



HIGHLIGHTS FOR TALK 1

WHERE DO THE TRUTHS OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH COME FROM?

- ❖ Man's "faculty of reason": we have the ability to discover limited yet true knowledge of God simply by drawing conclusions from our experience.
- ❖ So that we might know Him yet more fully, God also has revealed deeper truths about Himself to us directly, through what is called **Divine Revelation**.
- ❖ Public Revelation -- the period of time with definite beginning and end points in history that God used as a vehicle to transmit His Truth to us over the course of many years -- began after the sin of our first parents left us estranged from God and blocked from entering heaven; it culminated in the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Redeemer; and it ended with the death of the last Apostle, St. John. Once all of the Apostles were gone, God was finished revealing what everyone needs to know to get to heaven.
- ❖ Everything we need to know to get to heaven has been preserved in Sacred Scripture and in the Sacred Tradition of the Church. These truths together constitute Divine Revelation, which is also referred to as the "Deposit of Faith". These truths are unchangeable, and men of all places and times are invited to believe them.
- ❖ The Catholic Church is the only church instituted by Christ Himself, as evidenced in part by the unbroken line of succession that our bishops can trace back to the original Twelve Apostles led by St. Peter.
- ❖ Faith is man's proper response to Divine Revelation, because God is truthful and never deceives. Faith is a supernatural virtue that God grants to our souls at Baptism, but He does not force us to exercise it. Acts of faith are to be freely made.
- ❖ We have an obligation to pass the Catholic faith on to others, but first we must practice it ourselves through prayer, study, use of the sacraments, and taking part in Holy Mass.
- ❖ These are obstacles in modern society to a strong faith in God:
 - 1) **Pride**: Our own prideful complacency can keep us from living the life God has planned for us.
 - 2) **Relativism**: an idea that calls for people to believe whatever they please or think is useful to their own lives. In this view, there is no "absolute truth"; only self-centeredness instead.
 - 3) **Skepticism**: the bad habit of constantly questioning things without ever taking a firm position on important matters of faith.
 - 4) **Rationalism**: the idea that truth is comprehended by man's reason and intellect alone. This view stems from a desire to take control of one's life without recourse to God.
 - 5) **Poor example**: when Christians display behavior that does not measure up to the Gospel, others may consider them hypocrites and justify their own suspension of belief in God or the Church.

