

Student Notes for Unit 1

Key Understandings for This Unit

These are the key concepts you need to understand by the end of the unit:

- The Bible is the story of our salvation and tells us of God's enduring love for humanity.
- **Bible** is a word that means "books" and is a collection of sacred books containing the truth of God's Revelation.
- Biblical exegesis, or the critical interpretation and explanation of a biblical text, can lead to a deeper understanding of the Bible's meaning for the people it was written to and a more accurate interpretation of what it means for us today.
- Catholics both read the Bible and believe in the Church's Tradition. Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Catholic Church leaders and scholars help to explain and interpret the Sacred Scriptures.

Overview of the Bible

1. The two main sections of the Bible are the _____ and the _____.
2. Give a brief description of the content of the Old Testament.
3. The Old Testament can be divided into four categories of books. What are these four categories?
4. Why is the New Testament called "New?"
5. The _____ are the heart of the Scriptures.
6. The New Testament can be divided into five categories of books. What are these five categories?



How the Bible Came to Be

The Bible went through several steps of storytelling, writing, and approval in its formation. This process lasted well over a thousand years. Depending on what steps are included, people count three to five steps in the formation of the Bible. You will learn five steps in class.

1. Fill in the missing steps in the formation of the Bible.
 - A. People experienced God over a long period of time.
 - B. People shared the stories of their experiences of God _____.
 - C. The leaders of the Church determined the official collection of inspired books that is the Bible. This official collection is called the _____.
 - D. People speaking different languages _____ the Bible into their own languages from the Bible's original languages which are _____, _____, and _____.
2. _____ is the handing on of the message of God's saving plan through words and deeds.
3. Why were the early Christians especially concerned about protecting and safeguarding the message of Jesus Christ by writing it down?
4. What are the four standards used by the bishops of the Church to discern which books to include in the canon of the Bible?
5. What are four commonly used Catholic Bible English translations?



Interpreting the Scriptures

1. Describe what is meant by a fundamentalist approach to biblical interpretation.
2. Describe what is meant by a contextualist approach to biblical interpretation.
3. How has biblical archaeology helped us to better understand the Scriptures?
4. To help us in interpreting the Bible, Saint Thomas Aquinas described two main senses of Scripture, the literal sense and the spiritual sense. He also broke the spiritual sense of Scripture into three categories: allegorical sense, moral sense, and the anagogical sense. Match these senses of Scripture to their definitions.

Literal sense

How the people, events, and things in the Bible point to the life, death, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Allegorical Sense

Investigating the eternal significance of the events and teachings in the Bible.

Moral Sense

The obvious meaning of the text.

Anagogical Sense

How a passage instructs us to live in right relationship with God, neighbor, self, and the earth.

Biblical Exegesis

1. Define biblical exegesis.
2. A biblical scholar “must be attentive to what the human authors truly wanted to affirm and to what God wanted to reveal to us by their words” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 109). In doing this the scholar must study the _____ in which the biblical author lived. The scholar must also look at the various _____ and _____ commonly used at the time.
3. Thorough exegesis must be done by keeping in mind the larger truths revealed in the Scriptures and Tradition. How does this affect the interpretation of a particular text or passage of the Bible?



4. The unity of the Church's doctrine, the coherence of God's revealed truth is called the

_____.

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