- 2. Give you wisdom that leads to salvation**
- 3. Inspired by God**
- 4. Profitable**
 - a) Teaching
 - b) Reproof
 - c) Correction
 - d) Training in righteousness
- 5. That the man of God may be adequate**
- 6. Equipped for every good deed**



The Sufficiency of Scripture

2 Peter 1:2-3

Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.



Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

Ephesians 1:19-21

and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.



Seeing that His divine power ***has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness*** through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

Psalm 84:11

For the Lord God is a sun and shield; The Lord gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly.

Romans 8:32

He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?



Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness ***through the true knowledge of Him*** who called us by His own glory and excellence.

John 17:3

This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

Philippians 3:8

More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,



Seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness through the true knowledge of Him ***who called us by His own glory and excellence.***

Ephesians 4:1

Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called

1 Thessalonians 2:11–12

just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

