# Faith-Reflection Worksheets

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**Instructions**

Complete the questions below. Relate the findings to the common spheres of life, using one worksheet for Orthodoxy in Life’s Spheres and a second worksheet for Orthopraxis in Life’s Spheres.

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| **Orthodoxy Reflection: A Logical Approach** |
| **Objective:**  Develop your Christian worldview understanding in order to shape your thinking throughout the spheres of daily life. |
| **Question 1: What is the biblical/theological subject of inquiry?**  Faith and temptation or trial are the most important subjects of inquiry for me. I have been devoted to my pedagogic vocation since I made my first steps in a teaching career after completing a language course in the county of Buckinghamshire in England. I was confronted with a situation of temptation when my colleagues at the university betrayed me. They turned against me and I was faced with a trial and serious temptation by overwhelming emotions of anger, disappointment, and despair. |
| **Question 2: What do the sources of authority suggest?**  Scripture (Primary):    1 Corinthians 10:13:…And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.  Matthew 22:14: For many are called, but few [are] chosen.    Reason (Secondary):  Os Guinness wrote about the central purpose of life and God's call: "Having heard God's call and responded, our task is to seek to listen to God's call, to follow God's call and way of life, and to act on behalf of God's great purposes of justice and freedom in righting the wrongs of the world. ... The notion of calling is vital to the modern search for a basis for moral responsibility and to an understanding of ethics itself" (Guinness, 2003).  I believe these words also relate to temptations and trials we may encounter both in the personal life and social or professional life, as we should keep and live our faith and always remember about our primary calling, and we are to listen to and follow God's call.  Tradition (Secondary):  In Sermon 82 John Wesley explains temptations and how God can remove them or give consolation and peace of mind:  "Thus is God able to deliver out of temptation, by taking away the very ground of it. And he is equally able to deliver in the temptation; which, perhaps, is the greatest deliverance of all. I mean, suffering the occasion to remain as it was, he will take away the bitterness of it; so that it shall not be a temptation at all, but only an occasion of thanksgiving. How many proofs of this have the children of God, even in their daily experience! How frequently are they encompassed with trouble, or visited with pain or sickness! And when they cry unto the Lord, at some times he takes away the cup from them: He removes the trouble, or sickness, or pain; and it is as though it never had been: At other times he does not make any outward change; outward trouble, or pain, or sickness continues; but the consolations of the Holy One so increase, as to over-balance them all ..." (Wesley, cited in Wesley Center for Applied Theology, 2023)  Experience (Secondary):  My personal experience was that I was betrayed by my colleagues, who rejected and denied things that were obvious, and they turned away from God and accused me of heresy. My views, values and beliefs were in conflict with those of my colleagues' and went against my professional growth and career. But I have survived that serious temptation and trial. Although I thought I was at an impasse at first, I thought about and reflected a lot on that situation, and it provoked reflection about God and faith. Then I found the words of guidance in Scripture, and I realized I should go along my own path and faith journey. Even though I had to go through betrayal, something, that is much more important for me, is that I have maintained my firm beliefs, values and my faith. |
| **Question 3: Describe on the next page how your new understanding informs your thinking through the five (5) spheres of daily life.**  Though I did not gain so much in the financial sphere, I have retained my place in life, and I have been doing my favorite job and bringing up my children; I have made my choice and I can go along my own path, and what is far more important, I have maintained my faith and moral beliefs and values. I am going to teach my children and students the foundational Christian truths, and I would like to share my experience with others, for only if we remain true to ourselves and live out our primary calling faithfully, working for God, we can change our society and life for the better to "bring glory to God, and add value to our world" (Guinness, 2003). |

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| **Orthopraxis Reflection: A Chronological Approach** |  |
| **Objective:**  Apply your Christian worldview understanding throughout the spheres of life. |  |
| **Question 1A: What is the real life experience in question?**  In my life path, I unexpectedly encountered an experience, when my moral values and views turned out to be contrary to the local politics of the government, and my colleagues, who had previously supported my ideas and approved my research, immediately expressed their negative attitude to it, and, thus, so easily traded the truth for money and lies. |  |
| **Question 1B: State your operational theology. Is there a gap in your thinking?**  My faith is my path and my load, and I never doubt that, as I read Scripture. There is certainly a gap in my understanding, and the thing that I find extremely disturbing, strange and perplexing is that people not only betray others and lie to everybody, but they lie to themselves and betray themselves. How can we hope for any good or prosperity, if it is based on lies and treachery? |  |
| **Question 2: What do the sources of authority suggest?**  Scripture (Primary):  Matthew 5:44: But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that despitefully use you.  Matthew 6:14: For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.  Matthew 6:15 But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.  Mark 11:25: And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive them, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.  Reason (Secondary):  Orrin Woodward writes why forgiveness and reconciliation are not the same: "It's important to understand that forgiveness is not the same as reconciliation. You can forgive someone even if they are unwilling to reconcile. It is this truth that allows Christians to have joy even when their enemies still hate them. Otherwise, they would carry enmity against their foes which poisons their own soul as much as it does their haters." (Woodward, 2023)  "... true forgiveness is not the same thing as condoning ... It is not to deny wrong. It is not to tolerate the intolerable or lie down under the outrageous. It is to call a spade a spade, and evil evil, and to allow the full horror of its magnitude and outrage to sink in on every level - and then to be willing to dismiss the grounds of our own personal vengeance toward the evildoer." (Guinness, cited in Woodward, 2023)  Tradition (Secondary):  John Wesley explains what it means to forgive and emphasizes how important it is to forgive and pray for our enemies:  “This ‘forgiveness’ thing must be very important to our Lord Jesus Christ. Because first, he gives us this wonderful, comforting promise, “If you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.”(Matthew 6:14-15)…Mother Teresa said, “If we really want to love, we must learn how to forgive.” And theologian, C.S. Lewis wrote, “Everyone thinks forgiveness is lovely idea, until they have to forgive someone.” …Now, there is another very important point I want to emphasize. And that is, forgiveness does not condone the offence. … It does not make a wrong suddenly become right. And it does not necessarily mean forgetting. And in this regard, Jesus even said to love and pray for our enemies …Because by praying for them, perhaps they will come to the realization of what they’ve done, and seek forgiveness and change. …as followers of Jesus Christ, we are to be a conduit of his compassion, mercy and forgiveness to others” (Wesley, 2019).  Experience (Secondary):  I found answers and a way out in Scripture and listened to the Word of God. And I have forgiven my colleagues and let go of my anger, disappointment and despair, as only faith, God's Love and guidance, and love for the neighbor, love for the family and children helped to survive that serious temptation, so I pray for my colleagues to change and see the truth. |  |
| **Question 3: Describe on the next page how your new understanding**  **applies to the five (5) spheres of life where applicable. Be sure to document what type of life change occurred to improve your orthopraxis.**  Living out my faith and my primary and secondary callings, following the guidance that God gives me, and, thus, being able to move forward and go along my own path and faith journey with peace in my heart and happiness in my family - all of these are of primary importance for me. At times there are challenges, but I shall never trade my values and beliefs for money. I cannot just change the state of things, therefore, I pray that the current situation and circumstances will improve significantly and change for common good.  **Works Cited**  Guinness, O. (2003). The Call. Finding and fulfilling the central purpose of your life. <https://books.google.com/books/about/The_Call.html?id=KpA4u8Ui6rQC>  Wesley, J. (2019). Forgiving others. John Wesley United Methodist Church. <https://johnwesleyumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Sermon-Forgiving-Others-072119.pdf>  Woodward, O. (2023). Unspeakable by Os Guinness. Orrin Woodward Leadership.<https://orrinwoodwardblog.com/2014/08/28/unspeakable-by-os-guinness/> |  |

# A Toolkit for Christian Scholars

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| **Common Areas of Christian Thought** | |
| **Theology Proper: Christology: Pneumatology: Bibliology: Anthropology: Hamartiology: Angelology: Soteriology: Ecclesiology:**  **Eschatology:** | The doctrine of God.  The doctrine of Christ.  The doctrine of the Holy Spirit. The doctrine of biblical authority. The doctrine of humanity.  The doctrine of sin.  The doctrine of angels and demons. The doctrine of salvation.  The doctrine of the church.  The doctrine of prophetic and end- time future events. |
| **Sources of Authority for Faith & Practice** | |
| **Scripture:**  **Tradition:**  **Reason:**  **Experience:** | * Primary: Biblical Text Original languages, Translations, Paraphrases * Secondary: Concordance, Atlas, Bible Dictionary * Use of Bible Study Methods * Official Church Publications * Systematic Theologies * Biblical Theologies * Commentaries * Christian Academic Journals * Christian Publications/Periodicals * Academic Journals * Publications/Periodicals * Popular Culture * Personal Experiences * Additive Source Experiences * Variant Source Experiences |

**APPROACHES TO FAITH-REFLECTION**

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| **Approach** | **Distinctive** | **Starting Point** | **Goal** |
| Logical Order: Orthodoxy to Orthopraxis | Proactive Reflection: Developing a Belief | Begins with Subject / Problem of Inquiry | Developing a Christian Worldview in Spheres of Life |
| Chronological Order: Orthopraxis to Orthodoxy | Reactive Reflection: Improving Praxis | Begins in a Real Life Experience | Applying a Christian Worldview in Spheres of Life |

**Levels of Orthodox Thinking**

**The Folk Level:**

The folk level of orthodox thinking describes people of faith who have not engaged in any critical reflection on their beliefs. This extreme end of the spectrum rejects not only reflection on religious beliefs, but also rejects the idea and practice of articulating and analyzing how faith affects practice.

**The Academic Level:**

At the other end of the spectrum of orthodox thinking is the academic level. This level of reflection on beliefs is the polar opposite of folk level reflection. The academic level is typically aimed at theological dialogue principally with other academic theologians and has little interest in the actual daily lives of ordinary non-academic people of faith.

**The Lay Level:**

Lay level orthodox thinking begins when a person of faith expresses a desire to question many of the professed beliefs exhibited at the folk level. Lay level reflection lacks many of the skills necessary to engage in serious study of the biblical languages, theological analysis, and examination of Christian history.

**The Ministerial Level:**

The ministerial level of orthodox thinking is typically practiced by trained vocational ministers in Christian churches. Many people of faith at this level understand how to do in-depth Bible study for themselves, including the use of biblical languages, lexicons, concordances, and commentaries. Ministerial reflection also understands systematic thinking and has a grasp of Christian history.

**The Professional Level:**

Finally, the professional level of orthodox thinking demonstrates the ability to utilize advanced tools for biblical, theological, cultural, and historical studies in order to train other people of faith, including pastors and teachers. People of faith that exhibit professional level reflection often teach in seminaries, Bible Colleges, and universities.