Full name of Course PHI 815-22: History of the Integration of Religion and Society

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**Title: Immigration and Healthcare: A Judeo-Christian Perspective**

**Introduction**

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 Healthcare and immigration are critical and often contentious issues that have significant economic, social, and ethical implications. Migrants are becoming more common and healthcare access is more unequal than ever. These topics require thoughtful consideration and action. Through the integration of faith and academic learning, these challenges can be approached from a unique perspective. Based on biblical teachings and historical practices, a Judeo-Christian perspective can help inform and enhance contemporary policy and practice. To create more equitable and inclusive systems, Christian principles of compassion, justice, and hospitality are explored in this interdisciplinary faith-learning essay focusing on immigration and healthcare. A biblical worldview perspective, historical precedents, and exemplary models of faith-based initiatives guide us toward just and compassionate responses to complex immigration and healthcare issues.

**Biblical Worldview Perspective**

Immigration and healthcare are rooted in biblical principles of compassion, justice, and hospitality. Each person has inherent dignity in the Bible, since they were created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). According to this belief, Christians must treat immigrants with respect and care. A foreigner is to be loved by God's people in Deuteronomy 10:17-19, remembering that they were once foreigners in Egypt. As well, Leviticus 19:33-34 instructs the Israelites not to mistreat foreigners, but rather to treat them as native-born and to love them as themselves. It is emphasized in the New Testament that it is important to love one's neighbor (Matthew 22:36-40) and to care for the least of these (Matthew 25:31-40). A Judeo-Christian perspective on immigration and healthcare emphasizes compassion, justice, and hospitality towards immigrants (Center for Migration Studies of New York, 2018; Woolford & Horner, 2022).

**History of the Issue**

Christian social impact is intertwined with immigration and healthcare history. Christian advocacy for the rights and well-being of immigrants has been significant throughout history. William Speer, a Christian leader in the 19th century, was committed to promoting the integration of Chinese immigrants into society by opposing discriminatory legislation (Speer, 1870). Christians also played a major role in the civil rights movement during the 20th century, advocating for the rights of marginalized groups, including immigrants (Baldwin, 1991). Further demonstrating the historical influence of Christianity on healthcare is the establishment of hospitals by Christian missionaries and organizations (Robert, 2009). A biblical call to care for the sick and the needy motivated these efforts (Hollenbach, 2002; Illingworth & Parmet, 2017), reflecting the enduring pattern of Christian compassion and advocacy for social justice.

**Exemplars of Religion and Society Integration**

 In the context of immigration and healthcare, faith-based organizations play a significant role in integrating religions and societies. As a result of their religious and faith-based origins, these organizations play an important role in providing healthcare and support to immigrant communities. The Christian humanitarian organization World Relief, for example, has provided healthcare services to underserved communities and advocated for the rights of immigrants (World Relief, n.d.; Hirsch et al., 2020). The Catholic Church has also established hospitals and healthcare facilities for immigrant populations, such as the Mayo Clinic, which was established by Catholic nuns (Mayo Clinic, n.d.). It is through these institutions that religious principles can be embedded and applied to social issues (Goldenberg & Fischer, 2023; Woolford & Horner, 2022).

**Applicable Principles**

 These historical examples illustrate several timeless principles of truth and leadership. Compassion requires treating every individual with dignity and respect, regardless of their immigration status. According to the principle of justice, immigrants should be protected by fair and equitable policies. In addition to welcoming and supporting immigrants, the hospitality principle encourages them to become valuable members of society. Contemporary contexts can use these principles to promote religion's integration with society. Faith-based organizations can continue to provide support and services to immigrant communities (Ward, 2014; Wickramage et al., 2018) by advocating for policies that ensure equitable access to healthcare.

**Conclusion**

 Through an interdisciplinary approach, faith and academic learning can be integrated to provide a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of complex issues like immigration and healthcare. Christian principles of compassion, justice, and hospitality can be used to address these challenges and create more inclusive and equitable systems. Biblical teachings and the historical actions of Christian leaders emphasize empathy and care for all individuals, especially the marginalized and vulnerable. Immigrants deserve respect and dignity, not to be seen as statistics or burdens. In Judeo-Christian tradition, justice emphasizes fair treatment and equitable opportunities for all. Christian advocacy can help create a more just society where immigrants' rights are protected and health care is available to all. According to biblical narratives, Christians should welcome strangers and support those in need through hospitality. Creating inclusive communities that recognize and address the needs of immigrants can be guided by this principle. Faith-based organizations and healthcare professionals can also play a crucial role in this process. The values they hold dear can inspire them to advocate and implement policies that benefit immigrants, ensuring they have access to the resources and support they need (Martinez et al., 2015; Ward et al., 2021). The interdisciplinary faith-learning approach highlights the unique contribution that Christian perspectives can make to the discourse on immigration and healthcare. Christians can address these challenges while leading by example in creating a more inclusive and equitable society by embodying the principles of compassion, justice, and hospitality. Using this approach emphasizes the enduring relevance of faith in shaping our responses to contemporary social issues and reminds us of how religious principles can shape a more just and compassionate world (Hirsch et al., 2023; Zwi et al., 2019).

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