

Study Lesson Number 5

What is the Bible?

The Bible is the WRITTEN word of God, committed to His Church for the instruction and sanctification of mankind.

The Holy Bible is like a letter, and TRADITION is like messengers which God sends to teach us about Himself.

What do we mean when we say that the entire Bible is inspired?

When we say that the entire Bible is inspired we mean that its principal author is God, though it was written by men whom God enlightened and moved to write all those things, and only those things, that He wished to be written.

The men who wrote the Bible were inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Inspiration is a force that God puts into a man so that he can write what God wants him to write. Just as electricity gives light and power, so does inspiration give God's light and power, the light and power that come from the Holy Spirit.

This enables a writer to write just what God wants him to, though he uses his own language, his own style and his own writing skill. The power of inspiration keeps the writer from making a mistake. There are no errors or mistakes in the Bible. All that is there is TRUTH.

What is Divine Tradition?

Divine Tradition is the UNWRITTEN word of God - that is, truths revealed by God, though not written in the Bible, and given to the Church through word of mouth by Jesus Christ or by the apostles under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Has Divine Tradition ever been committed to writing?

Divine Tradition has been committed to writing, especially by saintly writers called Fathers, who lived in the early centuries but were not inspired, as were those who wrote the Bible.

Among the many holy men who have been called Fathers of the Church, these are the eight most important:

Those who wrote in Greek:

St. Athanasius
St. Basil the Great
St. Gregory Nazianzen
St. John Chrysostom

Those who wrote in Latin:

St. Ambrose
St. Augustine
St. Jerome
St. Gregory the Great

Has divine Tradition the same force as the Bible?

Yes; Divine Tradition has the same force as the Bible, since it too contains God's revelation to men.

By what kind of act do we believe the doctrines contained in the Bible and in Divine Tradition?

We believe the doctrines contained in the Bible and Divine Tradition by an act of DIVINE FAITH, which means that we accept them on the authority of God, Who can neither deceive nor be deceived.

Read from the Bible:

The perfections of God - Psalms: 28;32;45;102;135;138;143;144.

God can be known by reason - Rom. 1/18-23

The Bible is inspired by God - 2 Tim. 3/14-17

Divine truth comes also through Tradition - 2 Thess. 2/14

Discussion question:

Will God always exist?