

Which Bible?

It's a question many of my friends ask. An important question that we consider this week.

For those who would use the Bible alone as God's Word (*Sola Scripture*), recall that Catholics believe that you must study the Sacred Scriptures in conjunction with Sacred Traditions to understand God's divine revelations and the Mysteries of Faith. If you would use the Bible alone, the question becomes which Bible, in which language, and what translation? There are difficulties in precise translations of concepts between languages.

In the Bible, the problem is compounded by the fact that Jesus and his followers probably spoke Aramaic, while Hebrew was the language of the Jewish peoples, Greek the language of scholars, and Latin the language of the Roman Empire. The original writings that comprised the Bible were all done in these ancient languages where terminology, concepts and meanings differed significantly from those today. For example, in Aramaic, there are words for mother and father, brother and sister, but none for aunt, uncle, niece or nephew.

That's why we find so many references to Jesus' "brothers and sisters" in the Bible and yet many question if they were truly "brothers" or perhaps step brothers or even uncles or other family relations. And it's also why Catholics believe the Bible needs to be studied in keeping with the teachings and traditions of the *Deposit of Faith* as handed down by the Apostles.

Today there are dozens of widely used Bible translations of which billions of copies have been produced in thousands of languages. And these translations differ. Consider the following two quotes from John 3:3 [*Jesus speaking to the Pharisee named Nicodemus*] as translated in two different Bibles;

Catholic: St. Joseph's ed., New American Bible: "*Jesus answered and said to him, 'Amen, Amen, I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.'*"

Protestant: King James Bible: "*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*"

The notes in the Catholic Bible (*which incorporate the Teachings and Traditions from the Deposit of Faith*) go on to clearly explain how Nicodemus misunderstood Jesus to have said "born again", so Jesus continued on to explain what he really meant by "born from above".

Whole Protestant Religious congregations have been founded on this concept of *Born Again*. But is that what Jesus really meant? So, I restate the question concerning which Bible to use. If you are going to use the Bible alone as your only source of studying and understanding of God's divine revelations, then which Bible do you use? I personally find the current Catholic versions with notes and explanations of the ancient translations to be the most enlightening.

Regardless of which Bible you chose, the best one is the one that you read. Often. God Bless!

PS. Click the Bible Study Resources Tab and use the Bible Gateway to see how passages are translated in different versions of the Bible.

Please share this with family and friends in need of God's Help! God Bless!

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