

6th, 7th, & 8th Grade Homestudy Lesson #1

The Bible

*This lesson has been split into two lessons for our in-class students; please take as much time as needed to complete and work through the material.

**This lesson, as well as the lessons to follow, require the use of a Bible. Please make sure that you have a Catholic Bible as you move forward.

GOAL

The goal of this lesson is to teach the students about the composition of the Bible and how to navigate it when finding a Bible verse. Additionally, the students will learn about where the Bible came from, how we got to the Bible that we have today, and why the Bible is important to Catholics.

TEACHING

Navigating the Bible

1. Get two sticky tabs and place the first tab on the “Table of Contents” page and the second tab on “New Testament” page in your Bible. This will make it much easier to find verses in the future.
2. Next, fill out the “Books and Make-up of the Bible” sheet at the end of the lesson. Use your Bible to help you as well as the resource videos to aid you. The answers are in the appendix.

Go to YouTube and search for...

[“BIBLE QUICK TIP: HOW TO FIND A BIBLE VERSE For Beginners * Easy As 1-2-3!”](#)

Watch the video above to learn how to find verses in the Bible.

KEY TERM DEFINITIONS

- **Magisterium** – The teaching office of the Church whose task it is to give authentic interpretation to the Word of God.

- **Heresy** – A denial of a truth that with divine and Catholic faith must be believed after a person has been baptized.

INTRODUCTION

In the 16th century an event took place called the “Protestant Reformation.” A priest named Martin Luther took issue with several practices within the Catholic Church and ultimately many people broke away from the Church. One of the things Martin Luther misunderstood in his grievances was the role the Church played in the interpretation of Sacred Scripture. A result of the reformation is a strong emphasis on the Bible in Protestant Churches, in reaction to what Luther believed was too strong of an emphasis on Sacred Tradition within the Catholic Church.

Because of this, there have been many misconceptions that exist among other Christians about the relationship Catholics have with the Bible. One of the first misconceptions is that the Catholic Church is “unbiblical” or isn’t Bible-based. A quick look at the history of Sacred Scripture dispels this misconception.

THE HISTORY BEHIND THE CANON OF THE BIBLE

The Church did not come out of the Bible; the Bible came out of the Church. A look at the history of the Bible reveals why:

The Old Testament books were all written between 1000 – 50 BC. Some of the accounts contained within these books are much older and existed as oral tradition before being written down. **The Old Testament was translated into Greek around 200 BC.** This Greek copy is called the **Septuagint**. This version became the primary copy of the Old Testament that the writers of the New Testament would have been familiar with. The Old Testament was comprised of the Torah (Pentateuch), Historical Books, Wisdom Books and the Prophets. The Septuagint consisted of 46 books. **The New Testament, comprised of the Gospels, the Epistles and the Book of Revelation, were all written in the first century AD, after the death of Christ.**

In the first centuries after Christ, the early Church leaders begin to affirm the content and order of the New Testament and compile early canons of Scripture. Origen, Tertullian and others all recognize the four Gospels, the Epistles and the Book of Revelation. **In 367 AD, St. Athanasius writes a letter where he gives lists the name and order of the 27 books of the New Testament.** This is done to help Christians know what writings about Christ were accurate and which writings were forgeries or false. **In 382 AD, Pope Damasus made a decree that listed the books of today’s canon. In 393 AD, the canon of the New Testament is affirmed in an ecumenical council at Hippo.** Pope Innocent presided over this council. So, the entire canon of the Bible as we know it was completed before the start of the fifth century!

With all of this information it is clear that the Catholic Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, is responsible for compiling the Bible that we have today and for discerning what writings spoke truth and which ones did not.

IS IT TRUE THAT CATHOLICS DO NOT USE OR READ THE BIBLE REGULARLY?

While there is certainly a need for many individual Catholics to become more familiar and comfortable reading their Bible, to say that Catholics don't use the Bible regularly would be completely false. Every week we immerse ourselves in Sacred Scripture when we celebrate Mass. The Gloria, Liturgy of the Word, Sanctus, Eucharistic prayer and other prayers within the Mass are all recited straight out of Scripture. **Read Revelation 4 – 6** and you will see that the structure of the Mass is found in the Book of Revelation.

Priests, religious, and many lay people pray the "Liturgy of the Hours" every day – five times a day. The Liturgy of the Hours is rooted in the Scriptures – with psalms, canticles and readings. It has been called the "breath of the Church." One of the oldest forms of prayer in the Church – developed by monks – is Lectio Divina. This is a prayer practice where one learns to pray and meditate with the Scriptures. Additionally, the greatest biblical theologians – like St. Thomas Aquinas – have been Catholics. Currently, there are many scripture scholars, such as Dr. Scott Hahn, who are Catholic.

Of course, we as Catholics can certainly learn to go deeper in our own discovery of the Scriptures. While our Church is rooted in Sacred Scripture, often times we choose to ignore it or find it "boring." As faithful Catholics we need to dive deeper into Scripture – whether that is trying to read from your Bible every day or reading through the Mass reading before you go. It is important to become more familiar with Scripture. If you struggled at the beginning of the night to determine which passages came from the Bible and which came from popular literature, you may need to take that as a call to become more familiar with Sacred Scripture.

WHY DO CATHOLICS MAINTAIN BELIEFS AND PRACTICES THAT ARE NOT IN THE BIBLE?

Everything that we know about Jesus we have learned from His apostles or the people that were companions of the apostles. The New Testament was written after Jesus had ascended into heaven by these men, who were inspired by the Holy Spirit. The apostles are the ones who have passed down the teachings of Christ from generation to generation. The apostles called Jesus "rabbi," meaning "teacher." The Jewish tradition of a rabbi means that the 12 men dropped everything of their former way of life and went and lived with their rabbi for a period of time. They learned by his very way of life – how he prayed, what he taught, his manner of life.

If we consider how much the apostles learned from simply observing Christ, then we must consider that there is a lot about Jesus that was communicated but was not written down in the Scriptures. This is called Sacred Tradition. It provides a key to understanding the Scriptures, and it is also a source of Divine Revelation. The Holy Spirit and the Church have protected Tradition all throughout the centuries.

Tradition provides the key to properly understanding and interpreting the Scriptures. When Martin Luther broke from the Catholic Church in the Protestant

Reformation, he also broke from this Sacred Tradition. Before this schism, the Church had only two divisions – Catholic and Orthodox (they divided in the Great Schism around 1000 AD). Since Luther preached sola scriptura (only scripture) Protestantism has divided into over 30,000 different denominations. The confusion created by not paying attention to the teachings of the apostles has caused a complete lack of unity in the Church.

WHY DO SOME PEOPLE TRY TO CHANGE THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS CHRIST?

People have tried to change teachings about Christ for many different reasons. Sometimes it is to justify their particular belief or lack of belief. Sometimes it has been out of sincere but misguided or misinformed efforts to try to explain mysteries about Jesus Christ or God's Revelation. In the early history of the Church, there were a number of **heresies – false teachings** – that developed. The Church had to answer many tough questions to protect the teachings of Jesus Christ. Frequently, in the early Church, these heresies gave the Church the opportunity to defend the teachings of Christ and to develop the theology of the Church.

The Catholic Church has always protected the Truth of Christ. **The Magisterium is the teaching body of the Church and it is made up of the pope and his bishops.** As successors to the apostles, these are the people that Jesus entrusted with his teachings through apostolic tradition. Jesus promised Peter that the gates of Hell would not prevail against His Church. When we stand by the Church and her teachings, we stand by the one that was given authority by Jesus Christ to teach.

CONCLUSION

This is why the Catholic Church is important. Because it compiled the Bible as we know it, it is the only authority able to accurately interpret it. There are many misconceptions that exist about the Catholic Church and the Bible; however, they are untrue. It is important for us to realize how deeply our Church is rooted in Sacred Scripture. We also need to become more familiar with it ourselves, so when we are asked about the relationship Catholics have with the Bible we can prove it with our words and actions.

QUESTIONS

- Name something new or unexpected you learned about the Bible.

- What are some ways for you to use the Bible in your day to day life?

CLOSING PRAYER

The Rosary

For your closing prayer this lesson, pray the rosary with your family! If you do not know how to do so, please use the instructional video below:

[How to Pray the Rosary Step by Step](#)

“HOMEWORK”

Find and write down a Bible verse that you like and write it below including the book, chapter, and verse:

The Bible—Part II

GAME—Bible Search

Now that you are familiar with the make-up of the Bible, find and read the following verses:

Exodus 20:1-17

Is this verse in the Old Testament or the New Testament? _____

What type of book (Torah, Gospel, etc) is this verse from? _____

John 3:16

Is this verse in the Old Testament or the New Testament? _____

What type of book (Torah, Gospel, etc) is this verse from? _____

Matthew 6:19-21

Is this verse in the Old Testament or the New Testament? _____

What type of book (Torah, Gospel, etc) is this verse from? _____

1 John 4:9-11

Books of the Bible

Old Testament (46 books)

List the 5 books of the Torah (or Pentateuch)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

List the 16 Historical books

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.

List the 7 Wisdom/Poetic books

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

List the 18 Prophetic books

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.

New Testament (27 books)

List the 4 Gospels

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

List the 22 Epistles

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
- 20.

21.

22.

List the Final book of the Bible

1.

Appendix

Books of the Bible

Old Testament (46 books)

List the 5 books of the Torah (or Pentateuch)

1. **Genesis**
2. **Exodus**
3. **Levitics**
4. **Numbers**
5. **Deuteronomy**

List the 16 Historical books

1. **Joshua**
2. **Judges**
3. **Ruth**
4. **1 Samuel**
5. **2 Samuel**
6. **1 Kings**
7. **2 Kings**
8. **1 Chronicles**
9. **2 Chronicles**
10. **Ezra**
11. **Nehemiah**
12. **Ester**
13. **Tobit**
14. **Judith**
15. **1 Maccabees**
16. **2 Maccabees**

List the 7 Wisdom/Poetic books

1. **Job**
2. **Psalms**
3. **Proverbs**
4. **Ecclesiastes**
5. **Song of Solomon (Song of Songs)**
6. **Wisdom (Wisdom of Solomon)**
7. **Sirach**

List the 18 Prophetic books

1. **Isaiah**
2. **Jeremiah**
3. **Lamentations**
4. **Ezekiel**
5. **Daniel**

6. Baruch
7. Hosea
8. Joel
9. Amos
10. Obadiah
11. Jonah
12. Micah
13. Nahum
14. Habbakuk
15. Zaphaniah
16. Haggai
17. Zechariah
18. Malachi

New Testament (27 books)

List the 4 Gospels

1. Matthew
2. Mark
3. Luke
4. John

List the 22 Epistles

1. Acts of the Apostles
2. Romans
3. 1 Corinthians
4. 2 Corinthians
5. Galatians
6. Ephesians
7. Philippians
8. Colossians
9. 1 Thessalonians
10. 2 Thessalonians
11. 1 Timothy
12. 2 Timothy
13. Titus
14. Philemon
15. Hebrews
16. James
17. 1 Peter
18. 2 Peter
19. 1 John

20. 2 John

21. 3 John

22. Jude

List the Final book of the Bible

1. Revelation

Bible Development Timeline Answers

1. The writing of the Old Testament 1000-50 BC
2. Old Testament translated into Greek (Septuagint) 200 BC
3. Jesus dies 33 AD
4. New Testament completed 100 AD
5. Athanasius writes a letter where he gives lists the name and order of the 27 books of the New Testament. 367 AD
6. Pope Damasus made a decree that listed the books of today's canon. 382 AD
7. Pope Innocent and the ecumenical council at Hippo affirm the canon of the New Testament. 393 AD
- 8.