***Vera Halezina***

***Omega Graduate School***

***Professor Dr. Anique Elmes-Matthew***

***Submission Date: 04/02/2023***

20 Day Exercise Submission

1. For each of the following prompts, write a thorough response (2-3 well-developed paragraphs, each with 3 to 4 sentences minimum per paragraph) and cite at least one scholarly source (per prompt) to support your answer. Answer the questions in the context of your professional life, goals, and research interest:

a. What is postmodernity, and how does it undermine Christian Orthodoxy?

b. Define the key terms in orthodoxy: Theology, Doctrine, and Dogma.

b. When confronted with opposing worldview philosophies and beliefs in your career and culture, how does knowing what you believe help?

c. List three categories of Christian thought (i.e., eschatology) and state how

they apply to your faith journey and profession.

d. In contrast to the essential core beliefs of Christianity, there are also doctrinal matters that have been the subject of continual debate. Give an example of a non-negotiable belief and an example of a disputable matter from your faith tradition.

e. Why are “professed beliefs” and “operational beliefs” significant for the study of orthopraxis? How can the distance between the two be reduced?

f. Change is a natural process in life. Give a personal example of three types of normative life changes that were discussed in this course.

2. Structure (Assignment evaluation includes the following structure below).

a. Download the “OGS APA Course Assignments Template 7th Ed 2021” template from the General Helps folder in the AA-101 The Gathering Place Course on DIAL. Using the template create the following pages.

b. Title Page (Not included in page count).

c. Copy and paste the assignment instructions from the syllabus starting on a new page after the title page, adhering to APA 7th edition style (APA 7 Workshop, Formatting, and Style Guide, APA 7 Quick Guide).

d. Start the assignment on a new page after the copied assignment instructions.

e. Document all sources in APA style, 7th edition (APA 7 Reference Example, APA 7 Quick Guide)

f. Include a separate Works Cited page, formatted according to APA style, 7th edition

3. Submit through DIAL to the professor.

**1.a.** Postmodernism arose in the 20th century as a response to and disillusion with modernists' ideals and views of objectivism and absolute truths.

In postmodern thinking, truth is not objective but subjective and relative, and objective truth is impossible, as every individual is biased in his or her own understanding and perceptions in his or her situation and context. So truth is no more than how it is perceived by the individual (Brown,2020). Postmodernism has affected society, morals and culture in a dramatic and catastrophic way. What was right becomes wrong, and what was wrong might be right. It is not acceptable now to have exclusive beliefs. Appeals to personal beliefs and emotions have more influence in forming public opinion than objective facts (ibid).

It is important for Christians to understand postmodernism. Postmodernism rejects the concept of objective truth and, thus, it undermines the process of interpretation. Christians need to be vigilant and well equipped to be able to answer questions and respond to the challenges of the postmodern world and defend Christian faith (Brown, 2020).

**1.b.** The term Theology originates from a Greek word combination 'theo logos' where 'theo' means God and 'logos' has the meaning of studying. But it primarily implies a practical type of studying, as those engaging in Theology not only gain knowledge but wisdom of life and life is their main concern. And the important purpose of Theology is to bring the theoretical aspect of Christian faith into living (Grenz & Olsen, Baylis,2014). Doctrine comprises teaching of the conceptualized insights of the faith of a community, providing guidance and instruction to support belief (Outler, Britannica,2023).

Dogma refers to a set of doctrines, the essential principles accepted and professed by certain groups or faith communities (Outler, Britannica, 2023).

The knowledge and Christian beliefs that I have give me confidence, wisdom and guidance in life.

**1.c.** The various categories of Christian thought are all essential areas of Christian Theology, including Anthropology, Christology, Bibliology and other categories.

The focus of Christian Anthropology is the nature of humanity. It enables us to have an understanding of who we are and the way we were created by God and how we can relate to Him by embracing and following the call of God. This also helps us to understand our primary purpose of living for God and make sure this purpose guides us in our actions (Biblical Answers, 2023). The study of Christology enables us to understand the significance and the divinity of the Person and the work of Jesus Christ. Christology is one of the most important categories of Christian thought, as it helps to gain the right understanding of what Jesus Christ accomplished and how He loves us and protects, cares for and leads us through the uncertainties of our troubled world (Biblical Answers, 2023).

Bibliology is the study of the Word of God. By studying the Bible we come to understand how it is inspired by God. Bibliology teaches and gives us all the knowledge about God, Jesus Christ and life in general, which enables us to be well equipped both for faith journey and profession (Biblical Answers, 2023). **1.d.**The essential areas of Christian Theology are all essential core beliefs or non-negotiable beliefs, for example, the inspiration and authority of the Scripture, the Word of God that teaches truth, the divinity of Jesus Christ, the Tri-unity of God and other important core beliefs (Living Truth, 2018). There are also disputable matters or non-essential issues and things we may have different opinions about or agree to disagree on. These can be certain cultural preferences and traditions, such as different ways of counting the exact dates of the Holy Days calendar, for example, Nativity of Christ is celebrated on the 7th of January in Orthodox Christian tradition (in Russia, Georgia, Serbia, Montenegro, Egypt) (University of La Verne, 2023).

**1.e.**The concepts of orthodoxy or 'professed (right) beliefs' and orthopraxy or 'operational (practiced) beliefs' are both very important for the study of orthopraxis. Although these concepts differ in their focus - orthodoxy mainly on beliefs, and orthopraxy on practice, they are not in any way in conflict, but are closely interrelated and should be correctly balanced (Seddon, 2014), as every practice is based on beliefs and beliefs are communicated by and formed by practice (Rives, 2019). Moreover, many theologians argue that true orthodoxy is not possible without orthopraxy, and orthopraxy cannot exist without orthodoxy. They are inseparable "sides of the same coin" (Tie cited in Kaylor, 2019). Thus, orthodoxy forms the foundation for orthopraxy, and we should foster both of these and make sure orthodoxy is not static but lived out in orthopraxy (Kaylor, 2019) to ensure progress towards their mutual integration.

**1.f.** An example of a cognitive change that I have personally experienced is the knowledge and understanding I have gained and developed while studying the terms of Christian Theology and the various categories of Christian thought, and considering and reflecting on the essential core beliefs of Christianity and the concepts of orthodoxy and orthopraxy, their interrelated character and how important it is to reduce the gap between them, so that orthodoxy is lived out in orthopraxy.

In terms of an affective change I have experienced, I would like to say that I have developed a deeper awareness of my inner feelings and my emotional motivation related to my orthopraxis and orthopathy.

As for a personal example of a spiritual change, I feel that all the changes I have experienced (cognitive and affective) have formed a basis for and contributed to the transformation of my inner world, so that I now feel more empowered with God's truth and will. And in the process of this spiritual growth and change I can feel the confidence, energy and strength that God gives me, as He guides me in my faith journey and all the spheres of my life.

Works Cited

Baylis, A.,S. (2014) Response to Grenz and Olson, "Who Needs Theology?" Dallas Theological Seminary <https://www.academia.edu/23736740/RESPONSE_TO_WHO_NEEDS_THEOLOGY_BY_GRENZ_AND_OLSEN>

Biblical Answers (2023) Christian Theology <https://www.gotquestions.org/Christian-theology.html>

Brown, D. (2020) Biblical Hermeneutics and Postmodernism, Faith Baptist College and Theological Seminary <https://faith.edu/faith-news/biblical-hermeneutics-and-postmodernism/>

Kaylor, B. (2019) The Importance of Orthodoxy and Orthopraxy,

Word & Way <https://wordandway.org/2019/02/05/the-importance-of-orthodoxy-and-orthopraxy/>

Living Truth (2018) Doctrine and Preference <https://livingtruth.ca/blogs/devotionals/doctrine-and-preference>

Outler, A.,C. (2023) Doctrine and Dogma, Britannica, Article History <https://www.britannica.com/topic/doctrine>

Seddon, A.,M. (2014) Orthodoxy and Orthopraxy in Right Relation, The New Oxford Review <https://www.newoxfordreview.org/documents/orthodoxy-orthopraxy-in-right-relation/>

University of La Verne (2023) Holy Days Calendar <https://laverne.edu/chaplain/holy-days/>