

all but one of the sources of Truth called the Deposit of the Faith which have been preserved by the Ancient Churches of the East and West. In effect this impoverishes, and even squanders the wealth Jesus gave us and eliminates from your consideration and understanding much that is vital to knowing the full teaching of Jesus. It is like having only the first chapter of a five chapter book available to you as you prepare for a test over all five chapters.

We in the Catholic Church have guarded the Deposit of Faith from the beginning from being squandered or abandoned. In the second Century AD, Marcion sought to drop all but the books by St. Luke and some of the letters of St. Paul from the Bible. He was excommunicated for this. Bishops have been removed from their dioceses and authority for a lack of fidelity to the Tradition. The Church takes this SERIOUSLY, and so should you.

## The Catholic Church is not a Bible-Only Church

We Catholics need to understand our faith more. We need to know what is the source of our doctrine and know the doctrines themselves well. We need to study more and ask more questions of our priests and deacons to fill the lack of our understanding.

So, the next time someone asks you to a Bible study, or comes to your door and insists that you only use the Bible to discuss religion, tell them that unless you can bring the rest of your faith tradition to the discussion that you have nothing to discuss. The next time someone insists that you show them in the Bible the justification for your Faith, tell them that you reject the "Bible-Only" doctrine as un-biblical and based on a false interpretation of the Bible.

Tell them that you don't have to justify it there, because it is part of the Apostolic Tradition, not the Bible alone.

We have the blessing of the fullness of the Faith as given to the Apostles. It is not something that we should lay aside for the sake of keeping the peace. It is a treasure, not made of Gold, invaluable. Here are some sources you might want to get a hold of and add to your library.

- USCCB (1994), *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*
- Carl Keating (1988), *Fundamentalism and Catholicism*
- Scott Hahn, *Rome Sweet Home*
- Neuhaus, R. J. (1987). *The Catholic Moment: The Paradox of the Church in the Postmodern World.*
- Schreck, Alan (1984). *Catholic and Christian: An Explanation of Commonly Misunderstood Catholic Beliefs.*



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## Is the Catholic Church a Bible Church?



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## Well, Yes and No.

### The YES Part

The Bible is Sacred Scripture. We Catholics believe the Bible to be the inspired Word of God that relates the “honest truth” about the work of God in the world in His project which we call salvation history. As such, the texts of the Bible are good for teaching, admonishing, correcting, encouraging, inspiring, revealing, praying and worshipping God.

It contains the stories, poetry, letters, prayers, and Teaching of God, in both testaments, from which we can learn how to imitate or “put on Christ” and live in the image and likeness of our Creator. We can learn what is right and wrong and how to change our thinking so that we can produce in our lives the Fruit of the Spirit, and live in the power of the Resurrection. It helps us to identify who we are, how we were formed and for what reason we live. In short, it names us a Catholics in a way that no other source can.

### The NO part

But let us not be too narrow in our understanding of the role of the Bible for the life of the Christian.

The contents of the Bible are snapshots of different times and places where God has been working in the world for the salvation of all human kind. The revelation began with a desert people, the Hebrews, and con-

tinued to unfold through roughly 2,000 years of their history and the history of the early church, ending at or about the beginning of the second century AD (or CE). As such, the scriptures need to be read in the context of that world, those years, and in that culture in order to be understood. Additionally, there are many things that did not get into the Bible that Jews and later, Christians held to be equally important, as the old writings.

For example. When the 2 Timothy 3:16 that protestants use to support their theology of “*sola scriptura*” was written, there was NO NEW TESTAMENT. The Gospels were not all collected and some were not yet written. It says:

All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that one who belongs to God may be competent, equipped for every good work.

The scriptures that the author of 2 Timothy 3:16 was referring to was the **Septuagint**, which is the Greek version of the Bible used by all early Christians of the first century. And notice that there is no sentence in this quote that says Only the Scriptures can be used in this way. It merely says that all scripture is useful because it is the inspired word of God, and therefore a true and trustworthy source of God’s teaching.

### Sola Scriptura is not a Biblical Principle

There is no place in the Bible that says the Bible is the sole rule of faith. Indeed, the verse (above) immediately before the one quoted and used by Protestants to support their idea of *sola scriptura* is ignored or its meaning so twisted in their logic as to be unfaithful to the original intent of the writer of 2 Timothy 3:10 ff. The passage before it says:

**You have followed my teaching, way of life, purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, persecutions, and**

**sufferings**, such as happened to me in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, persecutions that I endured. Yet from all these things the Lord delivered me. In fact, all who want to live religiously in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But wicked people and charlatans will go from bad to worse, deceivers and deceived. **But you, remain faithful to what you have learned and believed, because you know from whom you learned it**, and that from infancy you have known (the) sacred scriptures, which are capable of giving you wisdom for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Here St. Paul says that his teaching is the rule of faith for the Bishop Timothy who was trained in the Septuagint from his “infancy”, which more than likely refers to his infancy in the Faith. And so St. Paul adds that the scripture is useful, too.

The Catholic Church, throughout her history, and beginning in the New testament Era, has relied on the Teachings of Jesus (some of which were later captured in writing in the Gospels) faith of the Apostles, the Teaching of the Bible and the Teaching of the Pope and Bishops in Church Councils as the source of belief. To diminish any one of these is to step outside of the full Tradition that has been preserved from the time of Jesus down to this very day.

Modern-day protestants would have you eliminate

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