

Chapter 13

Conscious Capitalism and Orthodoxy



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13.1 Introduction: A Brief Outline of Capitalism, Communism, and Socialism

Theology Professor Fotiou (2020) points out to his readers in his book ‘Engravings for the Modern World’ that “in order for one to comprehend the anthropological type of each epoch one ought to comprehend the prevailing ideology” (p.9). The same author (Fotiou) in his prologue to his 2018 book “Greed and the Thoughtless Rich” reminds us that the main parameters of the prevailing ideology today are “the deconstruction of the social, having made greed morally acceptable, aiming for our own individual bliss, being indifferent to our fellow human beings, the commercialization of everything, and the ecological decay”.

Capitalism is both an economic and a political system in which a country’s trade and industry are controlled by private owners for profit, rather than by the State. As Kounnoushis (2018) points out, since it first emerged, the capitalist economy is based on the private ownership of the means of production and the motive for its development has been the maximization of profit (p. 45). Taking the example of the United States as the epitome of a capitalist country today, like many other countries, it has an economic system in which the means of production and distribution are owned by individuals or private companies and the operations are funded by profits in a relatively competitive environment through the investment of capital to produce profits. In a country with such an economic system wealth is concentrated in the hands of a small minority of individuals and companies (Arkadas 2018). This results in economic inequality and, historically, increased government action and control have evolved to ameliorate the negative impact of the inequality. Today, of course, contemporary capitalism goes beyond the idea of capital and private property

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because we live in a market economy and for many authors, in fact, a market system. Some Orthodox theologians (see: Bishop Vasileios, 2013) consider the capitalist economic system to have failed because: (a) it encourages greed, (b) it results in income inequality which of itself is not unethical but becomes morally comprehensible when it is achieved at the expense of others, and (c) society ends up being ruled by capital (pp. 5–7).

The antithesis of capitalism is communism, an economic ideology developed by Karl Marx. Communism is an economic ideology that advocates for a classless society in which all property and wealth is communally owned, instead of by individual persons (Marx and Engels 1848). In fact, Marx believed that religion is the opium of the people and religion heals the people when they are in need (Konstantinou and Lianti 2013). A few countries that are self-proclaimed communist (e.g., China, Cuba, Vietnam) have some aspects of socialism.

In the economic system broadly termed ‘socialism’, resources are also centrally planned and allocated by taking the needs of people, both individual needs and such greater social needs as transportation, education, health care, and preservation of natural resources into account. In addition, in a socialist country the government emphasizes the importance of taking good care of those who cannot work such as the elderly, children and their caretakers.

While incorporating many aspects of a capitalistic economy, the five Nordic countries—Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland—are democracies with strongly socialist systems. Thus, the State, on behalf of the people, owns a large percentage of the economy, spends a large portion on education, housing, and public welfare. We can distinguish eight types of socialism, namely: democratic, revolutionary, libertarian, market, green, Christian, utopian and Fabián. Christian teachings of brotherhood are the same values expressed by socialism.¹ However, discussion of the different types of socialism is beyond the scope of the present chapter. Before attention turns to Orthodoxy, let us focus briefly on principles and concepts of Christianity as a backdrop to Orthodoxy.

13.2 Principles and Concepts of Christianity

Concerning *principles* of Christianity, it is accepted that in one’s struggle to develop Christlike character, one’s actions need to reflect such Christian virtues as humility, faith, charity, courage, self-government, virtue, industry, and wisdom. According to Dunnington (2019), in his book *Humility, Pride and Christian Virtue Theory*, Christian humility is as practised by the desert fathers and is totally unconcerned with the self. The life, teaching and ministry of Jesus Christ embody what it means to live in relationship with God, His example and teaching emphasise loving one’s neighbour, particularly the weak and vulnerable, as part of loving

¹ Dialectical Marxism: The Writings of Bertell Ollman. “Socialism Is Practical Christianity.” [Accessed Jan. 18, 2020].

God. In other words, this encompasses a compassionate environment with a compassionate and empathic leader- the very environment conscious capitalism is based on (see below).

Turning next to *concepts of Christianity*, fundamental to Christian belief is the existence of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, i.e. the *Holy Trinity* concept, which was revealed to people through the life and work of Jesus Christ himself. According to Fotiou (2014, p. 17), the tripartite nature of God both negates every egocentricity, every consideration of the primacy of one's self over others as well as excludes any notion of only loving a number of people because it establishes as axioms three features of genuine inter-personal relationships- that every individual is *unique* (διαφορά), *equality* (i.e. no one is superior to anyone) and *unity* (i.e. that nobody keeps anything as belonging only to him/herself but all is everybody's property) (p. 18). As Fotiou reminds us, the revelation of Christ as the inseparable part of the Holy Trinity is the Christian gospel and people are invited to become part of this community (p. 19). Furthermore, Christians believe the universe and human life are God's good *creation* and humans are made in the image of God. *Incarnation* means that Jesus is God in the flesh, and that, in Jesus, God came to live amongst humans. Humans, of course, tend to go their own way rather than keep their place in relation to their creator, popularly called '*the Fall*'. The idea that humans are 'fallen' and in need of rescue, *salvation*, points to the root cause of many problems for humanity. '*Gospel*' means 'good news' and Christians believe Jesus' incarnation is 'good news' for all people. In the New Testament Jesus is the answer, the Messiah and Saviour, who repairs the effects of sin and the Fall and offer a way for humans to be at one with God again. Jesus' death and resurrection open the way towards God. Christians believe that through Jesus, sin is dealt with, forgiveness offered, and the relationship between God and humans is restored. The lack of egocentricity and caring for others is also a basic feature of conscious capitalism.

To understand the said relationship between God and people, let us briefly also consider the Eucharist and the clergy as represented by the Bishop. In his seven short letters which St. Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, wrote in about 197 A.D as he travelled to Rome to be martyred, the focus is on the Bishop and Eucharist. According to St Ignatius, "The bishop in each Church presides in place of God" (Ware 1997, p.13) and 'it is the bishop's primary and distinctive task to celebrate the Eucharist', "the medicine of immortality" (ibid, p.13). Thus, a Bishop is a conscious leader serving a higher purpose, two fundamental tenets of Conscious Capitalism.

13.3 Orthodoxy

The Orthodoxy prides itself on having preserved the original apostolic faith, which was also expressed in the common Christian tradition of the first centuries. Thus, it conforms to the Christian faith as represented in the decrees of the early Church and as established by the first seven ecumenical councils between the years of 325

and 787 A.D. (Fairchild 2019). Thus, the frequent citing in the present chapter of relevant material from both the New as well as the Old Testament illustrates that without any deviation, the traditions, and doctrines of the early Christian church established by the Apostles is still adhered in Orthodoxy and are very relevant in the twenty-first century. The term ‘Orthodoxy’ is used as synonymous with the Eastern Orthodox Church Beliefs.

Writing about the Church in Orthodoxy, Voskou (2020) emphasizes that the Holy Eucharist does not just have a symbolic value as in some other denominations. With the Holy Communion one is part of the miracle taking place whereby one in fact takes in the Body and Blood of Christ, while, by divine intervention, the ingredients of bread and wine are not themselves altered (p.10). The same miracle occurs during the Orthodox Baptism in which one is imbued with the triadic God Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Drawing on Fairchild (2019), in contrast to the Western outlook that is guided more by a practical and legal mentality, the mindset in Orthodoxy is inclined towards philosophy, mysticism, and ideology. Concerning the basis system of beliefs:

- “The Holy Scriptures (as interpreted and defined by church teaching in the first seven ecumenical councils) along with Holy Tradition are of equal value and importance.
- Baptism is the initiator of the salvation experience and baptism is practiced by full immersion.
- The Eucharist is the center of worship. Eastern Orthodox believe that during the Eucharist adherents partake mystically of Christ’s body and blood and through it receive his life and strength.”

The theme running through the chapter is social justice, as illustrated by Jesus. In his book “Κοινωνική Δικαιοσύνη και Ορθόδοξη Θεολογία: Μία Προκήρυξη”/ “Social Justice and Orthodox Theology: A Proclamation”, Papathanasiou (2001), writes about charity, citing the words of St Gregorios of Nissi (fourth century A.D) who said, “what good is it if you create many poor by exploiting people and through charity you provide relief to one- if the many exploiters did not exist, there would not be many exploited either” (p. 23). For Papathanasiou, the early fathers of the Orthodox faith sought the causes of social injustice. In the fifth century, St. Akakios, Bishop of Amides, made available precious objects from churches (e.g., goblets, trays etc.) in order to raise money to save thousands of Persians taken hostages of war by the Byzantines. It is noteworthy that writing about spiritual values in orthodoxy today, Dr. Vasileios (2009), Bishop of Constantia-Famagusta, informs his readers that the Orthodoxy retains unchanged the basic Christian values (p. 73) and, also, that the third Presynod Panorthodox Council in 1986 drafted a text which described “The contribution of the Orthodox Church to the prevailing of peace, justice, freedom, brotherhood and love between people and the end of racial and other forms of discrimination” (p. 70). At the same time, Ioannis Bekos (2018) emphasizes that the Christian tradition is opposing the notion of lending money and

charging interest, and also asserts that Christian theology and the Church cannot remain apolitical.

Recent publications continue to advocate earlier sculpture found in Orthodoxy about people's behavior. These principles of being humble, caring, giving, having empathy and compassion, being resilient and having a higher purpose in life are principles that also characterize conscious capitalism. Interestingly, St. Gregorios the Theologian (who is considered one of the most prominent theologians after the Evangelist and Apostle John) claims that just like it is difficult to identify one beautiful flower from a garden full of beautiful flowers it is equally difficult to identify some virtues as more important than others. In his "Filoptohia" writings,² he advocates that faith, hope and love are the milestones of all other virtues. The virtues he lists in 'Filoptohia'³ are: gentleness, kindness, humility, contempt for money, generosity, munificence, patience, honesty, nemesis, caring and compassion and magnanimity.

Finally, according to Mantzaridis (2017), Orthodoxy advocates communitarianism which is closer to collectivism and socialism. It is also based on solidarity whereas capitalism and communism tend to express an individual-centered ideology. Principles advocated by Mackay and Sisodia as conscious capitalism are principles the Byzantine business world was built on where there was no unemployment, the currency in use had stable value over six centuries, the wheat was sold the same price 960–1014 A.D., consumers' rights were protected and left some profit to the traders but not too much so as to prevent them from accumulating too much wealth (Taxou 2020).

13.4 The Orthodox Church and Wealth

Writing on the issue of church and wealth, Bekos (2018) states that the religion's stance on wealth is generally negative and ranges from the one extreme of 'owning nothing' or 'communal ownership' to the other of 'reserved acceptance' which is being content with owning a little and giving to charity. Of course, Orthodoxy prohibits monks in monasteries and monks living on their own in the wilderness to own any material possessions or to get married. For Orthodoxy, to be rich is synonymous with being a sinner while the poor is a friend of God. Forgiveness of the rich is a very rare occurrence and charging interest on a loan, saving, or investing money is prohibited because wealth generally is a vain possession (Bekos 2018).

Interestingly, wealth is regarded as a necessary evil because, through charity, is the antidote to poverty. Thus, excessive luxury is prohibited but one is forgiven for being wealthy if he/she gives to charity; in fact, charity is considered to be a moral

² Filoptohia, <https://orthodoxfathers.com/logos/philoptochia> [Accessed 28 October 2020].

³ Interestingly enough the virtues outlined in Filoptohia by St Gregorios the Theologian do not deviate much from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. See Tredennick (2004) for a discussion on *Nicomachean Ethics*.

obligation. Wealth separates people into the rich and the poor, it creates social inequality, facilitates the development of a free market economy, and segregate the people into the haves and the have-nots. In contrast to wealth, religion unites people, it binds them together.

It should be noted in this context, however, that while monks and nuns own no property, their monasteries do and so does the institution of the Orthodox Church. Orthodox theologians have no problem with this apparent oxymoron as long as: (a) there is transparency in the management of the Church's property and (b) it is used to improve the living conditions of the destitute and others in need of assistance in our midst.

Bishop Vasileios (2013) analyses the following Christian principles and moral values that should underpin the economy: (a) everybody exists in a social context created by God and there is the socialization of human beings; and (b) people's socialization mandates solidarity. He then goes on to consider some Gospel principles for the economy that ought to characterize the exchanges between people generally as well as between the rich and the poor, namely:

- being free,
- having mutual support between the rich and the poor,
- the need to prioritize one's values in life to have freedom and dignity (which comes about when people are content with little material possessions),
- to have freedom and dignity at work and,
- the wealthy ought to shoulder their responsibility towards the poor and all their fellow human beings by using their wealth wisely so as to maximize their chance of finding themselves on the right side of God when the day of Judgement comes (pp. 9–11).

The Gospel principles listed are, in essence, no different from how one thinks about conscious capitalism in business and in accordance with its basic tenets considered below.

Writing at a time of economic recession and the social crisis that accompanies it, Atmatzides (2013), a Thessaloniki University Theology Professor, stresses that the said crisis tests the solidarity among people which has been the basis for the European Union. He proceeds to discuss 'logeia'⁴ which according to St Paul refers to the assistance given by Christians in other countries to their Christian brothers in Jerusalem, despite the fact that they themselves lived in poverty- setting an example of solidarity for Christians today and the Church to emulate by adhering to a theology of love that is inclusive of all human beings (p.35).

⁴From the Greek verb 'logevo' which means to collect money or material goods for charity.

13.5 The Concept of Conscious Capitalism (CC)

Mackay and Sisodia (2014) advocate that conscious capitalism sees people as source not resource. They explain that while a resource is a coal you burn, and it's gone the source is like the sun continually generating energy, light, and warmth. Thus, the same authors claim that a conscious business empowers its people, by enabling them to make decisions affecting their work, and give an example that the person sweeping the floor ought to be allowed to choose the broom (p. 240). They go on to advocate that “empowerment encourages creativity and innovation and accelerates the production of the organization” but “empowerment without accountability leads to broken promises” (p. 241).

It could be argued that the notion of conscious capitalism follows in the wake of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and compassion in business and management. As stated by Porter and Kramer 2011, conscious capitalism goes beyond corporate social responsibility by placing societal needs and their challenges at the core of the company's existence. The differences between the two are well outlined by Mackay and Sisodia (2014, p. 38) where they state that as far as CSR is concerned:

- “shareholders must sacrifice for society,
- it adds an ethical burden to business goals,
- it is often grafted onto traditional business model, usually as a separate department or part of public relations,
- sees limited overlap between business and society and between business and the planet,
- is easy to meet as a charitable gesture,
- assumes all good deeds are desirable, and
- is compatible with traditional leadership”

On the other hand, the same authors argue that Conscious Capitalism (CC):

- “integrates the interests of all stakeholders,
- incorporates higher purpose and a caring culture,
- reconciles caring and profitability thorough higher synergies,
- assumes social responsibility is at the core of the business...
- requires genuine transformation through commitment to the four tenets,
- requires that good deeds also advance the company's core purpose and create value for the whole system, and
- requires conscious leadership”.

More specifically, Mackey and Sisodia (2014, p. 32–33) advocate that conscious capitalism “(...) is a way of thinking about business that is more conscious of its higher purpose, its impacts on the world, and the relationships it has with its various constituencies and stakeholders”. The four inter-connected and mutually reinforcing tenets of CC are:

1. higher purpose and core values;
2. stakeholder integration;

3. conscious leadership; and
4. conscious culture and management.

For CC to be effectively manifested, the four tenets are the prerequisite elements of a philosophy that must be understood in its totality (p. 33). Thus, let us next consider CC in some detail. The emphasis is on less violence, less cruelty, more peace. The management of a business is conscious of the wellbeing of all their stakeholders, embraces their suppliers, cares about their employees and elevate the civic life of the business. Conscious capitalism is an emerging philosophy based on the belief that businesses can enhance corporate performance while simultaneously improving the quality of life for all stakeholders.

The concept of conscious capitalism takes additional significance when we come to appreciate the brain science behind it, the biological importance of trust, social inclusion, stakeholder sharing and optimism (Pillary and Sisodia, 2011). Warning against disengagement and the motivation to impress, Ogunfowara and Bourdage (2014) remind us that low honesty and humility creates ethical disengagement and engages in motivation to impress. Similarly, Padilla et al. (2007) pointed out that destructive leaders, unlike constructive leaders, overestimate personal capabilities, and disregard the views of others. Thus, organizational toxicity, characterized by, for example, endemic pain at work, emotions that are not filtered, and the abundance of narcissistic behaviour, can be encapsulated in the toxic triangle put forward by Padilla et al. (2007, p. 180). The toxic triangle is made of destructive leaders requires susceptible followers and needs a conducive environment. They argue that destructive leaders are charismatic, narcissistic, practice an ideology of hate, have negative life themes and personalized power. The susceptible followers are either conformers (who have unmet needs, low core self-evaluations, low maturity) or colluders (ambitious and those with bad values). The conducive environment is characterised with instability, perceived threat, lack of checks and balances and ineffective institutions.

The antithesis of a toxic work environment is a compassionate environment with compassionate and empathic leaders. This is the environment the conscious capitalism is based on. According to Holmes (2017), in order to cultivate compassion, what is needed is: to find commonalities with other people, don't put emphasis on money, act on empathy, self-compassion, teach others, be mindful, high emotional intelligence is called for, and express gratitude. In this context, according to Frost (2003), the capacities a good leader must possess are: emotional sensitivity, emotional intelligence, pay attention to the surrounding emotional and interpersonal climate, recognize the impact of organizational decisions on people first, anticipate the factors and events that may adversely impact the organisation and its people in the future and take incremental steps to minimize that impact, make the hard decisions, such as choosing among the options that are in the best interests of people regardless of the financial outcomes or political implications.

Academic literature (Dierendonck and Patterson 2015; Lenka and Tiwari 2016; Brown 2012, 2018) has unveiled the main characteristics and qualities leaders ought to possess:

- being ethical by having moral fibre and exercise ethical competence,
- having qualities which reduce legal problems,
- illustrating employment commitment/satisfaction and empowering employee ethical conduct,
- communicating and supporting interpersonal dealings,
- demonstrating commitment to the personal growth, safety, security, and quality of life of his/her staff,
- showing kindness and having time to listen to the employees' personal problems by revealing a human fallibility to one another,
- showing vulnerability and the ability to admit to mistakes, inspire loyalty and cultivate authenticity,

As already mentioned, these qualities are qualities exhibited in Orthodoxy, i.e. that one ought to be authentic, have empathy and compassion and be available and willing to help his/her fellow human beings regardless which race, colour or gender they belong to. To illustrate, Saint Gregory the Theologian in his writing on helping the poor advocated that compassion ought to be coming out of your soul as it is a great healing process for those in need (cited by Vasiliadou 2011). Similarly, in the Gospel, John 4:20, it is highlighted that you can't say you love God without loving people. As noted by Mbousa (2011, p. 171) our salvation depends on how we treat others. On this, Fotiou (2009, p. 13) noted that in the Readings, it is asserted that by caring and loving others, one exists; knowing one's self, means a person knows him/herself and his/her negative actions and sins; thus he/she can then appreciate the behavior of others.

13.6 Conscious Capitalism and Orthodoxy

The position of Orthodoxy vis-a-vis benign capitalism can be discerned in the New Testament (Acts 4:34–45), where we are told that “there were no needy persons among them. From time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the Apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone who had need”. We see that in the actions of the Apostles, we encounter the concept of capitalism. If someone has wealth, this is not considered a bad thing, as long as it is used for a good purpose. For instance, it is not used for self-satisfaction, but to help fellow human beings.

Along the same vein, in the New Testament, Matthew 19: 16–26, Parable of «*The Rich and the Kingdom of God*» (V.23), it is stated that “assuredly, I say to you it is hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of heaven”. Papathanasiou (2013) by citing versus from the New Testament (Jacobs 5:1–6) illustrates that the rich ought to fear the pain and brutality that will follow if they have not duly paid their workers and they in turn are starving, if they have lived their lives with enjoyment and waste and at the same time blamed those who were innocent. Thus, the man who has great wealth may think that being wealthy gives him more power and strength. In fact, the

Orthodoxy asserts that if a man wants to enter the Kingdom of heaven, he has to sell all his possessions to help his fellow human beings. The philanthropy of Christianity is different from the philanthropy of other philosophies in the way that the Christian will help his fellow human out of love and not out of coercion. Similarly, is the Ananias and Sapphira (New Testament, Acts, 5:1–11, V3) instance where the couple had great wealth but gave only part of it away to their fellow humans and kept the biggest share for themselves. Apostle Peter realised this conspiracy and said “Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn’t it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn’t the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God.” (Acts 5:3–4, NIV). The couple soon after fell dead. How realistic is this though in the twenty-first century to give most of your wealth away is a question that is outside the context of this article. In essence however, the orthodoxy advocates that every Christian, must love his neighbour as himself and help, donate and give to charity for their soul to be saved.

Concerning a ‘*higher purpose*’, in Genesis 2:15, we are told that “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” One may interpret this that in today’s world, the employees wherever they work ought to feel confident that their leader will make sure that they are provided with healthy working conditions for them to work in. An example of the joy offered by the work can be found in the first book of the Old Testament, when God gave the command to the first humans in Paradise to take care of it. “Garden” in Old Testament means a whole environment, which a human can use it but not to destroy it.

Examples of a conscious leader can be found in the Old Testament, Exodus 14:1–31, “Crossing the Red Sea”. A leader must face all the threats that can have tragic consequences for business. Sometimes a leader may have to sacrifice some of his belongings to get it right. For instance, in Orthodoxy we observe, this situation in Moses’ attempt to escape with the Israelites from Egypt. They encounter many difficulties, but Moses as a true leader helps his fellow humans, with a spirit of self-sacrifice and prays to God that they cross the sea. Also, in the New Testament, John 11: 49–50, we are told that “you know nothing at all. Nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people and not that the whole nation should perish.” Jesus Christ with his self-sacrifice is a great example of a true leader, when he was captured by the Jewish soldiers, he protected his disciples with his surrender. In the end, he was crucified for God. Thus, a good leader, in terms of being a conscious leader, tries to resolve all the disagreements of the partners and employees with calmness, communication and love, so that everyone understands the importance of good cooperation. At the same time a good leader is one that does not look down upon the younger generation or the less experienced.

Guidance on how best to go about *human relationships* is to be a conscious leader and can be found, for example, in Mark 10: 43–44, “whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all”. In other words, relationships are very important for the business reputation. The leaders ought to choose very carefully the people, with whom one

will work. On the other hand, a conscious leader should reciprocate the appropriate help, which is received from one's relationships, to create a strong collaboration.

In the New Testament (Corinthians 12: 12–14, v.12) we find unequivocal support for the basic premise in conscious capitalism in that a leader ought to *take care of all the stakeholders*- “Just as a body, through one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.” Thus, it illustrates that whilst each stakeholder is different and has different needs all form part of the whole and they each contribute to the benefit of the business regardless of its size. Thus, leaders need to acknowledge the role of each stakeholder in a business, regardless whether one is a competitor, employee, supplier or local community member. In doing so each stakeholder will offer his full potential and all together to be a stable team.

A leader, of course, exists in a management culture but a conscious leader functions effectively in a conscious management culture with certain essential characteristics that are stated in the Old Testament (Psalm 146:8), “The Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous”. In other words, it is very important in a conscious culture and management to be resilient and self-healing. Leaders are called every day to try to improve themselves and overcome the pain and hardship experienced as God is there to help, as long as they demonstrate blamelessness, character, conscientiousness, decency, fairness, high-mindedness, incorruptibility, irreproachability, irreproachableness, justice, morality, nobility, reputability, respectability, right-mindedness, scrupulousness, virtue. This means healing from hardships, personal problems or even just a rough day. In the Bible, healing embraces the man, both spiritually and physically. It symbolizes, a new beginning and better moments to come. For Christians, each day is a new chance to start their journey to healing, an act of resilience. Jesus has taught us to be resilient through His behaviour when holding the cross and despite the pain (physically and mentally) He demonstrated that He was resilient up until His crucifixion. Similarly, Virgin Mary demonstrated Her resilience when seeing Her son being crucified and Jesus seeing His mother and His beloved disciple says, “Here is your son.” This is clearly demonstrating to us when we have difficulties, we need to keep on going.

Along the same lines, in the New Testament-Matthew 11:28–30, says “come to me, all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for you souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” This illustrates that it is very important to show trust and appreciation to the people around us by showing empathy and compassion. In fact, a good manager is one that demonstrates to his employees that they are respected and appreciated, and his door is always open for them if they need help. In the Bible, a human being is not just the “other” but the icon of God. So, we must follow the example of the Lord, who calls us to rest our weary souls with Him and will grant us peace of mind, body, and soul, even in the hardest days. Such behaviour illustrates accountability, care, empathy, and loyalty. We also see each other, with egalitarianism (or tolerance) because we are all children of the same God.

Finally, in the New Testament Mathew (6. 21) noted we are reminded of Christ's words that "where your treasure is, there, too, is your heart". This illustrates that the purpose of life, according to Christian teaching is love, which has two legs. The first one, is a love to God and the second love to yourself and your fellow man. In the eyes of man, you must see God Himself. Thus, with this reasoning we will be able to eliminate selfishness and we will be able to lay solid foundations for better relationships in various areas whether in work or personal life.

13.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, capitalism, communism, and socialism were briefly considered, noting that Christian teachings of brotherhood are the same values expressed by socialism. The Orthodoxy prides itself on having preserved the original apostolic faith, which was also expressed in the common Christian tradition of the first centuries. Thus, Orthodoxy conforms to the Christian faith as represented in the decrees of the early Church and as established by the first seven ecumenical councils between the years of 325 and 787 A.D. Interestingly, wealth is regarded by Orthodoxy as a necessary evil because, through charity poverty can be reduced/eliminated. Thus, whilst excessive luxury is prohibited one is forgiven for being wealthy if he/she gives to charity.

This chapter also discusses synergies between the beliefs and teachings of Orthodoxy and Conscious Capitalism. The four inter-connected and mutually reinforcing tenets of CC are higher purpose and core values; stakeholder integration; conscious leadership; and conscious culture and management (Mackey and Sisodia, 2014, p. 32–33). Conscious Capitalism also highlights the need for less violence and cruelty, more peace in the world and the business environment. Principles also found in the New and Old Testament. Thus, both concepts and principles of Christianity converge with basic tenets of Conscious Capitalism.

Finally, the chapter considers the characteristics and qualities leaders ought to possess within the boundaries of toxic working environments. Some of the qualities identified as necessary for conscious leaders within the context of CC are also qualities demonstrated in Orthodoxy. Such qualities include authenticity, empathy and compassion and being available and willing to help other fellow human beings regardless of race, colour, or gender. It can be concluded that there is ample documentation demonstrating that many of the Principles Orthodoxy is built on are found in Conscious Capitalism.

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