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

Obed Alcime

Omega Graduate School

January 26, 2025

Professor

Dr. David Ward

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 first

week of the term. 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).

**Christianity's Influence on Society**

The core element of this course that is most significant to my career is Christianity’s influence on society. As a practitioner in various fields, I always aim to leave Christian impact, even if it must be conducted stealthily. From the eradication of slavery to improvements in human rights and education, Christianity’s impact extends far beyond religious beliefs and practice. Christianity has contributed moral and ethical principles that have provided strong foundations for culture and worldview across different periods of history.

Christian influence has been at the forefront of efforts to uphold human dignity and moral accountability. The ethical teachings of Christianity have consistently promoted advocacy for ideals such as social justice and human equality. For example, the abolitionist movement, led by devoted Christians like William Wilberforce and Harriet Beecher Stowe, was pivotal in the global fight against slavery (Schmidt, 2004).

**Influence on Education**

As an educator who professes Christianity, I also understand how Christianity has been integral to the development of formal education. Many globally recognized universities, including Harvard, Yale, and Oxford, from which Omega Graduate School has modeled its academic structure, originated as Christian institutions with the dual purpose of promoting theological knowledge and ethical principles alongside secular education (Schmidt, 2004). Even beyond Western institutions, Christian missionaries have launched educational initiatives in underserved regions, establishing schools that continue to contribute to local literacy and intellectual advancement.

**Influence on Healthcare**

Christianity has also had a lasting impact on healthcare, the field in which I have been teaching as a professor for over a decade. Monastic orders and Christian charities established hospitals with the aim of serving the underprivileged, embodying principles of compassion and care (Akanbi & Beyers, 2017). Today, numerous major hospitals retain Christian affiliations and uphold their ethical and business values. Christian-led medical missions have proven crucial to extending healthcare access to remote and disadvantaged populations, often bridging gaps where governmental and social services may fall short. Reformations and faith-based organizations are actively engaging in solutions for world hunger, humanitarian aid, and health policy. Organizations like World Vision and Catholic Charities demonstrate Christianity’s sustained dedication to social welfare, public health, and economic development (Kgatla & Kamukwamba, 2019).

**Influence on Western Thought**

Christian influence extends into governance and political philosophy. Fundamental democratic ideals, including the sanctity of human life and the rule of law, find their roots in Christian doctrine. Even as I studied to become an ordained Church elder, I saw how evident it was that theologian philosophers such as Augustine and Aquinas helped lay the moral and ethical groundwork for Western political thought, a legacy that persists in modern discussions on human rights, public policy, and ethics. Christian advocacy groups actively combat human trafficking, support displaced populations, and promote environmental stewardship.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is clear that Christianity continues to act as a catalyst for social transformation. The well-documented contributions of men and women from a myriad of Christian traditions and eras cannot be avoided and should not be disregarded. In this modern day, Christianity’s weight and influence must continue to prove an enduring commitment to societal impact; of which I intend to leave my mark as a contributor within various disciplines.

WORKS CITED

Akanbi, S. O., & Beyers, J. (2017). The church as a catalyst for transformation in the society. *HTS Theological Studies*, *73*(4), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v73i4.4635

Kgatla, S. T., & Kamukwamba, D. G. (2019). Mission as the creation of a God-ward culture: A critical missiological analysis. *Verbum et Ecclesia*, *40*(1). https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v40i1.1911

Schmidt, A. J. (2004). *How Christianity changed the world: formerly titled Under the influence*. Zondervan.