

Scripture and Tradition



Understanding Scripture and Tradition

Overview of Scripture and Tradition

1. The "big picture" overview of Salvation
2. The definition of "covenant" and how it is the key concept that links the Old Testament stories to
 - (a) the mission of Christ and New Testament
 - (b) the continuing mission of the Catholic Church
3. How to understand the Genesis stories of creation
4. How fundamental Catholic doctrines on marriage and the family are logically based on a proper understanding of the covenant with Adam

Understanding Scripture and Tradition

Why study Bible history from the perspective of God's covenants with mankind?

1. With a better understanding of Scripture, today we as Catholics can enter into more fully the liturgical worship of the family of God, the Catholic Church.
2. The Old Testament can be understood as a sequence or series of covenants that God established down through the ages leading up the coming of Christ.

One Holy Family: From Adam to Noah

The Mind of the Church:

- The Old Testament is an indispensable part of Sacred Scripture. Its books are divinely inspired and retain a permanent value, for the Old Covenant has never been revoked. (CCC 121)

What is Scripture ?

- **Scripture:** The simplistic answer is that it is God's revelation to man through human authors under the influence of the Holy Spirit. First, how do we know what documents are truly inspired and which ones aren't? Secondly, who has the authority to declare a document as "scripture"? The answer to the questions is the same: men appointed by God to spiritually guide His people. The appointed shepherds of Israel were the Levites. Part of these were the Scribes and Pharisees... scholars of the Old Testament. They determined what was "scripture" and what wasn't in regard to the Old Testament.

What is Tradition?

- **Tradition:** is an inherited, established, or customary pattern of thought, action, or behavior (such as a religious practice or a social custom), a belief or story or a body of beliefs or stories relating to the past that are commonly accepted as historical

7 Principles of Tradition

- Contributes a sense of comfort and belonging. It brings families together and enables people to reconnect with friends.
- Tradition reinforces values such as freedom, faith, integrity, a good education, personal responsibility, and the value of being selfless.
- Tradition provides a forum to showcase role models and celebrate the things that really matter in life.

7 Principles of Tradition

- Tradition offers a chance to say “thank you” for the contribution that someone has made.
- Tradition enables us to showcase the principles of our Founding Fathers, celebrate diversity, and unite
- Tradition serves as an avenue for lasting knowledge of our faith ancestors
- Tradition offers an excellent context for meaningful pause and reflection.

Scripture and Tradition I

- Scripture and Tradition work hand in hand so that we can better apply and understand our faith. What must be done to understand scripture?
- Consider the Text
 - To whom was it written? By whom?
 - What are the circumstances?
 - What are the precise meanings of the words in the original language.

Scripture and Tradition II

■ Consider the Text

- What related Scriptures might provide additional insights?
- Meditation on the passage. Only as we meditate on Scripture, a verse, several verses, or a passage will you begin to see the underlying principles that can apply to your life.
- There is only one interpretation of Scripture, but there are unlimited applications. The Holy Spirit will guide you on all truth, and show you how to apply God's word.

Scripture and Tradition III

- Paul based sound doctrine on two things : Christ own words, the words lead us to Christlike living.
- Christ's commands help us to apply Scripture by finding the foundation in the Old Testament and the application in the New Testament Epistles.

EXAMPLE

- Jesus spoke of honoring parents in Matthew 15:4. His statement echoes Exodus 20:12. The Apostle Paul reinforced these concepts in Ephesians 6:1-3

One Holy Family

- In ancient Israel, there was no word for family. so it is suggested that the word used was covenant.

One Holy Family

The Five Old Testament Covenants

Old Testament Covenant	Made with:	Covenant included:	Biblical reference:
Number 1	Adam	Family – the foundational covenant which all others spring	Genesis 1:26 – 2:3
Number 2	Noah	Household	Genesis 9:8 - 17
Number 3	Abraham	Tribe	Genesis 12:1-3; 22:16 - 18
Number 4	Moses	Nation	Exodus 19:5-6; 3:4 - 10
Number 5	David	Kingdom	2 Samuel 7:8 - 19

Covenants

How to understand "covenant"

"Covenant" is NOT interchangeable with the word contract:

"Contracts" exchange property, goods, and services; "covenants" exchange persons

In a covenant you say, "I am yours, and you are mine."

* Covenant creates what type of bond? A sacred family bond

Covenants

- What is God doing in the series of covenants?
- He is "fathering" His family.
- He is trying to reunify this family, which has been broken by sin.
- When Jesus comes, He does NOT abolish the Old Covenant law,
- He completes and perfects it.

What does Catholic Mean?

- The Greek word for international is "Catholic."
- Jesus transforms David's kingdom from a national, political kingdom into an international, spiritual kingdom, which is the Catholic Church.

One Holy Family

The Catholic Church is the sacramental family of God.

It will accomplish what? The supernatural reunification of God's family.

How the sacraments unite us in the Catholic family

1. Baptism gives us the family name of the Trinity which is the eternal, original family.
2. The Eucharist perfects and strengthens the family bond by feeding us the flesh and blood of Christ, the second Adam.
3. In the Church, we become adopted members of the Trinity as our family

One Holy Family

Mind of the Church:

- God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life. For this reason, at every time and in every place, God draws close to man. He calls man to seek him, to know him, to love him with all his strength. He calls together all men, scattered and divided by sin, into the unity of his family, the Church. To accomplish this, when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son as Redeemer and Savior. In his Son and through him, he invites men to become, in the Holy Spirit, his adopted children and thus heirs of his blessed life. (CCC 1)
- [God's] plan...unfolds in the work of creation, the whole history of salvation after the fall, and the missions of the Son and the Spirit, which are continued in the mission of the Church. (CCC 257)

Catholicism and the Bible

The creation accounts—Genesis

What is the Catholic teaching regarding the Bible?

- The Bible is inspired by God, meaning God is the principal author and the human authors are instruments that God uses.
- The Bible has no error even in the history that it teaches, but Hebrew/religious history is expressed differently than we do today.

Biblical History

Differences between Biblical history and modern Western history include:

- Western history is sequential or in chronological sequence.
- Hebrew (or "religious") history is circular-not always in the order events occurred.
- Religious history uses symbols and figures to express the meaning behind historical events.
- Religious history uses different literary types (poetry, etc.).

Interpreting Scripture

Mind of the Church:

"To interpret Scripture correctly, the reader must be attentive to what the human authors truly wanted to affirm and to what God wanted to reveal to us by their words. In order to discover the sacred authors' intention, the reader must take into account the conditions of their time and culture, the literary genres in use at that time, and the modes of feeling, speaking, and narrating then current." (CCC 109-110)

Word of God

The Word of God:

John 1:1-3 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made." Col 1:16-17 [In Jesus Christ] "all things were created, in heaven and on earth ... all things were created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together."

New Testament

The Mind of the Church:

- The New Testament reveals that God created everything by the eternal Word, his beloved Son.
(CCC 291)
- The New Testament repeatedly identifies Christ as the new covenant representative. God engaged him in special ways on behalf of his church — every Jew and Gentile that God identifies with Christ. As we read in [Hebrews 9:15](#):

New Testament

- Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance ([Hebrews 9:15](#)).
- The fact that Christ is God's chosen covenant representative for the church helps us understand one of the most important characteristics of New Testament theology.

New Testament

- In other words, they were to love him deeply by writing his law on their hearts. But in the policies of the new covenant age, God promised to intervene in such a way that this would be a reality for *all* of his covenant people
- When we think of the kingdom of God across the canon of Scripture and across redemptive history, there's changes in the administration of it as you work through the biblical covenants and reach their culmination in Christ

New Testament

- Having seen that God administered his kingdom through covenant representatives, and specifically through Christ in the new covenant, we should turn to a second feature of God's kingdom administration: the appropriate policies that biblical covenants established for different periods of biblical history.

Old and New Relationship

- These organic developments between Old Testament covenants and the new covenant provide us with a third crucial perspective on New Testament theology. In addition to being Christocentric and focused on policies that were appropriate for the threefold unfolding of Christ's kingdom, New Testament theology was *based* on Old Testament theology.

Core of New Testament

- At its core, New Testament theology was not a new faith. Instead, New Testament authors applied the teachings of the Old Testament in the light of God's revelation in Christ. This is why the New Testament is relatively small. It assumed the abiding validity of the Old Testament.

New Testament Theology

- New Testament theology emphasizes that Christ, as the representative of the new covenant, experienced both God's curses and God's blessings.
- As we seek to understand the New Testament more fully, we must keep in mind that the new covenant in Christ wasn't just one small part of New Testament theology. As the last of God's covenants with his people, the new covenant deeply influenced everything New Testament authors wrote. God made a solemn pact with his people in Christ through the new covenant. And the more we understand about this new covenant, the better we will be able to see the most important features of New Testament theology.

Word of God

Word of God:

- Genesis 1:26-28 God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness....So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them..."
- Genesis 5:3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image and he named him Seth.
- Therefore, when God created us, He created us in a father-son relationship so we are truly children of God.
- What does "image and likeness" mean in Gen 5:3? To father a son.
- Therefore, when God created us, he created us in a father-son relationship, so we are truly children of God.

One Holy Family

2. We learn that human labor has a certain value, because work is not a curse but a blessing. We work in imitation of God for six days and rest on the seventh.

Mind of the Church;

- The sign of man's familiarity with God is that God places him in the garden. There he lives "to till it and keep it." Work is not yet a burden, but rather the collaboration of man and woman with God in perfecting the visible creation. (CCC 378)
- God's action is the model for human action. If God "rested and was refreshed" on the seventh day, man too ought to "rest" and should let others, especially the poor, "be refreshed." (CCC 2172).

One Holy Family

3. We learn the centrality of worship as a part of human nature.

Mind of the Church:

- The celebration of Sunday observes the moral commandment inscribed by nature in the human heart to render to God an outward, visible, public, and regular worship "as a sign of his universal beneficence to all."
(CCC 2176)

4. We learn that all mankind is one family of God.

One Holy Family

Four truths the creation accounts in Genesis teach us

1. We learn that all human life has sacred dignity from pre-born to the natural end of life, because each person is formed in the image of God.

Mind of the Church:

- Every human life, from the moment of conception until death, is sacred because the human person has been willed for its own sake in the image and likeness of the living and holy God. (CCC 2319)

One Holy Family

The Church is also the family of God in the eternal, everlasting sense.

- Mary - our Mother
- Pope - our Holy Father
- Priests - sacramental father
- Saints - older brothers and sisters
- Eucharist - family table

One Holy Nation: Moses, Aaron, Levi

God fathers his family through covenants

1. The three stages of Biblical history

Stage Name	Comments
Stage 1: <u>Natural Stage</u>	Religion built upon Nature: <ul style="list-style-type: none">* The father is priest, prophet, & king* First-born is successor-* Family is both <u>church and state</u>
Stage 2: "Levitical" or sometimes called <u>legal phase</u>	Starts with the Mosaic Covenant- <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Priesthood stripped away from fathers and sons and given to the tribe of <u>Levi</u>* Lasts <u>over a thousand years</u>* A "bureaucratic" interim arrangement
Stage 3: "Age of Grace" or sometimes called "Evangelical" Age	Not dependent on Sacrifices Dietary restrictions <ul style="list-style-type: none">* Instead, the <u>sacraments</u> binds God's family

One Holy Nation:

Jesus as the New Moses

Jesus' life follows the pattern we see for Moses and Israel:

Moses & Israel	Jesus
Moses—Almost killed at birth	Herod almost killed at birth
Israel-enslaved in Egypt	Escapes to Egypt
Israel-God's first-born son	God's first-born Son
Israel-brought through Red Sea	Baptized in Jordan
Israel-40 years in the desert; Moses-40 days fasting on Mt Sinai	Fasted 40 days in the wilderness
Moses-took 12 chiefs for 12 tribes & 70 Elders	Took 12 apostles to rule the 12 tribes & 70 other disciples (Luke 10)
Passover lamb must be eaten	His body must be eaten

One Holy Kingdom: Davidic Foundations

1. The Biblical foundations for the Catholic Doctrine of the Kingdom of Christ
2. How and why the Kingdom of Israel arose - and the three prohibitions Solomon violated to cause its downfall
3. The key components of the Davidic Covenant and how they apply today as God fathers his family through covenants

Davidic Covenant

- The Davidic Covenant centers on several key promises that are made to David. First, God reaffirms the promise of the land that He made in the first two covenants with Israel (the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants).

God's Promises

- God then promises that David's son will succeed him as king of Israel and that this son (Solomon) would build the temple. This promise is seen in 2 Samuel 7:12–13, " I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name."

House of David

- The promise that David's "house," "kingdom," and "throne" will be established forever is significant because it shows that the Messiah will come from the lineage of David and that He will establish a kingdom from which He will reign. The covenant is summarized by the words "house," promising a dynasty in the lineage of David; "kingdom," referring to a people who are governed by a king; "throne," emphasizing the authority of the king's rule; and "forever," emphasizing the eternal and unconditional nature of this promise to David and Israel.

One Holy Family

- The relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament reflects both the continuity and discontinuity between the Christian and Israelite faiths. Christians believe God had one plan for salvation that was revealed first to the Israelites and then to all peoples through Jesus Christ. The New Testament and Old Testament, then, tell one ongoing story of salvation. At the same time, the authors of the New Testament were proposing something radically new: Jesus' fulfillment of the Israelites' hope in God's promises.

One Holy Tribe

For the New Testament writers, the Old Testament was holy scripture. To tell the story of Jesus, those authors relied largely on the vocabulary and methods of reading scripture that already existed in the Jewish world. According to one scholarly estimate, the New Testament has more than 4,000 references to the Old Testament; thus the books of the Old Testament have been important for Christians and remain, in the words of the Second Vatican Council's *Dei Verbum* (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation), “permanently valuable” because they were “written under divine inspiration.”

One Holy Tribe

Many of these references are “according to the scriptures” and “fulfill what scripture said.”

Christ’s birth, for example, “took place to fulfill what the Lord said through the prophet: ‘Behold, the virgin shall be with child and bear a son’ ” (Matt. 1:22-23). He said his last words on the cross “(in order to fulfill the scripture), ‘I am thirsty’ ” (John 19:28).

One Holy Tribe

The key word here is “fulfill.” The New Testament authors, while valuing the Old Testament as revelation, saw Jesus to be the fulfillment of that revelation. For them God’s plan of salvation unfolded with the Israelites, then was added to and redefined by Christ. That meant the New Testament writers read the events of the Old Testament as looking forward to Christ as the Messiah of his people. For example: In the opening of Genesis, God spoke a divine word to create the world, so in the opening of the Gospel of John, God, in the Word of God, re-created and renewed the world.

One Holy Tribe

Fulfillment, however, does not mean prediction. While the first Christians saw in the Old Testament the anticipation of what happened in Christ, that does not mean the writers of the Old Testament were literally looking ahead into the mists of time and seeing the coming of Jesus. What they were expecting was the final fulfillment of the promises God had made to them, but when Jesus appeared most Israelites did not think he was that fulfillment. The writers of the New Testament, however, believed in both the coming of the Messiah and Christ being that Messiah.

New Testament Writings

Mark: Was the earliest of the gospels, he was the interpreter of Peter. He does not let you forget the Jesus is a suffering Savior and proclaims both penance and Good News. The teaching about God's Kingdom.

Matthew: Totally Jewish, exploring Hebrew Scriptures, Jesus as the New Moses. The Law can be reduced to one

Commandment: **LOVE**

New Testament Writings

Four Gospels:

Luke: Is a gentile , a physician, friend of St Paul. He stresses salvation. Shows that Jesus is a friend to sinners, and outcasts. He shows Jesus as human, sympathetic and merciful. He is also the writer of the Acts of the Apostles with St Paul.

John: His gospels are written with the most theological , dramatic accounts, symbolic. He emphasizes the now of Jesus. His words and earthly life, and the Risen Christ

Other Books

1. Acts of the Apostles
2. Letters of St Paul
3. The Seven Catholic Letters
4. The Letters to Hebrews
5. The Book of Revelation

In Summary

- What is the point of the New Testament?
- Christians see in the **New Testament** the fulfillment of the promise of the Old **Testament**. It relates and interprets the **new covenant**, represented in the life and death of Jesus, between God and the followers of the Christ.