

- Q2. What rule has God given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him?  
A2. **The Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy him.**

**Scripture References:** 2 Timothy 3:15-16; Ephesians 2:20; Galatians 1:8-9; Isaiah 8:20; Luke 16:29-31; 24:27, 44; John 15:11; 2 Peter 1: 20-21, 3:2, 15-16; 1 John 1: 3- 4

- DQ1: The Bible is the canon of the church. What does “canon” mean?
- DQ2: Is there any other rule, outside of the Old and New Testament that teaches us how to glory God and enjoy Him forever?
- DQ3: How and through whom has God revealed Himself? (Romans 1:20; 1 Corinthians 1:21; Hebrews 1:1)
- DQ4: What is the Holy Bible or the Holy Scripture?
- DQ5: How was the Holy Bible recorded?
- DQ6: For what purpose was the Holy Bible recorded? (Romans 15:4)
- DQ7: Why do we need the Word of God? (Matthew 4:4)
- DQ8: There are three different categories of the Bible: the original manuscripts, the copies of the manuscripts and the translations. Can you explain the differences between and among them?
- DQ9: Does the original manuscript of the Scripture contain any errors?
- DQ10: Do you believe and accept the Holy Bible to be error free? If not, why not? If so, why?
- DQ11: What do we consider to be the Old Testament Bible?
- DQ12: What do we consider to be the New Testament Bible?
- DQ13: What are the differences between the Old Testament Bible and the New Testament Bible?
- DQ14: How are the Old Testament Bible and the New Testament Bible connected and continuous?
- DQ15: What does the Holy Scripture teach us?
- DQ16: How is the Holy Scripture profitable to us?
- DQ17: What warning does the Holy Scripture give us regarding adding to or subtracting from the Holy Scripture? (Revelation 22:18-20)

## Notes:

The Holy Scripture or the Holy Bible is considered the canon of the Christian church. "Canon" means that the Holy Bible is the authoritative book of the church. The canon's authority comes from the fact that it was given us by God. It is the authority of the Holy Scripture that (1) establishes the authority of the church, (2) sanctions the ministry of the church and (3) governs the administration of the church. Outside of the Holy Scripture, there are no other writings that are affirmed or considered as the Word of God. If a Christian rejects the authority of the Holy Scripture, then he could not rightfully be considered a Christian for one is and becomes a Christian by the very authority of the Holy Bible.

God has revealed Himself and His will in various ways. There are two major types of revelation of God. **First**, the creation (or the nature) reveals God. We call this "general revelation." General revelation clearly testifies to the incredible beauty, dimension, mystery, majesty, grandeur, balance, complexities, intricacies and delicacies of God's creation. This is why Apostle Paul explained that, because of the clear and sure visible evidences revealed in and through God's creation, man cannot simply ignore the existence of God but must acknowledge it. (Romans 1:19-20) Nonetheless, general revelation is capable of only testifying **about** God. It means a general revelation serves a limited purpose of telling us that there is God. General revelation cannot bring man into the saving knowledge, i.e., salvation.

**Second**, unlike general revelation which is limited to testifying about God, "special revelation" is able to cause man to **know** God and bring man into the saving knowledge. Special revelation is a recognizable and understandable communication of God regarding Himself and His character, personality, heart, thoughts, plans and ministry. In the Old Testament Bible, special revelation was given through angels, prophets, priests, kings, judges and others whom God specially called to express His desires. In the New Testament Bible, God's will was expressed primarily through Christ, John the Baptist, and the Apostles of Christ. The Holy Bible, which is passed on to us, perhaps is the most significant special revelation given to man. Special revelation is able to give us wisdom leading to salvation. It enables a true and meaningful relationship with God.

Today, the Holy Bible is the only authoritative writing that teaches how to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. Without the Holy Bible, we would not know how to properly worship God. The Holy Bible is the only source of instruction on how man can meet God, how to partake in salvation, and how to taste the glory of God. If anyone who receives instruction regarding such things from any other writing, such a person or source would be guilty of committing heresy.

How would you answer the question, "What is the Holy Bible?" We must be able to give a clear, concise and definitive answer to the question. We should first consider the Holy Bible to be a small library of books rather than as a single book since the Holy Bible is composed of numerous books, 66 books to be exact. The essence of the Holy Bible, however, is that it is "a faithful and truthful revelation of God regarding who He is, what He desires and how He wants His desires to be fulfilled."

The Holy Bible is given by inspiration (breath) of God. This is why the Holy Bible is always living and active. (Hebrews 4:12) It is by inspiration (the life giving breath) of God that the writers of the Holy Bible, along with their characteristics, personalities, skills, gifts, knowledge, and

experiences, were guided to produce a writing that is error free. We call this the inerrancy of the Word of God.

The Holy Scripture was written by about 40 different inspired writers. Among them were kings, nobles, scholars, rich, fishermen, a tax collector, a physician and even politicians. All of the books of the Holy Scripture were written over a span of approximately 1,500 to 2,000 years from the first book written (Job) to the last book written (Revelation). The books of the Holy Scripture were also written on three different continents of Asia, Europe and Africa. They were written most extensively in the Hebrew and Greek languages and to a small extent in the Aramaic language. Despite all these numerous variables, the Holy Scripture does not depart from the uniformity and consistency in its teachings regarding the triune God and his character, personality, heart, thoughts, plans and ministry. There is no other writing or canon that rivals the canon of the Christian church in its authenticity, historicity and authority.

The Holy Scripture is to be distinguished among the original manuscripts, the copies and the translations. This leads us to ask the question, "Where are the original manuscripts of the books of the Holy Scripture?" The original manuscripts (scrolls to be more exact) have long been lost and none exists at this point. Even if they were to be found, no one could possibly be able to positively identify them as originals. Is that shocking to you that no original manuscripts exist? Without the original work, how can the church claim that it has the Word of God? The important thing is not the physical original scrolls but the original texts. What is inspired is not the physical scroll but the texts. How could we know the content of the original texts without the original scrolls?

The answer is rather simple. Suppose you made ten copies of the same book. As the time passed, the copies became scattered and eventually even the original book is forever lost. In time, however, several of the copies of the book were discovered here and there. If only one copy was found, then there is no way one could determine that the copy was an accurate reproduction of the original. However, if several copies are discovered and, upon comparison and analysis, it was discovered that all of the copies are identical, then it would mean that they all came from the same original and the original text is well preserved. This is the case of the Holy Scripture. Although there is no original scroll/manuscript of any of the books of the Holy Scripture, there are thousands of the copies of the Old and New Testament scriptures well preserved. How we have confidence as to the original text is based upon a startling discovery that these thousands of copies are identical with each other.

The difference between the original and copies is as follows: the original manuscripts were the writings of the inspired writer as God spoke to them and the copies are those manuscripts thereafter made by uninspired scribes for preservation and dissemination of the original texts of God's Word. The job of producing and reproducing copies was not given to ordinary people. Mistakes in the production and reproduction process meant that the scribes would face severe punishment and often deaths. Because of such herculean and meticulous efforts and the guiding of the Spirit, even the copies of copies could be produced for over a thousand years and remain accurate beyond imagination.

What is the translation? The Bibles not written in the original languages are all translations. For example, the Korean Bible and the English Bible, as well as other language Bibles are translations. By nature, translations will contain errors. Translations are not considered inspired

the way the original was inspired. Therefore, the Bible scholars do not rely upon the translations alone but will pursue the study of the original languages. This does not mean the translations are worthless. Quite to the contrary, the translations, when properly done, will sufficiently teach the church about God and His character, personality, heart, thoughts, plans and ministry. Thus, the translations are fine to be used for instructions in the church.

“The Bible is inerrant.” It means that the Bible in the original manuscripts does not affirm anything that is contrary to fact. This is so because the Holy Scripture is given and guided by inspiration, which is the work of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Bible is divided into the Old and New Testaments. The word “testament” means covenant or agreement. “Old” does not mean that it is a passé. “New” does not mean that the New Testament is given to replace the Old Testament. The “Old” and “New” designations simply referred to before Christ and after Christ, respectively. The Holy Scripture is the revelation of God’s covenants. It is through the Holy Scripture that God has revealed His old covenant and new covenant. The Bible tells us that the covenant of God is unchanging and eternal, whether they are “old” or “new” covenants. (Genesis 17:7)

What are primary differences between the Old and New Testaments?

First, while the OT focuses on the glory, work and ministry of God the Father and highlighting the future coming of God the Son, the NT focuses on the work and ministry of God the Son and God the Spirit unto the glory of God the Father.

Second, while the OT describes how God’s righteousness and justice and His love and faithfulness are expressed through a covenant community of the OT, known as Israel, likened to another covenant community which was to become known as the church, the NT describes the relationship between the covenant community, i.e., the church, and Jesus Christ who is the head of the church.

Third, while the OT introduces many individuals and symbols which are types of Messiah who was to come, the NT introduces the incarnate God, who came as the Messiah, to fulfill and complete the OT covenants and promises.

Fourth, while the OT describes the practice of animal sacrifices for redemption and worship of God, the NT describes how Christ, by shedding of His blood on the cross, once and for all gave perfectly and eternally sufficient redemptive sacrifice.

There are additional differences. Yet, the OT and NT enjoy the continuity and consistency of the covenants, themes and doctrines. This is necessarily so because the author of the Holy Scripture is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. For this reason, without the OT, the NT could not possibly be understood. At the same time, the OT could not be complete without the NT. The NT is the fulfillment and completion of the OT.

1. Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men unexcusable;<sup>[a]</sup> yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of his will, which is necessary unto salvation.<sup>[b]</sup> Therefore it pleased the Lord, at sundry times, and in divers manner, to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his church;<sup>[c]</sup> and afterwards, for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing:<sup>[d]</sup> which maketh the holy Scripture to be most necessary;<sup>[e]</sup> those former ways of God's revealing his will unto his people being now ceased.<sup>[f]</sup>

[a]. Rom. 2:14-15; Rom. 1:19-20; Ps. 19:1-4; see Rom. 1:32; Rom. 2:1

[b]. John 17:3; I Cor. 1:21; I Cor. 2:13-14

[c]. Heb. 1:1-2

[d]. Luke 1:3-4; Rom. 15:4; Matt. 4:4, 7, 10; Isa. 8:20

[e]. II Tim. 3:15; II Pet. 1:19

[f]. John 20:31; I Cor. 14:37; I John 5:13; I Cor. 10:11; Heb. 1:1-2; Heb. 2:2-4

2. Under the name of holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testaments, which are these:

#### OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habbakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

#### OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Gospels according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, The Acts of the Apostles, Paul's Epistle to the Romans, the Corinthians I, the Corinthians II, the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Philippians, the Colossians, the Thessalonians I, the Thessalonians II, Timothy I, Timothy II, Titus, Philemon, The Epistle to the Hebrews, The Epistle of James, The First and Second Epistles of Peter, The First, Second, and Third Epistles of John, The Epistle of Jude, The Revelation of John

All which are given by inspiration of God to be the rule of faith and life<sup>[g]</sup>.

[g]. Luke 16:29, 31; Luke 24:27, 44; II Tim. 3:15-16; John 5:46-47

3. The books commonly called *Apocrypha*, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of the Scripture, and therefore are of no authority in the church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of, than other human writings<sup>[h]</sup>.

[h]. Rev. 22:18-19; Rom. 3:2; II Pet. 1:21

4. The authority of the holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man, or church; but wholly upon God (who is truth itself) the author thereof: and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God<sup>[i]</sup>.

[i]. II Pet. 1:19-20; II Tim. 3:16; I John 5:9; I Thess. 2:13; Rev. 1:1-2

**5. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the church to an high and reverend esteem of the holy Scripture[k]. And the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is, to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God: yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts[l].**

[k]. I Tim. 3:15

[l]. I Cor. 2:9-10; Heb. 4:12; John 10:35; Isa. 55:11; see Rom. 11:36; Ps. 19:7-11; see II Tim. 3:15; I Cor. 2:4-5; I Thess. 1:5; I John 2:20, 27; see Isa. 59:21

**6. 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[m]. 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:[n] 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[o].**

[m]. II Tim. 3:16-17; Gal. 1:8-9; II Thess. 2:2

[n]. John 6:45; I Cor. 2:12, 14-15; Eph. 1:18; see II Cor. 4:6

[o]. I Cor. 11:13-14; I Cor. 14:26, 40

**7. All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all[p]: yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed for salvation, are so clearly propounded, and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them[q].**

[p]. II Pet. 3:16

[q]. Ps. 119:105, 130; Deut. 29:29; Deut. 30:10-14; Acts 17:11

**8. The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which, at the time of the writing of it, was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and, by his singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic[r]; so as, in all controversies of religion, the church is finally to appeal unto them[s]. But, because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God, who have right unto, and interest in the Scriptures, and are commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search them[t], therefore they are to be translated into the vulgar language of every nation unto which they come[u], that, the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner[w]; and, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope[x].**

[r]. Matt. 5:18; Ps. 119:89

[s]. Is. 8:20; Matt. 15:3, 6; Acts 15:15; see II Tim. 3:14-15

[t]. John 5:39; Acts 17:11; Rev. 1:3; see II Tim. 3:14-15

[u]. Matt. 28:19-20; see I Cor. 14:6; Mark 15:34

[w]. Col. 3:16; see Exod. 20:4-6; Matt. 15:7-9

[x]. Rom. 15:4

**9. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself: and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly[y].**

[y]. Acts 15:15; John 5:46; see II Pet. 1:20-21

**10. The supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture[z].**

[z]. Matt. 22:29, 31; Acts 28:25; see I John 4:1-6

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Let us expound upon the Apocrypha and the proper canon. The Apocrypha could not be included as part of the canon for at least the following four reasons: first, they do not claim for themselves the same kind of authority as the OT writings; second, the then contemporary Jews did not consider them as God's words; third, Jesus and the NT writers did not consider them to be Scripture; and fourth, the teachings that were inconsistent with the rest of the Scripture were part of the Apocrypha. (Grudem, Systematic Theology at 59)

There are three major views of the Scripture. First, the liberal view of the Scripture holds that only certain select sections of the Scripture is God's Word and others are not. Thus, those sections that were not could be deleted from the Scripture with no or little consequence. The liberal view assumes that man has the ability to determine if any section of the Scripture does or does not belong in the Scripture.

Second, the new-orthodox or Barthianism view of the Scripture holds that the Scripture is the word of man but, upon reading the Scripture, somehow it becomes the Word of God in the person who reads it. Therefore, if the Scripture touches the reader, then it is the Word of God but if the Scripture does not touch the reader, then it is not the Word of God and remains the word of man. Neither view is founded upon the Scripture.

Third, the Reformed view of the Scripture holds that all of the Scripture is the Word of God. This is the view of the Shorter Catechism. All of the Scripture is given by inspiration and there is no error. This is the only historical orthodox view of the Scripture. CLC teaches and follows the Reformed view of the Scripture.

The church must be under the authority of the Scripture. The Scripture must dictate every movement of the church. The church is wholly without power or authority to interpret the Scripture arbitrarily. The Word of God cannot change at the whim of the church. In this regard, the papacy of the Catholic Church in Rome is in serious error of placing the church above the Scripture. It is for this reason that the reformers gave up their lives shouting "sola scriptura" (only scripture) and "sola fide" (only faith). We must also maintain such fervor today.

If you on a shaky ground with regard to your view of the Holy Scripture, then it is for certain that your faith will not grow. Apart from the Holy Scripture, we could not possibly know God. For whatever reason, God has chosen to reveal Himself most clearly in the Word of God and in Christ Jesus who came as the Logos. (John 1:1-3)

How is the Word of God touching you today?

Please read and meditate upon Psalm 119. Then write down how the psalmist described the Word of God. What do they teach you about the Word of God?

To love the Holy Scripture is to love God. To befriend the Holy Scripture is to befriend God. If you want to know God's heart, then know the Holy Scripture. Any effort to reach outside of the Holy Scripture to know God's heart is wrong. The Word of God is true. (John 17:17) Truth can only be found in the Holy Scripture. Are you possibly searching elsewhere for truth?

In conclusion, to disobey the Holy Scripture is to disobey God since it is the Word of God. Let us go deeper into the Word.