

Necessity and Authority of the Holy Scriptures

Bible	Roman Catholic Church
<p>2 Timothy 3:16 “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and <i>is</i> profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:”</p> <p>2 Peter 1:21 “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake <i>as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.</i>”</p>	<p>Summary: Christ neither commanded the apostles to write nor did the apostles think of writing the gospel with a primary intention, but only a secondary and occasional intention.</p> <p>Robert Bellarmine, “De Controversiis: Prime Controversia Generalis-De Verbo Dei,” in Opera Omnia. Volume 1. Neapoli: Josephum Giuliano. 1856. Pages 116-122</p>

NOTES:

1) The truth: God’s Revelation of Himself was absolutely necessary for salvation. And the Revelation written is hypothetically necessary because of the divine design of salvation. You cannot divide the unwritten word from the written word. Three necessary reasons for the Revelation of God to be written: (1) preservation, (2) vindication against Satan, (3) propagation.

2) Advantage for the Roman Catholic Church to hold this position against the Bible: the Bible is then weakened to need an outside authority to vindicate its meaning and use in the Christian life. The Magisterium then has its purpose.

3) An example of the consent of the Church Fathers with the Bible: Gregory the Great “He himself wrote who dictated these things to be written; he himself wrote who was also the inspirer of the work”

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<p>Ephesians 2:20 “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;”</p> <p>Psalm 119:105 “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”</p>	<p>Example: “It is true that we do not certainly know what God has revealed except from the testimony of the church.” De Controversiis in Opera Omnia. Volume 3. Neapoli: Josephum Giuliano, 1856. Page 114, response to argument 13</p>

NOTES:

1) The truth: The Scriptures themselves prove to us their divine authority, without needing the testimony of the church attesting to it. This is because (1) Ephesians 2:20, cause and effect, reversing violates logic, e.g. foundation to the house. Note: In 1 Timothy 3:15, pillar and ground=promulgator and guarder. (2) What authority came first? Revelation or Church? The Covenant of Works was revelation and condescension. (3) Nature of Scripture as self-authenticating: who in here would dispute with me that it is light in here rather than darkness? Scripture is like light lighting (Ps. 119:105), like food sweet (Ps. 19:10), like odor smelly (Song of Solomon 1:3). Likewise, the spiritual man instinctively knows the Divine Authority of the Scriptures.

Note: sola scriptura is not circular reasoning because there are different kinds of causes at play. To the question ‘By what power do you believe the Scriptures?’ We Answer: We prove the Scriptures by the Spirit as the efficient cause by which we believe. To the question ‘Why do you believe the Spirit in you is the Holy Spirit?’ We Answer: we prove the Spirit from the Scriptures as the object and argument on account of which we believe.

2) Advantage for the Roman Catholic Church to hold this position against the Bible: If the Bible needs outside proof for its divine authentication, then it is weakened so that it cannot be the sole judge and ruler of the Christian’s faith and life; so additional foundation pillars must be set up. The additional pillars can then include the non-written traditions, and especially the Pope’s infallibility ex cathedra.

3) Examples of the consent of the Church Fathers with the Bible:

Irenaeus, Against Heresies 3.2 “When they are convicted from Scripture, they turn round and accuse the Scripture, as being corrupt, and having no authority.”

Basil says, “it is necessary that the first principles of every science should be self-evident.”

Augustine says, “Let us follow those who invite us to believe; first, when we are not as yet able to understand, so that being made more able by the faith itself we may deserve to understand what we believe, having not now men, but God himself as the informer and illuminator of our minds within us.”