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How poverty effects on religiosity – aspects from the Greek debt crisis

In this paper I will argue poverty social ethics from a sociological and theological perspective: how poverty as a social and economic situation is disproportionate to the wealth that an organized society has – also referring to contemporary examples - and how religiosity is actually affected by these standards. Poverty, as a status of limited economic and social activity, existed from the very moment the first human society was formed. By the time that wealth emerged as a crucial historical subject and as a key differentiating factor between the people, has been consolidated in the consciousness, in the overall subconscious of mankind, the class stratification of society, together with contradictions and an ontological dimension of this differentiation. On the basis of the above, I will also refer to the differences between the social class hatred which triggers tensions, social anomalies and conflicts and in addition, solidarity, class cooperation and inevitability of the reciprocity of social dependencies, values that the Christian teachings, the Fathers of the Church such as St. John Chrysostom and St. Maximus the confessor, and at last the very act of our Church, have been highlighted, over the centuries. Poverty cannot be seen from only one side and this is what our Church is teaching. Poverty can be the chance for expressing solidarity and compassion. So the power is not determined to those who are willing to give, but also to those who get. I will also mention, how in Greece, especially during the first years of the debt crisis, the Greek Orthodox Church, made the slogan “no one alone in the crisis”, actually happen, giving it a substantive, spiritual, more solid background and actual meaning and also how and in what level the Greeks (Christian or not) welcomed that stance, since this multi-layered assistance was given unconditionally to all those in need, despite someone’s religion, ethnicity or political beliefs. Furthermore, I will try to answer if there are any spiritual prerequisites for social peace, unity and prosperity in today’s globalized world. Can there be a substantial transformation, a spiritual “Metamorphosis” of societies in this direction? And at last, is money itself evil or is it it’s usage that defines whether it’s bad or good?