

KNOWING WHAT IS TRUE — FREE
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*Knowing
What Is
TRUE*

Tertullian · Jewel · Newman · Cyril

RESURRECTION PUBLISHING READER

KNOWING WHAT IS TRUE

Tertullian, John Jewel, John Henry Newman, and Cyril of Jerusalem

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This free sample prints the question, four of Tertullian's chapters whole, and a taste of the comparison — it is not the full reader.

ABOUT THIS READER

Knowing What Is True gathers four teachers from across the Church's traditions — Tertullian, John Jewel, John Henry Newman, and Cyril of Jerusalem — on one question: How does the Christian know what is true?

The editorial layer — the prefaces, the four analyses, the comparison parts, and the glossary — was generated with large language models working under our editorial method, then verified quotation by quotation against the source editions. No page reached print until a human editor accepted it.

PART I — THE QUESTION

The question this reader exists to ask is a single sentence: how does the Christian know what is true? Two things are being asked at once, and the four writers in this book keep both together. To ask what settles a claim about the faith is to ask for a standard: a rule, a text, a test, something fixed enough to try other things by. To ask whom the reader may trust is to ask about teachers: bishops, doctors, ancient fathers, modern parties, each arriving with a claim already attached. And behind both stands a third thing the question never lets you forget: what a settled faith does to a life, because a believer who knows why he believes is free to live what he believes rather than re-argue it every morning. A reader who takes the first half alone becomes an examiner of documents, checking everything and resting nowhere; a reader who takes the second alone becomes a dependent of whoever spoke last. The four writers printed here refuse both reductions, though they refuse them in four vocabularies, from four centuries, from four corners of the Church.

The corners matter to the shape of the book. Tertullian wrote at Carthage, in North Africa, about the year 200; he is the witness of the Patristic West. Cyril taught in Jerusalem about the year 350, as its bishop; he is the Orthodox witness. John Jewel wrote as Bishop of Salisbury, in England, in 1562; he is the Protestant witness. John Henry Newman wrote in England, in an Essay published in 1845 and revised for the edition of 1878; he is the Catholic witness. And none of these men was answering any of the others. Tertullian had been dead more than a millennium when Jewel published, and more than sixteen centuries when Newman wrote; Cyril taught some fifteen centuries before the Essay appeared. Nothing in the comparison parts stages these four as a debate, because no debate ever happened. The

comparison belongs to the reader, not to the writers. What Parts VI–VIII compare is four independent answers to the same question.

Four books, four kinds of answers

Tertullian. *The Prescription Against Heretics*, written at Carthage about the year 200. The treatise argues like a legal brief: it does not begin by trading texts with the heretics but by asking what standing a heretic has to appeal to Scripture at all, and the prescription of its title is the lawyer's bar, the case settled before the evidence is heard. It addresses Christians living among heresies, whom it refuses to panic and refuses to console cheaply: the heresies were foretold, and the faith they unsettle is proved by the trial. Forty-five short chapters build the argument in order, and at its center stands the Church's Rule of Faith, the fixed summary that comes before inquiry. In the chapter where Tertullian sets faith against curious inquiry, the center of the argument is one sentence:

To know nothing contrary to the Rule is to know everything. —
Tertullian, chapter XIV

Faith is posited in the Rule, and the men who go on searching have, by their own account, found nothing certain. Curiosity yields to faith; fame gives place to salvation. This reader prints the treatise entire: all forty-five chapters, nothing withheld.

John Jewel. *An Apology of the Church of England*, published in 1562. The book is a public defense rather than a treatise: it answers the Church of England's accusers in long rhetorical periods, moving between what they say and what we say, and its center is a confession stated clause by clause. It addresses every reader the controversy could reach, the good Christian reader of its closing pages, and it lays the whole manner of the Church's religion out for examination. His sentence about the canonical Scriptures runs through clause after clause, and one clause carries the whole test:

that they be the very sure and infallible rule, whereby may be tried, whether the church do stagger, or err, and whereunto all ecclesiastical doctrine ought to be called to account — Jewel, Part II

The clause claims a court of appeal: the Church herself is tried against the Scriptures, and every doctrine is summoned before them. This reader prints Part II, Part V, and the Recapitulation, each whole.

John Henry Newman. *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, published in 1845 and revised for the edition of 1878. The Essay is one long sustained argument, and its chapters are single movements rather than collections of points: chapter I builds the idea of development from the ground up, and chapter V sets out seven marks, the Notes, for telling a genuine development from a corruption. It addresses the inquirer standing between the ancient faith and the claims of later churches, weighing which is the heir. His sentence on belief keeping its identity through change comes at the end of a paragraph that has just refused a familiar image:

to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often —
Newman, chapter I

The image refused is the stream that runs clearest near its spring. The argument is that an idea changes in order to remain the same, and that identity lives in continuity rather than isolation. This reader prints chapter I and chapter V entire.

Cyril of Jerusalem. *The Catechetical Lectures*, delivered in Jerusalem in the fourth century to candidates for baptism. The two units printed here belong to a course: the Procatechesis, the preparatory address that screens and readies the hearers, and Lecture IV, a summary of doctrine in ten points, each held to the proof of the Divine Scriptures. The genre is a course of instruction, built to be heard slowly, point fitted to point; the audience is the company soon

to be enlightened, baptized at Easter after the Lenten course. And the demand the course makes on the hearer reaches the teacher himself:

Even to me, who tell thee these things, give not absolute credence, unless thou receive the proof of the things which I announce from the Divine Scriptures. — Cyril, Lecture IV

The sentence stands in a numbered point on the seal of doctrine, and it is not rhetoric: in the next sentence Cyril says that the salvation we believe depends not on ingenious reasoning but on demonstration of the Holy Scriptures. This reader prints the Procatechesis and Lecture IV entire.

The map of comparison

Seven questions run through the comparison, and the answers come out of the writers' own pages. What guard keeps the reading of the faith sound: the Rule stated and then defended (Tertullian), the confession entire (Jewel), the ten points and the canon delivered by the Church (Cyril), the tests of fidelity (Newman). What oldness proves, and what novelty marks: the lateness of heresy argued from the order of the parable (Tertullian), the accusers' own antiquity examined and found late (Jewel), the maxim that the stream runs clearest near its spring refused (Newman) — and Cyril: none of the printed units take it up, and Part VII says so. How change over time is judged: growth or decay, development or corruption (Newman), against the guarding of what is handed on (Tertullian, Jewel, and Cyril — whose printed portions carry no theory of development at all — and Part VII says so plainly). Who settles a disputed claim: the Faith whose the Scriptures are, settled before the documents are traded (Tertullian); Scripture as the standing rule that tries the church itself (Jewel); the Church's canon, the books read in Church (Cyril); the claim weighed by its fidelity, not by a party's word (Newman). How a false teacher is recognized: pedigree, succession, and manner

of life (Tertullian); a cause that flees the trial (Jewel); the principle behind the doctrines (Newman); the tares told from the wheat by the trained taste (Cyril). What the Scriptures and the handed-on faith ask of each other: proof demanded of the very teacher who speaks (Cyril), and the books that may be read learned from the same Church. And what a settled faith does to a life: lively faith (Jewel), discipline offered as evidence (Tertullian), virtuous practice (Cyril), vigour that lasts (Newman).

Part VI gathers the agreements: five rows, each built only where at least three of the four writers carry citable text, each side anchored in its own words. Part VII names the differences: four axes — where the tribunal sits, what change over time proves, how openly the cause is tried, and what finally certifies a teacher — each ending with what turns on it and none with a verdict. The glossary maps each writer's key terms in his own vocabulary, with the nearest word in every other camp named beside it. Where a writer is thinner on a point than the others, the part says so.

The map is not a scorecard. Where the four converge, Part VI says so plainly and stops. Where they differ, Part VII names the difference and leaves it standing; the point is to let each writer finish his own sentence in his own terms, and to refuse the crowning of a winner.

The order of reading

The order of this book is simple. Parts II–V each begin with an analysis, then print that writer's units entire: entire chapters, whole parts, whole lectures, never fragments. The analysis orients you; the units are the writer himself. Read all four writers through before you turn to the comparison: Part VI gathers the agreements, Part VII names the differences, Part VIII assembles the daily practice of reading and checking, and the glossary maps each writer's terms onto the terms of his neighbors. A reader who begins with the map will see

the skeleton without the body; the comparison is written for second reading, and only the whole units make it fair.

The four answers share more ground than their vocabularies advertise, and they divide more deeply than their common question implies. Both facts belong to the subject. What follows is the demonstration.

THE PATRISTIC VOICE — TERTULLIAN

The reader's Part II carries all forty-five chapters of *The Prescription Against Heretics* — Bindley's 1914 English — each printed whole. This sample prints four of them complete: Chapters I, II, IX, and XIV. The other three voices — Jewel, Newman, and Cyril — enter through the comparison excerpts that follow.

CHAPTER I

THE character of the present times calls upon us to bear in mind that the heresies around us ought not to occasion wonder either at their existence—for they were foretold as bound to exist,¹ or that they subvert the faith of some—for they exist for the very purpose of giving an opportunity to faith, through suffering trial, of being approved.

It is therefore due to a want of heed and reflection that many are offended by the mere fact that heresies have so much power. How much would they have if they did not exist?² When anything is destined in any case to be, its being has behind it an irresistible cause, and then this cause of its existence makes it evident that it is impossible for it not to exist.

¹ Matt. 7:15; 24:4,11,24; Acts 20:24f; 1 Tim. 4:1f; 2 Pet. 2:1. In 1 Cor. 11:19 St. Paul was probably quoting definite words of Christ; see Knowling, *Witness of the Epistles*, p. 119.

² A Tertullianesque paradox. The non-existence of heresies would falsify the predictions of Scripture.

CHAPTER II

IN the case of fever, for example, to which its own place is assigned amongst other deadly and excruciating calamities for the destruction of man, we do not wonder at its existence, for it does exist; or that it destroys man, for it exists for that purpose. Similarly in the case of heresies, which are engendered for the weakening and destruction of faith, if we are struck with amazement that they have this power, we may just as well feel amazement that they exist; since as long as they exist they have power, and as long as they have power they have being.

Again, in the case of fever, rather than wonder at it we loathe it as an evil, recognized as such both from the reason of its existence and from its power; and so far as we can we take precautions against it, since we have not the power to annihilate it. Yet in the case of heresies, which inflict eternal death and the burning of a keener fire, some persons prefer to wonder that heresies have such power rather than to avoid their power when they have the power to avoid it. Heresies would not prevail a whit if men would cease to wonder at their prevailing so greatly. For either whilst men are wondering, they lay themselves open to an occasion of stumbling, or because they are being tempted to stumble, they wonder on that account, fancying that the great power of heresies arose from some truth that they possess. As though it were wonderful, forsooth, that evil should have any strength of its own. Yet it is to be observed that heresies prevail chiefly with those who are not valiant in the Faith.

In a contest of boxers or gladiators, in very many cases a competitor wins the victory not because he is strong or insuperable, but because the defeated one was a man of no power; and hence that same victor, when subsequently matched against a really strong man, is himself overcome and retires. Just in the same way heresies owe all their

CHAPTER II

power to men's weaknesses, and are powerless when they assail a really strong faith.

CHAPTER IX

Now I am going to grant you your point voluntarily. I will admit, for the sake of argument, that the words “Seek and ye shall find” were addressed to all. Yet even this view is bound to clash with any reasonable rule of interpretation. For no Divine word is so unqualified or so unlimited in its application that the words alone can be used in argument and their real purport be disregarded.

But among first principles I lay this down: that there was a one and definite Truth taught by Christ, which the nations are bound by every means to believe, and therefore to seek, so that when they have found it they may believe it. Yet surely an indefinite search for a single and definite teaching is impossible. Thou must seek until thou findest, and thou must believe when thou hast found. And then nothing more remains for thee to do, save to keep what thou hast believed—provided that thou believest also that there is nothing else to be believed, and therefore nothing remains to be sought for, since thou hast found and believed what was taught by Him Who bids thee seek for nothing beyond that which He taught.

And if any one is in uncertainty what this is, it will be established that Christ’s teaching is to be found with us. And for the moment, out of confidence in my proof, I anticipate it, and admonish certain persons that nothing must be sought beyond what they believe to be the proper objects of their search, lest they interpret “Seek and ye shall find” without strict regard to its real purport.

CHAPTER XIV

Now, provided that the form of this Rule be preserved in its own place, thou mayest seek and discuss as much as thou pleasest, and pour forth thy whole desire for curious inquiry if any point seem to thee to be undetermined through ambiguity or obscure from want of clearness. There is surely some brother, a doctor gifted with the grace of knowledge, some one amongst those well-skilled ones who are intimate with thee, and like thyself curious, who although like thyself a seeker will know that it is better for thee in the end to be ignorant, thus avoiding thy knowing what thou oughtest not, since thou already knowest what thou oughtest to know. “Thy faith,” Christ said,¹ “hath saved thee,” not thy argumentative skill in the Scriptures. Faith is posited in a Rule: it hath a Law, and Salvation that cometh from the observance of the Law. But argumentative skill depends upon curious inquiry, and possesses a fame derived solely from zeal in practice. Let curiosity yield to faith, let fame give place to salvation. At all events let them cease to be a hindrance, or let them be quiet. To know nothing contrary to the Rule is to know everything. Suppose that heretics were not the enemies of the Truth; suppose that we were not forewarned to avoid them, yet what kind of an action would it be to unite with men who even themselves profess that they are still seeking? If they are still truly seeking, they have as yet found nothing certain, and therefore as long as they go on seeking they display their own hesitation about any tenets which they seem for the moment to hold; And so if thou who art similarly a seeker lookest to them who themselves are also seekers—a man in doubt looking to others in doubt, a man in uncertainty to others in like plight—blind thyself, thou art bound to be led by the blind into the ditch.² But when for purposes of deceit they pretend to be still seeking, in order craftily to recommend their own views to us through an insinuation of

disquietude, and having approached us immediately defend those points which they previously said needed investigation, we are at once bound to refute them so as to make them understand that we are not deniers of Christ but of themselves. For while they are still seeking they are not yet holding, and since they are not holding they have not yet believed, and since they have not yet believed they are not yet Christians.

But, it may be objected, when they do really hold and believe, they affirm the necessity of seeking in order that they may be able to defend their belief.

Then they actually deny it before they defend it, since whilst they are seeking they confess that they have not yet believed. How much more are they not Christians to us who are not even so to themselves. What kind of a faith do they argue for who arrive at it by deceit? To what truth do they lend their countenance who introduce it with a lie?

But they themselves treat of the Scriptures and argue out of the Scriptures. Of course; for whence could they speak concerning the things of the Faith save out of the literature of the Faith?

¹ Luke 18:42.

² Matt. 15:14.

FROM PART VI — WHERE THE FOUR AGREE

The four writers in this book answered one question, and they answered from four worlds: Tertullian at Carthage near the year 200, Cyril in fourth-century Jerusalem, Jewel in the England of 1562, Newman in the England of 1845 and 1878. They do not share a method, and this part does not make them share one. It gathers the places where their printed chapters carry the same conviction, and each side of every agreement is anchored in the sentences printed in Parts II–V. A row appears only where at least three of the four carry text for it; where a writer says less than the others on a point, the row says so.

Four writers can converge on a sentence without converging on a system, and each row below is titled from the writers' own terms. What the four do not settle is Part VII's work.

Agreement 1 — The faith is received, not invented

None of the four treats the Christian faith as a position a man works out for himself. Each begins from a trust already in hand, and each describes the holding of it as a stewardship before it is ever a debate. The vocabularies differ (Tertullian's handing-on, Jewel's searching out, Newman's development under tests, Cyril's delivery of a summary), but the order is the same in all four: what is believed was given, and the giving is older than the questioning.

Tertullian fixes the order at the head of his argument, in the chapter that names what the heretic does and what the Christian may not:

For us, however, it is not lawful to introduce anything on our own authority, nor to choose that which any one else has similarly introduced. We have the Apostles of the Lord as our authorities, who not even themselves chose to introduce anything on their own authority, but faithfully handed on to the nations the rule received from Christ. — Tertullian, chapter VI

Nothing is introduced on one's own authority; the rule descends from Christ through the Apostles, and choosing is the very act that makes a heretic.

Jewel confesses rather than invents, and his Recapitulation gives the account of where the confession was taken from:

And that we have searched out of the Holy Bible, which we are sure cannot deceive, one sure form of religion, and have returned again unto the primitive Church of the ancient fathers and Apostles; that is to say, to the first ground and beginning of things, as unto the very foundations and headsprings of Christ's church. — Jewel, Recapitulation

The form of religion was searched out where deceiving is impossible, and the return was to the first ground of things; a faith traced to the foundations and headsprings is claimed as an inheritance, not offered as a novelty.

Newman's account runs differently, and his trace here is thinner than the others'. The received faith, in his chapters, is an idea carried by a community, and the guard against invention is a set of tests rather than a stated creed:

This is what may be said, and I acknowledge its force: it becomes necessary in consequence to assign certain characteristics of faithful developments, which none but faithful developments have, and the presence of which serves as a test to discriminate between them and corruptions. — Newman, chapter V

None but faithful developments carry the marks, and what is invented fails them. These two chapters of his give no positive statement of the rule of faith. The guarding is what he contributes here, and it says less than the other three state.

Cyril hands the faith over as a summary sealed before the Creed itself is reached:

But before delivering you over to the Creed, I think it is well to make use at present of a short summary of necessary doctrines; that the multitude of things to be spoken, and the long interval of the days of all this holy Lent, may not cause forgetfulness in the mind of the more simple among you; but that, having strewn some seeds now in a summary way, we may not forget the same when afterwards more widely tilled. — Cyril, Lecture IV

The seeds are strewn in a summary way now and tilled more widely afterwards; the candidate receives an ordered trust, not a set of conclusions to be worked out again from the beginning.

For a reader weighing the four together, the point is this: the question of how one knows does not open from zero in any of them. Each starts with a faith in hand and asks how it is kept. Where the keeping happens, and who does the keeping, divides them sharply, and Part VII takes up the division in its turn.

FROM PART VII — WHERE THEY DIFFER

Agreement is the smaller half of honesty. Part VI gathered what the four writers hold in common; this part names what they do not: four axes on which the traditions genuinely part company, each framed in the terms of the writer who holds it. No camp is described by another camp's critique. Jewel's charges against his accusers, and Tertullian's against the sects of his own century, appear below only as labeled polemic, never as a description of what any other tradition in this book teaches. And nothing here is a debate: Tertullian wrote at Carthage about the year 200, Cyril taught at Jerusalem about 350, Jewel published in 1562, and Newman's *Essay* was published in 1845 and revised for the edition of 1878; none of them was answering any of the others, so the differences are set side by side, not staged against each other. One of the four axes rests on three writers, because the fourth writer's printed text does not carry it, and the silence is named where it falls. Each axis ends by naming what turns on it, plainly, with no winner declared.

Difference 1 — Where the tribunal sits: what is tried, and by what

All four settle a disputed claim by carrying it somewhere to be tried; Part VI gathered that much ground. The disagreement is about where the tribunal sits, and about what has to be decided before it can sit at all. For Tertullian, the trial of texts is not the first proceeding. Before any Scripture is expounded between strangers, a possessory question is decided:

Who holds the Faith to which the Scriptures belong? From whom and through whom, and when, and to whom was the doctrinal teaching delivered whereby men are made Christians? For wheresoever it shall appear that the true Christian religion and faith exist, there will be found the true Scriptures and interpretations and all Christian traditions. — Tertullian, chapter XIX

The order of things demands that this point come first, and until it is answered the heretic is, in Tertullian's strongest stand (chapter XV), "not to be admitted to any discussion of the Scriptures at all." The tribunal is not abolished; it is postponed until the parties are sorted, because a text means what its owner's faith says it means.

Jewel sets the court on a different footing. In his confession the written Scripture is the standing rule, and the church itself stands on the same side of the bar as any doctrine it pronounces:

Also that these be the heavenly voices, whereby God hath opened unto us his will: and that only in them man's heart can have settled rest; that in them be abundantly and fully comprehended all things, whatsoever be needful for our salvation, as Origen, Augustine, Chrysostom, and Cyrillus have taught: that they be the very might and strength of God to attain to salvation: that they be the foundations of the prophets and apostles, whereupon is built the church of God: that they be the very sure and infallible rule, whereby may be tried, whether the church do stagger, or err, and whereunto all ecclesiastical doctrine ought to be called to account: and that against these Scriptures neither law, nor ordinance, nor any custom ought to be heard: no, though Paul his own self, or an angel from heaven, should come and teach the contrary. — Jewel, Part II

Nothing outranks the rule, not even an apostle or an angel teaching otherwise, and the church is tried for staggering by the very

rule that tries every doctrine. Jewel then binds the office to the book instead of raising it beside the book: the keys of the kingdom are, with Chrysostom for witness, “the knowledge of the Scriptures”, and the office opens the text rather than standing above it. Certainty sits in a text, and the heart’s settled rest is only in them.

Newman’s two chapters state no standing rule at all. He names “the rule of Scripture Interpretation” among the principles of Catholicity and leaves it, by his own accounting, “undefined, by the Church”; the guard he offers in their place is historical, a set of tests carried to a growing thing:

This is what may be said, and I acknowledge its force: it becomes necessary in consequence to assign certain characteristics of faithful developments, which none but faithful developments have, and the presence of which serves as a test to discriminate between them and corruptions. — Newman, chapter V

The tribunal for him is not a text consulted but a history examined. A claim is decided by whether its growth has kept the type, the principles, and the vigour of the idea it came from; the trial sits in time rather than in a document.

Cyril holds the two sides of the seam in a single charge. Every doctrine must be proved from Scripture, and the Church fixes which books may stand at that bar:

Have thou ever in thy mind this seal, which for the present has been lightly touched in my discourse, by way of summary, but shall be stated, should the Lord permit, to the best of my power with the proof from the Scriptures. For concerning the divine and holy mysteries of the Faith, not even a casual statement must be delivered without the Holy Scriptures; nor must we be drawn aside by mere plausibility and artifices of speech. Even to me, who tell thee these things, give not absolute credence, unless thou receive the proof of the things which I announce from the Divine

Scriptures. For this salvation which we believe depends not on ingenious reasoning, but on demonstration of the Holy Scriptures. — Cyril, Lecture IV

The court is the written Word, and the first person bound by it is the speaker. But the bar itself is appointed elsewhere: the candidate learns “what are the books of the Old Testament, and what those of the New” from the Church, and whatever is not read in the Churches is not read even by himself. Scripture is the tribunal, and the Church keeps the list of the books that may appear before it.

What turns on this. The difference is about what must be settled before a disputed doctrine can be heard. Jewel sends every doctrine to the standing rule and puts the church in the dock with it; Tertullian puts a possessory question first, so that the trial of texts waits until the owner of the Faith is named; Cyril proves each doctrine from Scripture while the Church defines the court’s list of books; Newman states no standing rule and tries a claim by the fidelity of its history. What a reader does first, when two doctrines disagree, follows from this seam, and the four first moves are not the same.

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