

Chapter 4

Answer Key for Double-Check Questions

1. *Why do we rely on the Magisterium for interpretation of Sacred Scripture?*

The Bible can be a difficult text to understand at times. Guided by the Holy Spirit, the Magisterium has the authority to guide us in authentically interpreting Sacred Scripture.

2. *What is biblical exegesis, and why is it important?*

Biblical exegesis is the critical interpretation and explanation of Sacred Scripture. To truly understand the writings of the Bible, we must do the work of biblical exegesis in order to grasp exactly what the human authors were trying to express as they communicated God's Word to us.

3. *What are the two main things we must consider when interpreting the Bible?*

First, we must consider what the human authors of Scripture were trying to communicate. Second, we must consider what God is revealing to us through their words.

4. *Explain the difference between the literal sense and the spiritual sense of a biblical text.*

The literal sense is a form of biblical interpretation that considers the plain meaning of the text. It is the meaning conveyed by the words used by its human author. The literal sense is the foundation for the spiritual sense. The spiritual sense considers what the realities and events of Sacred Scripture signify and mean for our salvation.

5. *Why is knowing the literary form important to understanding a biblical text?*

Knowing the literary form of the text you are reading is essential, so that you have the appropriate expectations for how that text is communicating its truth.

6. *How do textual criticism and historical criticism rely on each other when interpreting a text?*

If you have two versions of the same writing, figuring out the more accurate version (textual criticism) might depend on figuring out which version came first. Perhaps one version has a reference to a specific event. Knowing the historical situation (historical criticism) could help identify which came first.

7. *What are the three things we should take into account when assessing what the human authors of the Bible were communicating?*

The literary genres used by the author, the characteristic ways people spoke and wrote in their time, and the cultural ways in which people interacted with one another.

8. *What three things should we pay attention to when trying to understand what God intended to reveal in Scripture?*

The content and unity of the whole Scripture, both Old and New Testament; the living Tradition by which the whole Church continues to be guided by the Holy Spirit; and the analogy of faith, the unity of Church teachings with the whole of God's Revelation.

9. *Why is archaeology an important tool for biblical scholarship?*

Archaeology is an essential tool in helping us understand the culture and history of past human societies. It has led to a greater appreciation of the lives of the people we meet in Sacred Scripture.

