

References for Church Tradition

2 Timothy 3:14

But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; (15) And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (16) All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: (17) That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

Note: the books which we have in the current Bible were not the only writings about Jesus in circulation and some hadn't yet been written. There reflected Tradition.

2 Timothy 2:2

And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

2 Thessalonians 2:15

Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.

2 Thessalonians 3:6

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.

John 21:25

And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

1 Peter 2:2

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

2 Peter 3:16

As also in all his [PAUL'S] epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.

Clearly states the importance of correct, guided understanding and interpretation of the Church's teachings

Apostolic Fathers on Tradition

Pope Clement I

"Then the reverence of the law is chanted, and the grace of the prophets is known, and the faith of the Gospels is established, and the **Tradition of the Apostles is preserved**, and the grace of the Church exults" (*Letter to the Corinthians* 11 [A.D. 80]).

Papias

"Papias [A.D. 120], who is now mentioned by us, affirms that he received the sayings of the Apostles from those who accompanied them, and he moreover asserts that he heard in person Aristion and the presbyter John. **Accordingly he mentions them frequently by name, and in his writings gives their Traditions [concerning Jesus]. . . . [There are] other passages of his in which he relates some miraculous deeds, stating that he acquired the knowledge of them from Tradition**" (Fragment in Eusebius, *Church History* 3:39 [A.D. 312]).

Irenaeus of Lyons

A. "As I said before, the Church, having received this preaching and this faith, although she is disseminated throughout the whole world, yet guarded it, as if she occupied but one house. She likewise believes these things just as if she had but one soul and one and the same heart; and harmoniously she proclaims them and teaches them and hands them down, as if she possessed but one mouth. For, while the languages of the world are diverse, nevertheless, the **authority of the Tradition is one and the same**" (*Against Heresies* 1:10:2 [A.D. 189]).

B. "That is why it is surely necessary to avoid them [heretics], while cherishing with the utmost diligence the things pertaining to the Church, and to lay hold of the Tradition of truth. . . . **What if the Apostles had not in fact left writings to us? Would it not be necessary to follow the order of Tradition, which was handed down to those to whom they entrusted the Churches?**" (ibid., 3:4:1).

C. "It is possible, then, for everyone in every church, who may wish to know the truth, to contemplate the Tradition of the Apostles which has been made known throughout the whole world. And we are in a position to enumerate those who were instituted bishops by the Apostles and their successors to our own times--men who neither knew nor taught anything like these heretics rave about.v"But since it would be too long to enumerate in such a volume as this the successions of all the churches, we shall confound all those who, in whatever manner, whether through self-satisfaction or vainglory, or through blindness and wicked opinion, assemble other than where it is proper, by pointing out here the successions of the bishops of the greatest and most ancient church known to all, founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious **Apostles, Peter and Paul, that church which has the Tradition and the faith which comes down to us after having been announced to men by the Apostles.** "With this church, because of its superior origin, all churches must agree--that is, all the faithful in the whole world--and **it is in her that the faithful everywhere have maintained the Apostolic Tradition**" (ibid., 3:3:1-2).

Clement of Alexandria

"Well, they preserving the Tradition of the blessed doctrine derived directly from the holy Apostles, Peter, James, John, and Paul, the sons receiving it from the father (but few were like the fathers), came by God's will to us also to deposit those ancestral and apostolic seeds. And well I know that they will exult; I do not mean delighted with this tribute, but solely on account of the preservation of the truth, according as they delivered it. For such a sketch as this, will, I think, be agreeable to a soul desirous of preserving from loss the blessed Tradition" (*Miscellanies* 1:1 [A.D. 208]).

Athanasius

A. "Again we write, again **keeping to the Apostolic Traditions**, we remind each other when we come together for prayer; and keeping the feast in common, with one mouth we truly give thanks to the Lord. Thus giving thanks unto Him, and being followers of the saints, 'we shall make our praise in the Lord all the day,' as the Psalmist says. So, when we rightly keep the feast, we shall be counted worthy of that joy which is in heaven" (*Festal Letters* 2:7 [A.D. 330]).

B. "But you are blessed, who by faith are in the Church, dwell upon the foundations of the faith, and have full satisfaction, even the highest degree of **faith which remains among you unshaken. For it has come down to you from Apostolic Tradition**, and frequently accursed envy has wished to unsettle it, but has not been able" (ibid., 29).