History of the Integration of Religion and Society

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Professor

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**Assignment #4** – **Course Learning Journal**

The journal is a written reflection of your learning journey while working in each course. The Learning Journal integrates the essential elements of the course within your professional field of interest. The objective of the course journal is to produce a degree of acculturation, integrating new ideas into your existing knowledge of each course. This is also an opportunity to

communicate with your professor insights gained as a result of the course. **The course**

**learning journal should be 3-5** pages **i**n length and should include the following sections:

1. **Introduction** –Summarize the intent of the course, how it fits into the graduate

program as a whole, and the relevance of its position in the curricular sequence.

2. **Personal Growth** - Describe your personal growth–how the course stretched or

challenged you– and your progress in mastery of course content and skills during

the week and through subsequent readings – what new insights or skills you gained.

3. **Reflective Entry -** Add a reflective entry that describes the contextualization (or

adaptation and relevant application) of new learning in your professional field.

What questions or concerns have surfaced about your professional field as a result

of your study?

4. **Conclusion** – Evaluate the effectiveness of the course in meeting your professional,

religious, and educational goals.

The study of the integration of religion and society in history reveals the world changing role Christianity played in addressing social issues (Dix, 2018). Christianity means actively engaging with the world around us, as we participate in the restoration work of God over all lives (Hillman, 2017). However, life changing events occurred at the creation the fall and the redemptive consummation. God created human life by God, emphasizing the essence of life breathed into his creation and the potential it holds (*Holy Bible English Standard Version*, 2001 Gen. 1:1). The essence God infused into creation was vitality, splendor and joy and its inherent possibilities. The quality of his results in contrast, was far from inactive (Hunter, 2010). In another pivotal historical event, Satan assumed the title of the prince of this world at the fall of man in Eden (Ward, 2020). Admittedly, the ultimate historical world change came through the redemptive work of Christ (John 3:16) and the restoration of humanity back to God. During the phase of restoration, through faith Christians are empowered by God to help one another, recognizing that each individual is made in the image of God and bearing witness to his mercies (Matt 28: 19-20).

Historical figures on earth such as Pinel (Schmitt, 2006) provide scholars with theological and worldview epistemology to identify the significance of issues that arise when faith is introduced as an intervention, supplement, or substitute for worldviews that are deeply ingrained in disciplines related with social problems (Beers & Beers, 2008). Historical evidence demonstrates that Christianity has had a beneficial impact on social issues (Marko, 2023; Schmidt, 2009; Van Bilsen, 2016). These historical Christian influencers prompts researchers to rely on biblical and extra-biblical texts to effect positive change in society. Hunter (2010) epitomizes world-changing actions as a pathway, “to reclaim a culture for Christ and his church.” (p.154).   
This course is a valuable component of the curriculum as it offers scholars numerous interdisciplinary research adequacy that effectively fulfill the objective of obtaining a practical research degree. Becoming adequate means knowing various methods in natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities, along with their strengths and limitations (Repko, 2020). Before advancing in the course, scholars analyze historical data, worldview principles shaping scholarship, and interconnectivity of social problems. The analysis demonstrates the importance of preserving Christian traditions. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen and integrate the traditional Christian worldview into the disciplines of psychology, philosophy, social science and natural science and research to substantiate a contribution to the treatment of societal problems (Repko, 2020).

The growth I experienced was a result of the course materials that enhanced my understanding of Christian activity and its impact on societal problems. The world of Christianity has adhered to the biblical traditions over the years, wherein God has aided his people in overcoming formidable enemy attacks (Joshua11: 8-18). Additionally, Christians maintain the sharing of biblical testimony by  utilizing a biblical perspective, through their faith, and their role to assist those in need. The course materials provided Christians with the capacity to analyze and discern the engagement of political movements that advocate for social change, aligned with human empathy and common grace but opposed to theism (Noebel, 2006). The course material enables scholars to utilize Christian religion as a means to address societal problems, showcasing the tradition's resilience and capacity to resolve these issues. It emphasizes the importance of a compatible worldview, such as the need for humanity to care for one another, particularly for vulnerable groups (Cook & Hamley, 2020). Ward (2020) highlights that Christians operate under the rulership of Christ, who historically healed and cared for the sick.  
Literature that promotes awareness of worldviews from a Christian perspective, which perceives the world as God sees it (Anderson et al., 2017). A Biblical worldview facilitates my own growth as a Christian within society (Dockery & Wax, 2019). Further, literature addresses social issues and recommend how to bring about positive transformations in these areas (Lehmann et al., 2022). Exploring critical thinking skills within the framework of integrating Christian faith into problem-solving has not only deepened my understanding but also sharpened my ability to discern the impact of theology and worldview (Slife & Williams.1997; Dockery & Wax, 2019 ). According to Tippet (2017), individuals who belong to the Christian community have a responsibility to promote a Christian perspective in order to address and rectify societal problems, instead of disregarding these issues that are being negatively influenced.

In the realm of assisting young people with depression, historical evidence demonstrated how individuals, in the likeness of God's image, societal systems and human unkindness restrained and confined them to prison walls under the misguided belief the afflicted possessed demonic spirits (Marko, 2023).  Bockoven (1963) showcased the emergence of Philip Pinel's work and shed light on the biological, genetic, and environmental factors contributing to mental illness, which lead to the establishment of hospitals and healthcare facilities for proper treatment. (Schmidt, 2004). The legislative confrontation that enabled Dorothea Dix to initiate the construction of mental health institutions also resulted in the emergence of novel insights regarding the provision of care for the mentally ill (Dix, 2018).   
The establishment of family support groups in Geel, Belgium (Van Bilsen, 2016) pioneered family care services for mental health facilities in Australia, albeit non-religious. (McGorry 2019). The presence of diverse worldviews that impact morals, politics, law, philosophy, and society. The Christian worldview establishes an impartial criterion for human worth whereas Marxism defines this worth as a social construct determined solely by collective agreement (Kantola, 2024). But there exists a mutual concern for young people with depression and imprisoned due to marijuana use (Malla et al, 2022). Yet, proponents of marijuana argue that the legalization of the drug is responsible for the incarceration. Still, the legalization of marijuana leads young individuals to perceive the drug as harmless and purely recreational (Sabet, 2021)). Further the LGBTQ+ experienced depression and the LGBTQ+ community blames conversion therapy is the source of this despair (Miller, 2019; Jackson et al., 2023). Conversion therapy is rooted in a faith-based ideology that aims to convince individuals that their sexual orientation or gender identity contradict their God given identity (Genesis 1:27). Christianity emphasizes the importance of humanity and upholding the rights of all individuals based on their inherent value to God. (Kantola,2024).

As I examined the syllabus and delved into Schmitt’s (2007) work titled "How Christianity Changed the World," I was impressed by the changes that individuals of the Christian faith accomplished in many disciplines, while the secular perspective failed to adequately acknowledge the importance of these historical personalities and their work.

The course enabled me to recognize that my religious beliefs create a global transformation, with Christ being the key figure in altering the fundamental nature and ultimate fate of humanity (Hunter, 2010). Further the integrative question is addressed as I delve further into questions regarding changing societal problems such as mental illness. I must exemplify the teachings of the gospel which provides a resolution to societal issues (Tippet, 2017).  
This course helped me distinguish between different interpretations of facts, guiding me on which theories to embrace or dismiss in the context of Christianity (Beers, 2008). Furthermore, the course helped me realize that my career path increasingly aligns with authorship. As a contributor to the cultivation of the earth and providing resources that assist young individuals in their silent struggle with depression. Hence, my purpose and abilities align with a teleological viewpoint - to fulfill the tasks that God assigns to his people for his glory.

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