

REFLECTION TOOL #5

REFLECTION PAPER ON A MINISTRY INCIDENT

Students are usually skilled in describing and analyzing events. More difficult is the task of evaluating and reflecting on an event in ministry so that understanding and growth will occur. But, insight comes from the discipline of reflection, and needed change is aided when disciplined reflection looks at personal development. This tool is designed to help students engage in such a process of reflection on ministry.

In writing the paper, be honest, but discreet. Use initials instead of names. The value is on understanding the event and your response to the incident. The use of "I" statements is imperative. Talk about how you feel, what you observed, and what you have learned.

Papers must be typed (single-spaced with double-space between paragraphs) and must be a minimum of two pages in length.

The following format is to be used in writing the reflection paper:

1. **Background:**

State the pertinent details leading up to the situation you are describing. How did the event come to be? Describe any feelings or expectations you had before the incident took place.

2. **Description:**

Give a brief statement of what happened. What did you do? Who was involved? What were the reactions and responses of others? Be as objective as you can.

3. **Reflection:**

State what you have learned as a result of this event. Talk about feelings and insights. Where are the critical areas for you? If you have data from other people, include relevant comments. Such reflection should focus on four areas:

- a. **Personal:** What effect did this event have on your personal identity? What did you learn about yourself? To what extent did your personality affect your approach to the situation?
- b. **Professional:** How did this incident influence your sense of calling to your vocation? Are there skills and competencies you feel you used well or need to develop further?
- c. **Theological:** What theological issues were raised by this incident? What are the implications of these issues for you?

- d. **Spiritual:** How did this situation touch you in your spiritual development?
How do your Christian beliefs shape your response to the incident?

4. **Integration:**

What have you learned from this incident? Is there anything you would do differently as result of what you learned? What resources did you make use of, if any, and would this change in the future? How do you "make sense" of the whole incident?

Please attach to completed Reflection Tool Cover Sheet.