

## RCIA HO Class 3 Scripture and Tradition Introduction to the Bible

The Bible is a collection of books. 73 books: 46 OT, 27 NT

**“Scripture”** from the Latin scriptus = written, scribble, script, prescription, subscription  
Different authors, different genres, written at different times

**Inspiration** (spiritus, perspire, respire, expire, etc.). God moved/directed/impelled the human authors to write what He wanted them to write, but in their own language, in their own words, and in their own cultural context.

### **Translations:**

Remember that the OT was written in Hebrew and other ancient languages, and that the NT was written in Greek. Numerous translations have been made. All translation involves interpretation. Example of translation challenges: “presbyter” in James 5 and liturgy of the Sacrament of Anointing. Elder, priest, presbyter. What is it? Depends on theology. Eg. John Calvin vs. RC Church.

KJV (1611) RSV (1952), NAB (1970) NIV (NKJV, NRSV) (inclusive language)

Eg brethren of the Lord, and Paul’s use of “brethren” as opposed to brothers and sisters.

### **The Canon of Scripture (=the choice of the list of books):** Protestant version vs. Catholic versions

“Canon” = Gk. rod, measure, standard. At the time the NT books were being written there were many legends and stories about the life of Christ. Confusion resulted over what was true. It seems that the Council of Hippo (393 AD) first determined which books were inspired and therefore “canonical” (meeting the “standard”). Subsequent Councils confirmed that decision as did the Council of Trent (1546) responding to the Protestant attempt to change the canon. The books rejected by the Council came to be known by Catholics as “apocrypha”. Later, Protestants would use this term to refer to the books that Luther removed from the canon. The history of the dispute goes back to the versions of the OT compiled by two groups of Jews living in the few centuries before Christ; Hebrew speakers in Palestine, and Greek speakers scattered through the Roman Empire. The Church accepted the Greek canon (version) which differed from the other over seven books. Luther would follow the other version. The seven books found in the Catholic OT but not in the Protestant OT are Wisdom, Maccabees, Tobit, parts of Daniel and Esther, Baruch, and Sirach. Catholics call these books “deuterocanonical”, Protestants call them “apocryphal”.

Today, Catholic and Protestant New Testaments are the same, although Luther also removed at one time Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation.

**Interpretation:** The Church is the final interpreter of the Bible because the Church wrote the Bible. Example “Brethren of the Lord”, presbyter

Testament = pact, agreement, covenant

***RCIA WKSH Class 3 Revelation, Scripture, Tradition, and tradition (BCL#2C). Parent and student should work together.***

- 1) What word do we use to describe how God has shown Himself to us?
  
- 2) What are the two fonts or streams of the Revelation that comes from God?
  
- 3) What word do we use to name the writings contained in the Bible?
  
- 4) What word do we use to name the part of Revelation that has been handed down to us through the Apostles and bishops which is not contained in the Bible?
  
- 5) What is the difference between Tradition (spelled with a capital "T") and tradition (spelled with a lower case "t")?
  
- 6) What other words do we use for those two types of tradition?
  
- 7) Which type of tradition can change and which one cannot?
  
- 8) Explain why the one that doesn't change cannot change.
  
- 9) What is the difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament?
  
- 10) If there is some question about the interpretation of a passage of Scripture, where will we find the correct answer? How do we know that?