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Omega Graduate School

Professor Dave Moser

Submission Date: 4/12/2023

20 Day Exercise Submission

1. In a brief 3-5 page essay, respond to three of the four options below:

a. In light of class materials, why is a historical perspective important for a Christian scholar-practitioner? When considering the concept of divine revelation, what makes a Christian worldview historical perspective insight-producing? [At least one page].

b. Discuss various approaches to historical study (secular and Christian) presented in the course. What did you take away from the biblical historical perspective? In addition, interact with either the course concepts of chronos, kairos, disclosure statements, OR Ward (2020) The Kingdom article located in Course Resources [At least one page].

c. Summarize the various ways of how God changes the world. Incorporate the course lecture discussion on the Cultural Mandate with course readings/audio (select at least two sources - Hunter, Hegeman, Kgatla, Szterszky, Tippett, or Wenigar located in Course Resources). [At least one page].

d. Discuss how one of Schmidt's areas of Christian impact on history appeals to your calling. Why? [At least one-half page].

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 (not included in page count).

3. Submit through DIAL to the professor.

**b. Discuss various approaches to historical study (secular and Christian) presented in the course.**

In historical studies, scholars take several different approaches to understanding the past and the historical context of the present. Some of the approaches are secular and some are religious. A few of each will be discussed. These approaches are paradigms, a way in which we are to see and understand history and a way to make sense of the context of history.

Secular approaches include modernism, realism, contextualized, reflective understanding, postmodernism, and post-structuralism. Where secular means an account without reference to a deity or religious system. We can understand the modernist approach from the philosophy that developed from the 19th-century modernism era, with the challenges to the classical era of realism and religious ideas. The modernist perspective understands history through technological, economic, and structural changes. For the postmodernist approach to history, we can understand it as an antithesis to modernism, where interpretive models of understanding as opposed to a unified structural way of history, historical understanding from a postmodernist perspective is fluid and interpretive.

With the Christian perspective on history, there is a benefit of having a divine-inspired record of history, from the beginning of time to a large span of world history, and even a vision of the future. With this perspective, we have a linear view of history where we can pinpoint the historical timeframe on this linear progression of history structured around creation, the fall, Christ and his work, and then the future restoration of heaven and earth. As a Christian having a Christian approach to historical study is crucial to not only understanding history and Christian history but also providing a richer appreciation of the worldwide brother and sisterhood of Christianity of the past and present and moves us to a more faithful and participatory union with our fellow Christians throughout denominations and cultures.

As Christians we not only can learn from the spiritual lessons from Israel’s history we read in the scriptures, but also from Israel’s history itself such as discloser statements/situations where “The distinctive feature of Israel's history was that it was built around a series of disclosure situations, which through the activity of prophetic minds became interpretive of Israel's history and ultimately of the history of all mankind" (Richardson, p. 223). Discloser statements were major events of the people of Israel that God spoke through those events to the people of Israel, but also all humankind as well so that people may come to know the character of God, such as the freeing of the enslaved Israelites from Egypt and the miracles that were performed, pointing to the great lengths that God will go through to save people from the bondage of sin.

The Christian approach to history also includes the understanding of two Greek words, Chronos, and Kairos, where Chronos refers to the measurement of time in duration or age or an era, such as a season, a year, or a millennium. Kairos refers to a qualitative dimension of time, such in Ecclesiastes; a time to laugh, a time to cry, or such as the millennium reign. These concepts are important to utilize in the Christian historical approach, where Christian scholars could not only understand the social-historical context of history but also the spiritual context of history.

**c. Summarize the various ways of how God changes the world.**

God has been and is active within His creation, He has caused things to happen within the world and has used mankind’s agency to fulfill His will in the world. Believers and non-believers alike exercise their God-given agency to engage in the world in such a way that it causes changes to the status quo for good or bad, for positive or negative change. How are Christians to use their agency to engage the world to bring about good or positive change? This may seem like an easy question to answer, but it is not, due to our lack of insight and incomplete but developing sanctification as Christians, we may mean well in trying to change the world, but if we are not in tune and following God’s will the change we may enact may be for the bad and a negative change.

In Hunter’s article *To Change the World,* he provides comments and criticism of on several Christian world-changing models and provides an alternative paradigm of Faithful Presence, in which, “The incarnation is the only adequate reply to the challenges of dissolution, the erosion of trust between word and world and the problems that attend it. It is the way the Word became incarnate in Jesus Christ and the purposes to which the incarnation was directed that are the only adequate reply to the challenge of difference. Pursuit, identification, the offer of life through sacrificial love—this is what God’s faithful presence means.” (Hunter, p. 5), a call for Christians to engage the world (believers and non-believers) with a sacrificial love that is to guide their agency.

A religious and Christian concept derived from Genesis 1:28 (God giving His human creation, male and female, to propagate and have dominion over His created earth) has been called the “Cultural Mandate” or the “Creation Mandate”, there is a debate about exactly what this means. In Weinger’s article, *The Deadly Menace of the Cultural Mandate*, he argues that some Christians take the cultural mandate to mean that Christians are to Christianize cultures. Weinger argues that the culture mandate/creation mandate was given to mankind before the fall and was a call for early mankind to propagate and subdue the creation for human use. Weinger provides us an example of how diverse the views are of Cultural Mandate, and given the diversity of Christian non-essential beliefs, we can see that many Christians may be pursuing the calling of cultural mandate in many ways and may have positive as well as negative outcome in changing the world for God.

**d. Discuss how one of Schmidt's areas of Christian impact on history appeals to your calling**.

It is without a doubt that Christianity has made many impacts or changes in societies and people throughout history, some were negative, but most were for the good. In Schmidt’s book *How Christianity Changed the World*, he presents in various areas which Christianity had impacted or changed the world, from sexual morality to education, to labor and the economy to science, and many more areas. All the areas that Schmidt covers are of interest to me given my calling as a Christian sociologist, however, one of the areas of Christian impact that particularly appeals to me is healthcare and the creation of hospitals and other healthcare facilities that Christianity established to dedicate physical and mental care for people, believers and non-believers alike. As a sociologist, one of my areas of interest is the sociology of healthcare, I have worked in the field of healthcare analytics and as an applied sociologist in healthcare examining the social dynamics of patients and the social dynamics of healthcare.

Healthcare has a long history from the ancient Greek physician, Hippocrates, throughout history healthcare was based on a small practice of providers caring and seeking healing of people who were sick. Schmidt states that Christians started the first hospital in 369 A.D., where the large-scale health facility sought to care for the physical needs of people with nursing and physician staff. Christianity had a call to continue Christ’s model of interest and caring for the sick and people’s physical and mental needs, such as throughout modern history we find many Christians going into healthcare as nurses and providers based on the calling of God’s love for humanity and participating in the care for the physical and mental needs of people.

WORKS CITED

Hunter, J. D. (2010). *To change the world: The irony, tragedy, and possibility of Christianity in the late modern world* . Oxford University Press

Richardson, A. (1964). *History, Sacred and Profane*. SCM Press

Schmidt, A. J. (2004).*How Christianity Changed the World.* Zondervan.