



Opening Question

Why do some people get restless and seek new horizons?

Searching

Have you ever looked up at the starry sky and wondered: Is there someone or something out there, beyond what I can see or hear or touch? Or, have you taken the time to reflect on your own existence and asked: Am I more than just atoms and molecules or flesh and bone? These two questions are universal. They are two sides to the same coin. The more we stretch our minds into the great unknown, the more we know about ourselves. And the more we explore our inner life, the more we can imagine a reality beyond our own. These two avenues of discovery mark humans as religious beings, always reaching out, always seeking within. We might run from this calling because of fear, indifference, anger or distractions. But we can never really escape it.

We have an innate desire for God based upon those two questions. The wonders of the world, the beauty of nature, and the sheer magnitude of the cosmos cause us to stand in awe. At the same time, the wonders of our inner worlds, our emotions, our intellects, our abilities to choose can also cause us to be amazed. The answer to these two questions and the experiences they evoke is simple.

There is a God.

Attributes of God

That raises another question: how do we talk about God? We can start with the better attributes we find in humanity. Goodness, wisdom, power, and love. We can take these attributes and apply to the Almighty as a means of comparison. But that only takes us so far. Soon our language fails us because



God is so much more than these attributes can describe.

As the Catechism of the Catholic Church stated:

Our human words always fall short of the mystery of God.

Catechism of the Catholic Church 42

Revelation – God’s Invitation

Don’t we know a lot about God from the Bible or the Church? Yes, but Scripture and the teaching of the Church ultimately depend upon what God revealed to us. When we read the Bible, we see God showed himself and his plan through stages over time.

From the beginning, God invited humans into a relationship with him despite their sin. He crafted that relationship in the form of an alliance called a covenant. On his own initiative, God offered covenants to individuals like Noah, Abraham and David. He made a covenant with the Hebrew people when he gave them his law through Moses. In doing so, he molded them into a nation called Israel. Every step along the way, God showed his power: saving Noah from the flood, promising Abraham descendants and land, freeing the Hebrews from slavery in Egypt and giving them a homeland, establishing a royal line

for David that would last forever.

To keep his people on the path of his plan, God sent prophets to proclaim his message to the wayward. In the end, God sent his Son as the fulfillment of this divine plan. Jesus Christ is the total and complete revelation of the Father.

Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium

Alright, we have Scripture and the Church. But Jesus lived 2000 years ago. How do I know that the faith we received is true? How do we know it didn't get corrupted over time? We can trust the faith of the Church because the Spirit inspired the apostles and their successors, the bishops, to pass it along to succeeding generations in two ways: in writing and orally. We call its transmission in writing Scripture. And we call oral transmission of the faith Tradition with a capital T. Both are ways the Church teaches the same and entire faith of the apostles.

As the Catechism of the Catholic Church states:

In order that the full and living Gospel might always be preserved in the Church the apostles left bishops as their successors... (with) teaching authority.

Catechism of the Catholic Church 77

There is no doubt of the Bible's authority but what about the place of Tradition? Again the Catechism states:

Through Tradition, the Church, in her doctrine, life and worship, perpetuates and transmits to every generation all that she herself is, all that she believes.

Catechism of the Catholic Church 78

In other words, Tradition contains not only what the Church believes but how it believes in its worship, prayer, outreach, and need to spread the Good News.

Both Scripture and Tradition are the gift of the Spirit to the entire Church. But the responsibility of teaching the faith accurately falls to the Pope and the bishops. They are to interpret God's word accurately. They expound and clarify certain beliefs called dogmas in ways that are relevant and coherent to the entire faith. So, there are three

components to the faith we received: Scripture, Tradition with a capital T, and the teaching authority of the Church called by a Latin word: Magisterium. All three work together to keep the faith alive and relevant in the world.

As lay people in the Church, we have the responsibility to pass along our faith in word, prayer, and example. In this way, we bring the faith alive for others.

Is there a God? We know God exists based upon our reflections of the universe and of our inner life. But, what is God telling us about himself? We find that in the Bible passages about God's covenants from Abraham, through Moses, and to David. Ultimately, we find the fulfillment of revelation in the person of Jesus Christ. We can be sure our faith in him is right and real because it was passed down from the apostles through the bishops, in Scripture and Tradition.

While times change and customs fade in and out of fashion, what God tells us about himself never will.

Closing Question:

Why do you believe in God?

Reference to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Paragraphs 27-95.

Permission for use. All materials found in word-sunday.com are the property of Larry Broding (Copyright 2025). Viewers may copy any material found in these pages for their personal use or for use in any non-profit ministry. Materials may not be sold or used for personal financial gain.