

How Does God Reveal Himself?

As we search for God, He searches for us. From the first moment of human existence God dwelled with His people.¹ Even after Adam and Eve turned their back on God, He remained faithful, claiming the Israelite people as His own.² When the appropriate time had come, God sent His son, Jesus Christ, into the world as the fullness of His revelation.³ After Jesus suffered, died, and rose to save us, He ascended to the right hand of the Father and the Holy Spirit was sent to guide us. Simultaneously, God continues to reveal Himself to us in a particular way through the Catholic Church;⁴ in her sacraments⁵, the writings of Sacred Scripture and through the Church's divinely inspired and protected teachings.

The different books of the bible were composed over thousands of years by many different and divinely inspired authors, but it was not officially compiled until the year 382 AD. In 382 AD, Pope Damasus I called the bishops of the world to meet in Rome to discern which books should be included in the bible and commissioned St. Jerome to produce a reliable and consistent text. The bible is a product of the Catholic Church and has its authority as the Word of God, because the Catholic Church discerned that these books were truly divinely inspired. It is simply illogical to believe in the bible yet ignore the teachings of the Church, because if one doubts the authority of the Church, they doubt the authority on which the bible rests.

The bible is the divinely inspired Word of God, but that Word must be interpreted and applied to each unique time and place which requires the teachings of the Church. While all the teachings of the Catholic Church agree with Sacred Scripture they often go beyond what is explicitly stated in the bible, because God's message needs to be applied to the changing times. The bible, for example, says nothing about transgenderism because it did not exist when the inspired authors were writing, so the Church teaches the truth about transgenderism, by applying the principals of the scripture. While the teachings of the Church expand beyond what is expressly stated in the scriptures, they cannot contradict each other because they have the same source, God.

¹ Gen 1:27 – 2:19

² Gen 28:13 – 15

³ We will see in Chapter 5 that Jesus is truly the Son of God.

⁴ Chapter 9 will explain more fully what the Catholic Church is and that it is the one true Church.

⁵ We will discuss the sacraments later

Our response to God's revelation of Himself is called faith. God reaches out to us through the teachings of the Catholic Church and we grasp ahold of Him by assenting to those teachings in faith.