PHI 851 History of the Integration of Religion and Society

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Omega Graduate School

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Christianity’s Influence on Society

Professor

Dr. David Ward

# Assignment #1 – Course Essential Elements

1. **Select One (1) Core Essential Element from the Syllabus Outline:**
   1. Create a 350-word original discussion paper (with cited sources) during the week of the residency. Be prepared to discuss and engage with other students during the live sessions. Post this document in DIAL.
   2. Professor will check for quality of content and word-count requirements. Grade assigned will be Credit or No Credit (CR/NC).

**Steven, this is a great Assignment #1 focusing on the Course Essential Element of Christianity’s Influence on Society. In a brief essay, you highlighted Christianity’s civilizational impact especially on morality, in education, in the workplace, and on government. Well done.**

**You demonstrated good research in finding relevant sources (especially recent Journal articles) to support your discussion essay.** **Remember that you can use any of the many course resources for the course in DIAL as Developmental Reading sources. Your APA form is good but you reversed the capitalization rule for journal articles: the article titles are not italicized and the journal title and volume # are italicized.**

**Keep up the good work! Dr. Ward**

**Christianity’s Influence on Society**

Christianity has profoundly influenced societies for centuries, affecting moral, cultural, educational, occupational, and political aspects. Its transformative effect on civilizations is evident throughout history.

A significant area of influence is morality, shaped by Christ’s teachings, particularly in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5–7). Principles of love, forgiveness, and humility have inspired reform movements such as abolishing slavery and civil rights activism (Schmidt, 2007). Belief and faith are crucial in shaping societal morals, carrying real-life consequences (Schirrmacher, 2013).

Culture reflects a society’s religious and philosophical values (Hegeman, 2007). Christianity has influenced marriage, family norms, art, literature, and music. Its belief in human dignity, rooted in Genesis 1:27, has shaped contemporary views on equality and human rights (Kim and Connolly, 2024).

Christianity’s contributions to education are significant. Monastic communities preserved classical knowledge during the medieval period and established early universities. The Protestant Reformation emphasized the importance of literacy in promoting the reading of Scripture. By the mid-1500s, Martin Luther and John Calvin advocated universal and compulsory education. By the 1700s, educational access expanded to include individuals who were deaf, and by the 1800s, it also embraced those who were blind (Schmidt, 2007). Missionaries further laid the foundation for modern educational systems by founding schools affiliated with churches.

Christian principles influence the workplace by promoting ethical practices and enhancing employee well-being. Workplace spirituality highlights the importance of meaningful work within a community, which reduces stress and increases engagement (Misra, 2024). Forgiveness and gratitude are essential Christian values that promote both personal and community well-being.

Politically, Christianity has influenced governance and democratic ideals by highlighting the inherent worth of every individual and shaping human rights frameworks. It has also served as a moral compass during conflicts, encouraging peace and reconciliation. Christ’s teaching that his kingdom is not of this world distinguishes religion from governance and promotes minimal involvement in worldly affairs (Numa, 2024).

Christianity’s values have significantly shaped societal ethics, cultural norms, and personal well-being, making its influence vital for addressing today's social challenges. Its focus on love, justice, and compassion offers a lasting framework for confronting contemporary issues like inequality, mental health, and global strife. By fostering unity and inspiring hope, Christianity continues to be a transformative force that can cultivate a more just and compassionate society. Additionally, its capacity to promote selflessness and community engagement remains a powerful driver of positive change across diverse contexts.

**References**

Hegeman, David Bruce. (2002). *Plowing in hope: Toward a biblical theology of culture.* Canon Press.

Kim, A. E., & Connolly, D. (2024). *Institutions and countercultures: Christianity’s impact on South Korean modernization.*Religions*, 15*(4), 416. https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15040416

Misra, A. N., Haque, M. I., & Tripathi, G. (2024). *Happiness at work – How workplace spirituality contributes to employee wellbeing.*Management Dynamics, *24*(2), 2. https://doi.org/10.57198/2583-4932.1341

Numa, Denis Fustel, d. C. (2024). *Christianity changes the conditions of government.*Econ Journal Watch*, 21*(1), 235-250. Retrieved from https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/christianity-changes-conditions-government/docview/3030878005/se-2

Schmidt, Alvin J. (2007). *How Christianity changed the world*. Christian Book Summaries, Volume 3, Issue 24

Schirrmacher, T. P. (2013). *Leadership and ethical responsibility.* The WEA Global Issues Series, 13, 80.