

00:00 Welcome back, everybody. This is the second video for session four of the Exploring Theology course. Just looking to my coffee.

00:09 And, so, yeah, in this video, the focus, of this part is going to be looking at what we mean by the word tradition, when we're thinking about it theologically and within the context of, the church as well.

00:23 So, let me just get the slides up and we'll get going.

00:29 so here we are. The word tradition. Now, one of the things I like to do is look at where words come from, and what's their background, and that kind of thing.

00:38 It sometimes helps. Doesn't always, but sometimes helps. Opens up angles and everything. So, let's just have a look at this word.

00:46 So, taking the word tradition. so it comes from the Latin word tradizio. So, this is, the noun, the tradizio, and it itself as a word, tradizio, comes from the word tradere.

01:01 Now, tradere, means, and when you're translating some Latin, when you're, when you've got the word tradere, you're going to translate it to deliver or betray.

01:10 Okay, so, that helps to a degree, but let's see where we can go, if we can go a little bit further with this, if we take that word, the, the tradere, the, it's like the doing word, of delivering and betra-, or betraying, if we take that word and we take it apart, there are two parts

01:31 , you've got the, you've got the trans part, which is translated, we would translate as across, and you've got the dare part, which is, if you take the word dare in Latin, it means to give.

01:45 So you've got two bits that are, that we, are joined together to make tradere, trans and dare. So in that sense, if you take those bits, it's like to give across, to hand over.

02:03 So when we're looking at the word tradizio, from which we get the word, tradition, you've got this understanding of giving across or handing over.

02:17 And so that's, that's, that's quite a bit. Let me just quickly go back over that just to make sure we're all on there.

02:24 So we've got the Latin word Tradizio, that's the noun, the noun. The word that is most closely related, as it were, to our word tradition, it's where our word tradition comes from.

02:34 that word in Latin comes from the verb, the doing word, which is to deliver or betray. So if you take that word Tradere, there are two bits that go to make it up, trans and dare.

02:48 And trans is translated as across and dare is to give. Give across. So the idea of Tradere is to give across, to hand over.

02:59 And you can see how you get from to give across, to hand over, to words such as meaning such as to deliver or to betray.

03:06 so, yes, that's, that's where we've got to with the word tradition. So, tradition, with all this in mind, means both what is given across and the act of handing it over.

03:21 It's both what is given across and the act of giving it across. It has these two levels, or two aspects of its meaning.

03:35 It's both what is given across and the act of handing it over. Now, an image might help at this point, so let me, come to an image, give you a thing.

03:49 So here we go. So this takes us back to, so, I'm recording this in May 2025. Last year we had the Olympics in Paris, and here we've got Imani Lara Lansicot, and, Amy Hunt, and they were competing in the four by four, one hundred, relay.

04:07 Uh, this is for the finals, and they got a silver medal. And, here, I think Imani Lara Lansicot was running the second leg, and Amy Hunt was running the third leg.

04:21 And because it's a relay, you've got the baton there, the sort of yellow stick there, and that's being handed over.

04:29 Now, to think about this, that when I was saying a moment ago, tradition means both what is given over and the act of handing it over.

04:37 So, the, the baton is both, is, is the tradition, as it were, that's what's being handed over, but the actual act of handing it over, of, Lansicot handing, relaying it, passing it whilst they're running to, Hunt.

04:53 the, the, that's, that's, that's traditioning, that's, that's handing it over. So, it's both the baton and the act of handing the baton over, are the, both are the kind of things of what we're meaning of when we're using the word tradition.

05:06 And, if you go, if you think back to the reading that we had for our Lectio Divina, reading, in the first video for this session, session four Paul's writing to the church in Corinth, and he's having a, he's, he's having a tricky time with these folk.

05:29 I mean, they are, they are a rum bunch. And, in this, it's a long letter, and, he, he, he starts the letter talking about the importance of the crucifixion, and at the end of the letter, He then

brackets, as it were, and then at the end of the letter, then he's coming to talk about the importance

05:46 of the resurrection. And this is the beginning of chapter five, this fantastic, part of the And in this letter, he says this phrase, and you, look, I've kept the verse numbers in here.

06:02 You can see, for I handed on to you of first importance what I in turn had received. This I handed on handed on to you, yes, this I handed on.

06:12 This, when the scriptures were first translated into Latin, they were written into Greek, and then they were translated into Latin.

06:20 The word that was used there in the Greek, and what I'm about to say still holds in the original language, if that kind of thing is going to, trip you up, don't let that trip you up, doesn't apply.

06:30 it's not a, it's not an issue in this, the same thing is, is, is very much going on. I handed on to you, when it was translated into Latin, because language was like English at the time, it was the main dominant language across the Roman Empire, across the Mediterranean, so these documents

06:47 that have been written, these letters that have been written in Greek, if you wanted them to have a wider audience, they needed to be translated into the English the lingua franca of the day, into Latin.

06:56 when this was translated, it was translated, for I traditioned to you as a first importance. I traditioned, you've got this bit, I traditioned.

07:08 obviously we wouldn't say in English I traditioned, but in the Latin it's tradidi, which is saying I traditioned, I passed on, so I, I handed on, I tradidied to you, I traditioned to you as a first importance, what I in turn had received.

07:27 So, Paul is talking about here, in his letter, that he is traditioning, as in he is passing on. So this is the aspect, if you remember, if we go back a few, things, tradition means both what is given over and the act that of handing it over.

07:42 So Paul is talking here about the act of handing it over, when he's talking about I handed on, I traditioned, I tradidied, as it were, it to you, I handed it on.

07:54 We're talking about tradition here, in terms of the act of handing it on. But what, okay, because you've got those two aspects of the meaning of tradition, both the act, and work.

08:05 What is being traditioned? So here, what is being traditioned? What is being handed over? So it's the message.

08:27 I want you to understand brothers and sisters, the good and good news that I proclaim to you. That's one way he refers to it.

08:32 The good news, the gospel, which you'd in turn received in which you also stand through, which also you're being saved.

08:38 If you hold firmly to the message that I proclaim to you for, I handed onto you as first importance. It's the message.

08:49 The message is what he is trans, what, what he is traditioning. So he's, the act of tradition is the act of handing on.

08:57 And what he's handing on is the tradition, the content of the act of handing on. It's what's handed on. And here it's the message.

09:09 And note that the message here takes the form of a story, doesn't it? Let's look at it. So, for I tradition, tradidi in Latin, to you is of first importance what I in turn had received.

09:23 So Paul's received it and he's handing it on. That, and this is the bit in italics, Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures.

09:41 A, first of all, it's like a mini, narrative, it's like a description of the plot of a story.

09:50 go back all the way, I haven't got it on the screen, but you know it by now, the Robert Jensen quote, God is whoever raised Jesus from the dead, having before raised, Israel from Egypt.

10:00 It's like very succinct, and here, Paul is doing a similarly very succinct thing, isn't he? He's saying, that the thing that he had traditioned was, of the first important, what I had in turn received, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he

10:16 was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures. So, you've got this very succinct little story, this very succinct little narrative, which is the message.

10:28 It's the good news, it's the message. That's what's being traditioned, that's what's being handed over, that Paul is handing it over, and notice, this is gosh, I'm going off in different directions, but notice that in this context because oftentimes we'll think about tradition as

10:47 being across generations, won't we? Don't we? It's just like, there's, there's one generation, this is the way we've always done these things, So I have the.

10:54 A little bit of the traditionalism, I know but it's being handed across from one generation to the next.

11:01 That's oftentimes how we think about things being tradition, being traditioned, as it were. Um, but Paul is talking about it not across the generations, but in his own time.

11:12 Um, he has received from one group of people, and after his encounter with the Lord on his way to Damascus, and all that then changed, he is, he has received something, this message about Christ dying for our sins in accordance with the scriptures.

11:29 He's then, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, he is handing this on, this message, he's handing it on, he's traditioning it.

11:39 It is the tradition, it's the, Thank Uh, this message, it's the content, and he's also handing it on to the people that are alive in his own moment.

11:51 It's not for those who have yet to be born, and from those who have already died, it's everybody's alive at this moment, and he's handing it on.

11:59 He's traditioning it. So tradition is both across the generations, but it's also in our moment, as we hand something on from one person to the next.

12:08 He's received something, and he's handing it on to the other person. So this is, this is, this, this is what's going on here when we're using the word tradition.

12:15 Tradition means both what is given across, and that this is his message. So here we go, that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised again on the third day in accordance with the scriptures, and notice that they're just like with the

12:35 declaration, the theological declaration that we were looking at in the first video, this recurrent, talking about Jesus dying in accordance with the scriptures, and he rose again in accordance with the scriptures type of thing.

12:48 I can't remember whether it says the thing, I need to get the bit. Anyway, it doesn't matter. Here, Paul is connected to connecting both of these things, both Jesus' dying for our sins is in accordance with the scriptures, and he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures.

13:04 Remember here, just as with the Nicene Creed, even more so because the Nicene Creed was three hundred years later. Here, Paul, there are no scriptures other than what we call the Old Testament.

13:17 Paul was in me. Immersed as a, as a, as a Pharisee, he was immersed in what we would call the Old Testament, the, the Tanakh, the the Torah, the, the, the Prophets and the writings, what we group together and call together as one, we call it, we call it the Old Testament.

13:34 Jesus' Bible, this is, this is, these are the only scriptures. So when he's talking about in accordance with the scriptures, he's not talking about, oh, in accordance with the Gospels.

13:42 Well, according to Mark or the God, they hadn't been written yet. He's, none of this exists at this point. Paul is just firing off letters across the Mediterranean to all these churches that he's had dealings with.

13:56 And when he talks about in accordance with the scriptures, he's talking about the Old Testament. And for those of you who have had teaching with me before, those of you who are, have yet to have that experience.

14:10 Um, one of the things you'll hear me talk about is the importance of the Old Testament. It's so important. And here we have a perfect example, a perfect illustration of why, because Paul is saying all this is that has happened with, with Christ.

14:27 Okay. And Christ meaning the Messiah. um, the anointed one of God that his dying and his rising are all, it's all in accordance with the scriptures.

14:41 Now, what does that mean? That's to be unpacked and, and, and, and, and to be explored and to, to be worked through.

14:49 But the point is, he's saying, it's all in accordance with the scriptures. Everything that was there in the tradition and, and all in our, in the Torah, in the prophets, in Isaiah, in, in, in the writings, it's all there pointing to what was going to happen.

15:04 And, and, and for us to make sense of what has happened, we can't make sense of it apart from everything that's written in the Old Testament, what we call the Old Testament, the Torah, the prophets and the writings of Israel.

15:16 So all that. Is there so tradition means both what is given across and the act of handing it over.

15:30 Okay. Go, remember that relay image of the runners at the Olympics and everything, handing on the baton and all, you know the, the moment of anxiety, you're going to drop the baton type of thing and everything where we might pick up on that in a moment.

15:43 I don't know. Um, but yeah, so this of course raises a question, doesn't it?

15:53 the question is this, I mean, how do you make sure that what has been, that in this traditioning, in this, both the content and in the act of handing over, both in your own moment and across time, how do you make sure that, you know, You don't, as it were, drop the baton.

16:22 or to use another, uuuh, an example.

16:27 yeah, another way of thinking about it is the telephone game. Do you remember playing this? you know, you start off, and you've got a nice little illustration of this.

16:36 You've got one, you know, I used to play this as a kid. You've got one kid who says one word, and here the kid's saying peas, and then by the time it's gone from, it then turns into bees, and then knees, and then cheese, and by the final person there is just like going, Hang on, fleas?

16:48 How do you ensure the message, remember Paul's talking about the message that he's received and that he's handing on, how do you make sure, how do you, uuuh, preserve the message, how do you make sure that it stays intact as it were, or that you don't drop the baton, or that the message, slowly

17:05 but surely, as it goes along, starts to get tweaked and changed, and so on and so forth, and so you start off with bees and you end up with fleas.

17:13 How do you, how do you, how, what are some of the ways? So, actually, yeah, let's pause for a moment, grab your notebooks, have a think about some of the ways that you can think of that we ensure that we preserve the message, the integrity of the message.

17:37 Thinking about Paul receiving the message and handing it on, what are some of the ways to preserve the message in this act of traditioning?

17:46 How do we preserve this, what is being handed on, the message, the tradition that's being handed on, the message? take yeah, take three minutes, grab your notebooks, scribble down some thoughts and we'll see where we get to.

18:00 Okay, so, I wonder what, some of the ways that have come to mind for you, of ways that, to preserve the message.

21:38 If you need a bit more time before I move on with this, then, then pause the video, but, I'm now going to just sort of explore, three, key ways, which, that are used and have been used by the church to, both in the act of traditioning, in the act of handing over, and the

22:02 to ensure that the message itself, the tradition, the message that's being, the content of that act of traditioning, uuuh, is preserved.

22:08 so three ways. Oops. Here we go, three ways. Firstly, it's going to come as no, no, no surprises here, scripture.

22:23 I'm, I'm, I was saying a moment ago that, when Paul was writing, obviously there was no, the, the, the scriptures, in accordance with the scriptures, the scriptures, were the pieces of, writing, that, uuuh, was, was, was the Old Testament, what we call the Old Testament

22:42 , the Torah, the first five books of the Old Testament, and then all the prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and all the, what we call the minor prophets, the shorter prophets, and then all the writings, things like the Psalms, and Proverbs, and the Book of Job, and, and, and the Song

23:03 of Songs, and, all of, all, all, all of that, these are the, these, the Scriptures, but then of course what happens is, Those who were in those early years and everything of, of, of, after Jesus's, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, to the right hand of God the Father, what

23:29 happens then, of course, is that those who witness these things, they, they, they start to die, and so then it becomes a, a very important thing in order to preserve what their witness was, and so whilst they were still alive, then you would have, them writing, well, those

23:53 who were witnesses then relaying their witness to those who then write. So say, for example, the, the, the shortest gospel, the gospel according to Mark, is understood to be, that the primary witness that lies behind the writing of the gospel according to Mark is Peter, the Apostle

24:10 himself, and, so you have that bearing witness to Peter's witness, so it's something that's then written down, and, that way, you can ensure that, yeah, yeah, no, that, that, that is what happened, or, no, no, no, that's not what happened, you, you know, that, so on and so forth,

24:33 and you've got it written down in a way that is faithful, and then can be both in your own time, across the Mediterranean, take those pieces of writing, remember, that would have been hugely expensive, and so on and so forth at the time, but you can take those pieces of writing, and they can be shared

24:49 both in their, in their own time, but also across time, so generations that then followed, you have these pieces of writing that, and, and, and Paul in his occasional letters to these tricky

churches that he's writing to across the Mediterranean, those writings as well as along with Peter's letters

25:06 , and John's letters, and the Revelation according to St. John, and, and the, and then the other Gospel accounts, the Gospel according to Matthew, the Gospel according to Luke, the Gospel according to John, and then you also have, don't you, you have the Book of Acts, which was also written by Luke

25:21 , so you've got all these scriptures, so a way of preserving the message, and ensuring that that can be handed on in a way, with integrity, and keeping the message intact, as it were.

25:39 That's it. So, tradition, in this sense, is both, remember, the act of handing it on, and the content of what's being handed on.

25:44 So, here, we're very much focused on the content of what's being handed on, this is the witness as to what's happened, and writing and reflecting on its consequence, and what it means for us to live, and so on, and so forth.

25:56 All that's the scriptures. Okay. Number two. I wonder what was number two again. on your list, whether you, I wonder whether you had scriptures on your list, it would be interesting.

26:08 This is going to be one of the things we'll talk about when we meet. So, number two. Okay. It's the creeds.

26:17 And the creeds themselves, we've already come across one of the creeds, haven't we, earlier, in the first session. Drag myself up to there, there we go.

26:25 So, we had the Nicene Creed, this came many, many, many years later, 325. Uh, the year was when it was formalized.

26:32 Um, but you had prior to that earlier sort of creeds taking shape, statements of faith, because you had people being baptized and this is sort of where it all sort of these statements, these elaborated statements for many of them, they're, they're, they're sort of their provenance where they come

26:51 from, their origin, was in the statement of faith that you, if you were being baptized you needed to know what you were signing up for, as it were, because as is the case in our own time in other parts of the world, becoming a Christian, brings its cost, and so you

27:15 you needed to know what you were signing up for, and you needed to know what it was about, and, so core statements of faith, you know, one of the earliest statements of faith is Jesus is Lord, which had all sorts of political consequences for saying that, you know, if you

27:34 were saying Jesus is Lord, you were saying that Caesar, who was the other big lord, you're saying that Caesar isn't, isn't, isn't.

27:39 It's equivalent, and many people have made this, and you're, I'm sure I've heard this before, you'll have heard this before, but it's equivalent to turning around in 1930s Germany and saying, Hitler isn't the Fuhrer, Jesus is mein Fuhrer.

27:51 and you say, well, the, the, the, the power and the politics, just as with Caesar, just as with Hitler.

27:57 It's turning around saying, hang on a second, no, I'm, I'm the one who calls the shots here, not you, and so, to say that Jesus is Lord, it has all sorts of resonances, yes, with everything in the Old Testament, and what, and, and, and, we can talk about that on another occasion, but it also

28:13 has this highly politically charged significance as well, so one of, that's one of the earliest kind of, nutshell kind of statements is that Jesus is Lord, and Jesus is Lord, and no one else is, so yeah, but then by the time you get to 325, you've got these more expanded, elaborated

28:32 creeds, which have been born of theological reflection as they're trying to work out, you know, the identity of who Jesus is, and what's Jesus' relationship with the Father, and who is the Holy Spirit, and all this, all this kind of things being thrashed out, and worked, and worked through.

28:50 And then these creeds, become established and accepted, that yes, this is faithful, this is faithful to the tradition. And you hear that word of saying, well, faithful to the tradition, but I hope you're beginning to hear more layers to that meaning.

29:02 It's, it's faithful to the message that was handed on from those who witnessed what happened. That's, that's, it's both the content, and the action.

29:15 To handing it on faithfully. Tradition has that double meaning of, of both the act and the content. And so the creeds got the apostles' creed, the Nicene creed, got the Chalcedonian creed, you, the, the, the, and the various various others.

29:35 And the, no, not thinking the Chalcedonian creed. I'm thinking of the Athanasian creed. Anyway, it doesn't matter. The Nicene creed is the really, really, really big one.

29:49 Um, and we stay truthful to it and faithful to it. So that's the second one. So you've got so you've got you've got where's the slides gone?

30:02 Here we go. You've got um, scripture, creeds. Have a guess. What do you think the third one is? What do you think the third one I'm going to come up with will be?

30:20 Got all the writings, but bear witness. Got the creeds, which are more sort of, Systematic statements, declarations of faith. What's the third one?

30:32 How long can I keep you in suspense? The third one Yeah, that's right.

30:51 The third one is bishops from the get-go. This is the understanding. Different words, different languages understood, but it's there in the New Testament letters, so on and so forth.

30:58 These people who have this authority that they're charged with, pastoring, and taking care of all within their area, and also ensuring that there is sound teaching.

31:12 that's one of their key responsibilities. And even to this very day, in our church, the Church of England, that's one of the key responsibilities, is the, the, the being the chief pastor of both the priests and the laity, and, also ensuring sound, teaching, and, and, and, in

31:33 our time, in the in the in the Diocese of Winchester, our diocesan bishop at the time of recording, so this is in 2025, is Bishop Philip Mount Stephen, there's a happy, smiling picture of Philip, and just recently consecrated is also the Bishop of Southampton, Bishop Rhiannon

31:53 , Bishop Rhiannon King, and she's one of, Suffragan, bishops in the diocese, until very recently, of course, we had Bishop David as well, but now Bishop David has been true.

32:04 Translated, and he's gone over to become Diocesan Bishop of Truro, so yeah, so Bishop, Philip and Bishop Rhiannon, their role, they are our bishops at the moment, over the coming year, when we're doing this course in 2026, I'll edit this bit, and we'll include the new Bishop of Basingstoke

32:23 as well, but these are three of the ways, that are the, the tradition of, of making sure the act of handing on from one generation, both across time and in the same time, how we hand across the message that's been received.

32:46 We go back to what Paul was talking about in that, passage of, from 1 Corinthians 15. The message that he has received and that then he has proclaimed, and, and, ah, the, the Corinthians are then, are to have, to receive this, and, and implicitly then they are to share and to hand on themselves

33:06 , to tradition it to others, It's both the act of traditioning and the content of traditioning. And, another way of thinking about this as we draw this little, section to do with what we mean by tradition and traditioning, is to think about, here's a road.

33:25 So, you, you got the road, just going around the corners, lovely countryside, so on and so forth. But look what's going along the left-hand side here.

33:33 Along here and on the right-hand side of the road as we look at it. You've got these crash barriers, yeah?

33:43 these are here to stop the cars from, falling off the road, driving into the, driving into the fields and having accidents and so on and so forth.

33:50 That's the idea. The crash barriers are there to stop us from going off the road. And similarly, when we're talking about the, the, the ways that we can preserve the message and ensure its faithful transmission, scripture, creeds and bishops, they are in effect, in one way of thinking about it, they're

34:07 like our crash barriers. They're there to make sure that we don't go careering off. and, and if If you think about the creeds.

34:16 if I go back to the creed, boom, boom, boom, boom, there we go, Nicene Creed, think about this creed, this was born of, dispute, of argument, of disagreement as to who Jesus is and it was thrashed out as to what the, what the, the, the, the, the, the, the, the, the understanding of who Jesus

34:35 is that was coherent with all the events of his life and who he is and and what he has done and so on, that if we're to speak of him, we have to speak of him in the same language that we're speaking of God, because he is God, just as God is God, God the Father is God, Jesus is God, so on and so forth

34:50 , so in the past, it's akin to saying, well, back in the day, go back to this image of the crash barriers, it's like, the road used to be here, but back in the year 300, or the, back in the 200s or so on and so forth, there weren't any crash barriers at this particular point.

35:04 And some of us went careering off the road, a guy called Arian, and he was saying, Jesus isn't really God, he's kind of God-ish, but he's not entirely God, he's not quite God the way the God the Father is God type of thing, and oh my word, then the consequences that flow from that, we can't say

35:18 that, because if we say that, the, the, the, the, that then entails X, Y, and Z, which means that this doesn't hold together, and we're not bearing faithful witness to everything that has happened with Jesus.

35:28 Jesus goes right back to the message of Paul, saying that he died, and he rose, and he's ascended, and, and so on.

35:34 So, as a consequence, it's like, okay, right, we come together with the Creed, and we'll just assemble a little bit of the, crash barrier here to make sure that, subsequent Christians, both in our own time, and, in the years to come, don't go careering off at this particular point

35:52 of the road. Now, this is helpful, because one of the things, is that, and it may have been that when I asked you that earlier question about how you feel about tradition, what comes to mind and everything, you might have had a sort of fairly negative view.

36:06 You might have been more sort of your experience may have been tempered by that kind of understanding that comes with traditionalism, tradition for its own sake type of thing.

36:15 but a lot of what lies behind tradition, this content and the act of handing on the content, is that in the past, all the mistakes, so many of the mistakes have been made, and, just gone in all sorts of weird and wacky directions with things, and the Church has discovered and

36:37 understood that actually no, that isn't the way to go, and that's not that's not where we should end up. And, and, and so it's for us to benefit from us.

36:46 Now, if we turn around and say, oh, we don't need to have any, we don't need to pay any attention to what's gone on over the last 2000 years, then we just are gonna repeat the same mistakes.

36:56 We're just gonna end up doing the same thing all over again. And that's what you see happening, is that that, that we just think, ah, we don't- need to really you know know, well, Jesus was a fantastic moral teacher, but to speak of him as being God, type of thing, well, boom, we're 37:13 right back in the two hundreds. And, and, and, oh no, it's a, it's a talking about an interior, spiritual kind of thing, and Jesus wasn't really human.

37:25 He was God, yes, totally he was God, except that he was God, but- the idea that he was actually human?

37:30 No, no, he was just pretending to be human, boom, was straight back to those early hundreds of years prior to the Nicene Creed.

37:38 And, and so there are all sorts of ways that we can end up going in our own theological thinking, in our own time.

37:43 Um, and if we haven't spent time learning about what has happened in this act of traditioning, of handing standing Over the tradition, from generation to generation, over the years, we will just end up making the same mistakes.

38:00 And with all the consequences that then followed from them. So the, the crash barriers are there to help us keep on track.

38:07 Help us keep the act of traditioning, this act of handing over, and the content of it to keep it um, on track.

38:16 However, there is an overarching question behind this, isn't there?

38:25 And the question is this, and I'm, I'm not even going to pretend that I'm, I'm going to answer this question, but it's an important question, is that, okay, so we've talked about the importance of the scriptures, we've talked about the importance of the creeds, we've talked about the importance of bishops

38:38 in this traditioning, this handing on of the message, how are we sure that this is being done faithfully, and well, and so on?

38:53 And one of the underpinning, questions here is the role of the Holy Spirit in all of this. Uh, the Lord, the giver of life, as the creed, says.

39:09 because, it's not that, you know, uuuh, it's not that you can't go over the crash barriers, as it were.

39:21 You can go over the crash barriers, You know, the crash barriers are only, you know, it's an image. You can drop the baton.

39:27 Go back to the running example, you can drop the baton. or go back to the telephone game. You know, just like, how do you keep the message intact from generation to generation or in your own time?

39:40 And integral to this is the Holy Spirit to, to, eh, because, as I say, you, you can, go back to the crash barrier image of driving along a road and the crash barriers there.

39:55 you can, you can move beyond that. The crash barriers, and, yes, you're still doing theology, you can be thinking of God and, and, and reflecting on God and, and, and so on, but, to

the degree that what you're doing then could be described as Christian theology, is, is up for grabs

40:15 , it's theology, absolutely, and, because, obviously, other traditions are also, thinking, theology. and, reflecting theologically, but in, in traditions that are shaped by other, events, and other writings, other scriptures, and, other ways of handing on from

40:36 one generation to the next type of thing, so, it's not that beyond the boundaries of this road, as it were, the way to use the, New Testament, language it's not that beyond the edges of the way that you can't go there.

40:52 You can, you're totally free to, and, and lots of people down the ages have gone in all sorts of interesting directions.

41:05 And back to the Nicene Creed, the, one of the advantages that comes from people exploring in all sorts of directions is that it, sharpens the mind of, of those who say, hey, hang on a second, you've gone too far here, and this is why.

41:16 And it, actually, until they were asked to think it through as to why that's going too far, or that's going in the wrong direction, they hadn't thought, perhaps, they hadn't sharpened their own thinking.

41:26 So in response to somebody going that little bit too far, it helps clarify your own thinking. You know how that happens in a c conversation sometimes, somebody says something and you go, well, I'm not actually sure I agree with that, and you've never really thought it through up to that point, but

41:39 now that that person said this to you, you need to think out your own thinking, as a consequence, you become clearer as to what you actually think about whatever topic it might be.

41:49 Same kind of thing. So again going beyond those limits sometimes. I can go like, oh dear, you know, what's going on there, but actually it can be a way by which, um it helps us work out as as followers of Jesus, how, what it is that we actually understand and hold to be true.

42:16 So so yeah, okay. Um, that's, I'm gonna draw this part to do with tradition to a close.

42:28 So we've, we've, in the previous videos, we've looked at revelation, and we've looked at reason. Obviously we've been looking at scripture a lot as we've gone along.

42:36 And, and so in this one we've also been talking about tradition. So I hope you have this understanding that it's got these two aspects to it, of both the content, the message, of what's being traditioned, and the act, of traditioning.

42:47 And so that's a lot of what's going on when we talk about tradition. And Integral to all of this is the agency and the activity of the Holy Spirit.

42:57 Umm, the you know, otherwise we're just talking and describing things at a sociological kind of level. This is, this group of people who had this message that they handed on in this kind of way.

43:09 And that's looking at it as a, The sociological kind of level or an anthropological kind of lens of just saying, this is a group of human beings.

43:16 And they were doing this and so on and so forth. Where it gets interesting is with this, I think it's already interesting.

43:23 But we're underpinning it. And the reason why it's just like, okay, what is going on all along the way here is where is the Holy Spirit in all of this?

43:32 Where is, How is, How is all this bound up with the activity of God, the Holy Spirit? So, that's one of the key things.

43:43 Always to bear in mind that, and the church has understood that the church, the Holy Spirit is very much, you know, integrally involved in the in the writing of the scriptures.

43:57 In the col- The translation of the scriptures. Which scriptures are we counting? Which ones are actually in the Bible?

44:01 Which ones are the really important ones? Well, the Holy Spirit's guiding the spaces in the formulation of the creeds. The Holy Spirit is totally involved in this.

44:08 And when we come to choosing a bishop, we're praying for the Holy Spirit to guide us in that choice of the Holy Spirit.

44:14 And when the Holy, when the bishop is consecrated, what do we do? We pray, and we lay hands, and pray that other bishops are praying, and laying their hands on the bishop uh, d- this.

44:22 The new bishop, for the Holy Spirit, just as we do. And at baptism, we pray for the- the Holy Spirit.

44:28 Holy Spirit. All the way through this. We're praying for God the Holy Spirit in all of this. And we're trusting that the Holy Spirit is guiding all of this.

44:37 So there we go. So when you think if I were to give you like a one sentence, nutshell kind of thing is that when you hear the word, tradition.



44:46 I pray that you will start to think, tradition Holy Spirit, it's not tradition, that tradition isn't. No, hear the word tradition.

44:58 And hear the message. think back to Paul writing his letter, the message and the act of handing it on. Both, both of those that they are enveloped and infused with the Holy Spirit.

45:10 So, tradition. Holy Spirit. Okay, there we go. Got all preachy there. Anyway, umm, this draws a video too for session 4, to a close.

45:27 And in the third session, I'm on decaf, I trust you, it's decaf. Umm, when we get to session video 3, we're going to, with all of this, we're just going to bring this round to this question of, why is the church important?

45:51 See you soon.