**Assignment #1**

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Omega Graduate School

PHI 815-22 History of the Integration of Religion and Society

Professor Dr. David Ward

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**Assignment #1 – Core Essential Elements**

1. Select One (1) Core Essential Element from the Syllabus Outline:

a. Create a 350-word original discussion paper (with cited sources) during the week of class. Post this document in DIAL.

b. Professor will check for quality of content and word-count requirements. Grade assigned will be Credit or No Credit (CR/NC).

**The Role of Religion in Promoting Social Justice and Equity**

Religion has historically played a critical role in advocating for social justice and equity, often serving as a guiding force in the pursuit of a more just society. Today, religious organizations continue to be influential in addressing contemporary issues such as racial inequity, economic justice, and the global refugee crisis. This discussion explores how religious institutions contribute to advancing social justice by promoting fairness, dignity, and support for the marginalized in modern society.

Religious institutions remain a key player in modern-day movements, using their influence to promote equity and justice across various societal issues. Recently, over the last decade, religious organizations have aligned themselves with movements that address systemic inequalities, such as *Black Lives Matter (BLM)*. Churches and faith leaders offered their support to Black Lives Matter, invoking religious teachings on justice and the moral responsibility to confront oppression. This involvement in social justice issues underscores the relevance of religious values in guiding responses to current challenges in social justice equity.

Beyond racial justice, religious organizations have also contributed significantly to economic justice initiatives. Faith-based groups and organizations have been essential in advocating for fair wages, affordable housing, and access to healthcare, often framing these issues within the broader context of human dignity and the moral obligation to support the vulnerable. For instance, organizations like the Catholic Church and the Islamic Relief USA have been actively involved in campaigns aimed at reducing poverty and economic inequality, demonstrating the continued importance of religious principles in addressing modern-day economic disparities.

Furthermore, religious groups have increasingly engaged in efforts to support refugees and immigrants, responding to the global crises of displacement with compassion and advocacy. Faith-based organizations have been at the forefront of providing essential services to refugees, from shelter and food to legal aid, emphasizing the moral imperative to welcome strangers and uphold human dignity regardless of nationality or legal status.

Religion continues to be a powerful force in promoting social justice and equity, particularly in areas such as racial and economic justice, as well as support for refugees and immigrants. By focusing on these critical issues, religious organizations demonstrate the enduring relevance of faith in advocating for a more just and equitable society. Understanding the ongoing intersection of religion and social justice is important for appreciating the broader impact of faith-based initiatives on contemporary societal progress.