

Thursday, August 09, 2007

Gilligan's Island and The Bible



I wish we could've brought the whole Bible with us

Imagine the ship you are on is starting to sink and the captain's steward tells you that you can only take a very limited amount of stuff with you on the lifeboat. Wait! This was supposed to be a three hour tour, a three *stinking* hour tour! In the distance they spot a small deserted isle. If you were stuck on this desert island and had to take only a small handful of the individual books of the Bible with you, which would you take? What if you had to burn certain books of the Bible to send up a distress signal or use as kindling to be thrown in the fire, but save the most important ones? God forbid! Which would you save? Which are most important?

Can the fullness of the Gospel be understood by just reading a few books of the New Testament? Should the Gospel be truly distilled down to reading only a small portion of Scripture? Can we really understand and obtain all that is necessary from a few books of the Bible? Can we know truly what the Gospel is from such an abridged source? If Gilligan had to come up with a correct soteriology (theology of salvation) as well as a correct christology (theology of who Christ is), could he have done with just a few books of the Bible and no tradition whatsoever?

Catholics believe that the fullness of the Gospel is found in the entire Bible (including all the deuterocanonicals) along with Sacred Tradition (no, not the "traditions of men" that were soundly spoken against in Scripture by our Lord and Paul) Together, the Scriptures

with Sacred Tradition make up the deposit of faith given by God to the Church. Catholics believe one can't operate correctly without the other. Sacred Tradition and Scripture "work" together inseparably to provide the fullness of truth we so often blog about.

Catholics believe you need both for correct belief and practice of faith. Without one or the other, we don't believe we can have the fullness of the faith. Now can you imagine what happens when you remove not only Sacred Tradition, but several books of the Bible as well? (not just the deuterocanonicals). As a Catholic we believe this could lead to only a partial, not full understanding of the Truth. But, according to Dr. Luther, Gilligan would have been able to derive all he needed from about 7 books of the New Testament. In my opinion, I suspect even the Professor could have gotten it wrong with that limited selection. A three hour tour, a three hour tour....

*"In a word, St. John's Gospel and his first epistle, St. Paul's epistles, especially Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians, and St. Peter's first epistle are the books that show you Christ and teach you all that is necessary and salvatory for you to know, **even if you were never to see or hear any other book or doctrine.**"*

Luther's Works, Vol. 35, page 362.

"In a word, you need all of Scripture to compare to Scripture just as you need the Old Testament to see the Truth in the New Testament. One is not complete without the other. Finally, you need the Sacred Tradition of the Church to fully illuminate the Gospel of our salvation as found interwoven throughout all of Scripture."

Anonymous Blogger Vol.12 p.30