

Case Study Procedures

INTR 532: Contextualization

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Prior to the class period in which we discuss the case:

1. Read the case carefully to become thoroughly acquainted with all of the details under consideration. Be sure to identify the theological issue(s) in the case.
2. Construct a rough time line of the events that led to the situation being considered (simply draw or write it out in your book)
3. Using a high lighter, identify all of the significant characters in the case.

On your worksheet . . .

. . . list the major sets of factors involved in choosing a course of action.

4. Decision(s) faced (front of worksheet): what decision does is the person being asked to make? Include any contextual specifics of relevance (i.e., important factors in the immediate context of the case study such as deadlines, impending dangers, etc.);
5. Phenomenological analysis (front of worksheet):
 - a. From the various perspectives (when relevant), how might insights from each of the six dimensions of religion (see Case Studies Supplement) help in both the theological reflection and the decision-making process for the case? **Highlight** what you consider to be the two to three most significant issues.
 - b. Especially in the social dimension, what *cultural* and *institutional pressures* are present in the social institutions? For the institutional pressures, refer to the Case Studies Supplement.
6. Root(s) of the problem: Based on your phenomenological analysis, what would you say are the root(s) of the problem at hand?
7. Relevant Scriptural guidelines (back of worksheet):
 - a. What are the most significant and *relevant* scriptural texts, principles, case studies, and guidelines which must be weighed in the decision-making process? List ideas together with appropriate biblical references. You should have at least five references, with at least 2 from the Old Testament.
 - b. Are there non-Scriptural principles which are being promoted as Scriptural? What are they, and why are they inappropriate?
8. Identify what you consider to be the one best solution (back of worksheet). For that solution, propose

- a. What the solution is and
 - b. How that solution may be implemented, involving a specific course of action (how the main character in the case study would implement the proposed solution). This course of action should accord with scriptural principles, be culturally sensitive, and focus on the central issue(s) of the case.
9. Finally, **give yourself a preparation grade (a number, not a letter) for each case study** (for the final report; see below)

During class time . . .

I will use a variety of methods to split you into groups and discuss the case. You may write corrections, clarifications, new thoughts, etc. on your Worksheet, but write them in a different color from your pre-class work.

After class . . .

And *before* the next class session, write a brief post-discussion report (*maximum* of 500 words) noting what you learned under the following three headings:

Section I. What I Learned about Theological Development

What insights did you gain or were reinforced in this case study about the process of developing theology and theological convictions? How does culture interfere and/or enhance our approaches to theological thinking about practical issues? When cultures or values clash, how might our theology change as a result?

Section II. What I Learned about Applying Contextualization Theory to Real Challenges

How does the theory and discussion in the course notes and class apply to the settings seen in the case studies? What theory(ies) or idea(s) did you find particularly helpful in this case? This section may overlap with the first section, but is intended to be broader than just theological development. You may also consider which of the dimensions of contextualization has the most relevance for your study and why.

Section III. What I Learned about Myself as a Contextualizer

This should include both positive and negative lessons. Did you see how your own theology is intertwined with your cultural values? Did you see evidence of flexibility? Did you find yourself compromising too easily? How did you handle the tensions between truth and relationships? What type of role(s) did you play in your group (initiator, respondent, facilitator, peace-maker, conflict initiator or evader, etc.)? On your original solution, what did you propose that would help develop trust?

For your Case Study assignment, after the last case study write a 1000 word report (using the three sections above) to summarize what you learned in each area. Please keep your reflection in 1st person; I will be looking for evidence that you know both your weaknesses and strengths.

Include your worksheets for each case study with the report; ensure that you have assigned yourself a preparation NUMBER grade on each worksheet.