

Is Christian Morality Unique? Part One

Industry and Christian Morality

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Is Christian Morality Unique? Part One  
Industry and Christian Morality

Michelle Nailon CSB

# Has the Christian approach to morality shaped the development of industry?

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## Industry and Christian Morality

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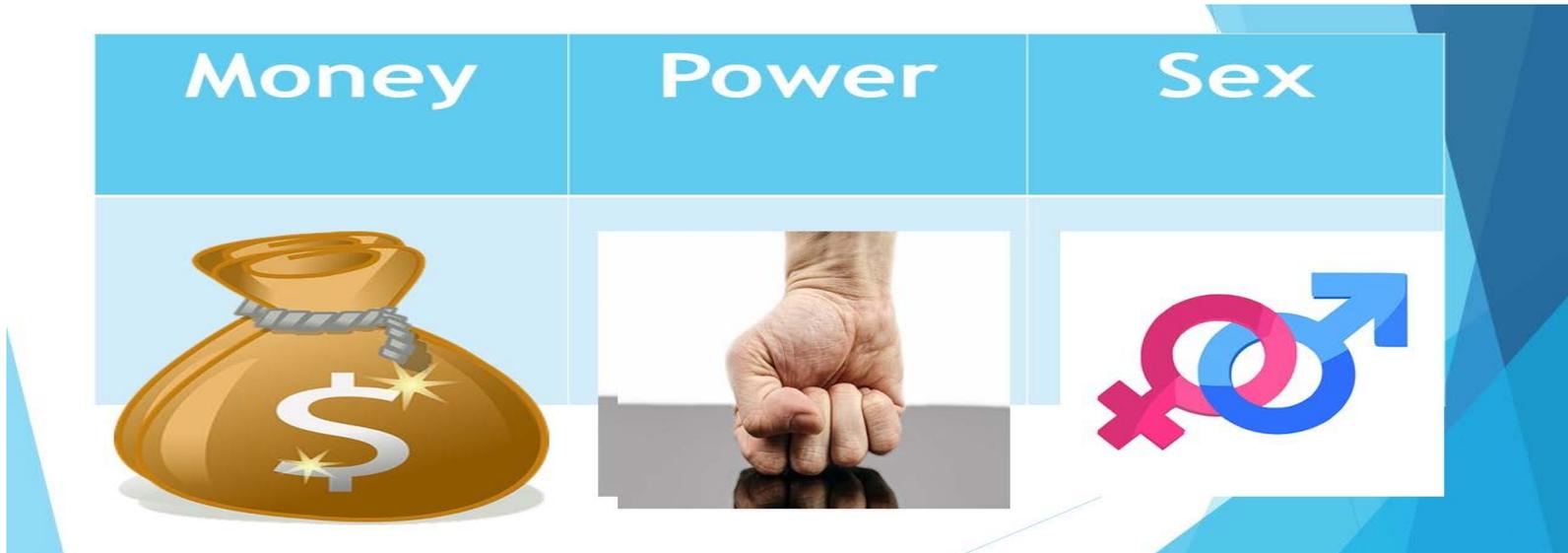
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# Has the Christian approach to morality shaped the development of industry?

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A question arises.

Key emphases in Christianity were continued on, into the centuries following the first century CE.

Were these precepts incorporated into the structure of Western civilization?



Let us a re-cap of previous workshops and a sociological analysis of the gospels cf. [www.realitysearch.com.au](http://www.realitysearch.com.au)

The gospel of Mark gave an introductory outline of the Christian message showing it was structured on the basis of authority and law (cf Judaism) It was also structured on the sense of order (cf. the Greek philosophy of the Roman Empire)

Matthew gave an outline of the strengths and weaknesses of a society based upon Law. Luke gave an outline of the strengths and weaknesses of a society based upon order.

Rather than on the details of Jewish law an early Church council put focus on three key Commandments (Thou shalt not kill, commit adultery, or steal)

The Council and teaching to follow challenged the followers of Jesus to constantly "raise the bar" of these Commandments.

People were challenged to avoid "blood", that is, cruelty as such  
They were challenged to avoid "fornication", that is, sexuality without commitment,  
They were challenged to avoid "strangling", that is, unjust business practices.

A dynamic was set in place to constantly try to improve on the following through of the Commandments,that is:

Institutionalise compassion. Support social foundations. Improve on the production and distribution of material goods.

**Would you expect this dynamic to play out within the social organism of society over the centuries?**

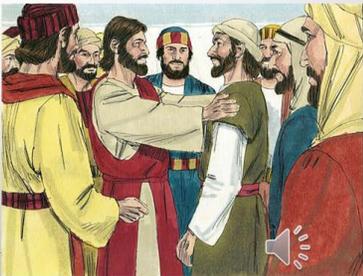
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If so, what influence did the three Commandments discussed above, have on the shape of industrial development, especially in the West.?

<b>"Thou shalt not kill"</b>	<b>"Thou shalt not commit adultery"</b>	<b>"Thou shalt not steal"</b>
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Also, what about the insistence within Judaism and with figures such as St Paul, on the "otherness" of God and a focus on "the Other" as shown in the lifetime of Jesus?



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To what extent does modern industry fit with a positive, "raising of the bar" approach to

<b>"Thou shalt not kill"</b>	→	<b>Heal and empower</b>
<b>"Thou shalt not commit adultery"</b>	→	Protect and administer social support systems
<b>"Thou shalt not steal"</b>	→	Produce material goods and distribute them

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# "Raise the bar in a social organism"

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How to gauge this?

Consider a Sociological View

One sociological approach is to consider the functions of a society as being similar to that of a social organism.

cf. The Sociologist Talcott Parsons

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As a "social organism" society needs

A Sense of Direction

Social Cohesion

Productivity

The Ability to move and adjust

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Parsons listed four major social systems/functions

1. Cultural System -
  - this deals with "ultimate reality" and includes art and defining a sense of direction
2. Social System -
  - This deals with the integration of people
3. Personality system-
  - this deals with goal attainment and productivity
4. Behavioral Organism
  - this deals with adaptation e.g. the economy

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Consider an outline ANZSIC the Australian and New Zealand Industry Classification

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Agriculture,</li> <li>B Mining,</li> <li>C Manufacturing,</li> <li>D Electricity, Gas and Waste Services,</li> <li>E Construction.</li> <li>F Wholesale Trade,</li> <li>G Retail,</li> <li>H Accommodation and Food Services,</li> <li>I Transport, Postal</li> <li>J Information, Media and Telecommunication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>K Finance, Insurance,</li> <li>L Rental, Real Estate,</li> <li>M Professional, Scientific and Technical Services,</li> <li>N Administrative and Support Services.</li> <li>O Public Administration and Safety</li> <li>P Education and Training</li> <li>Q Health and Social Assistance</li> <li>R Arts and Recreation Services</li> <li>S Other (e.g. Religious, Personal)</li> </ul>
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# "Raise the bar in a social organism"

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## Cultural System

Roughly speaking, do the industries listed by ANZSIC fit in with Parsons' analysis? Consider:

this deals with "ultimate reality" and includes art and defining a sense of **direction**

- R Arts and Recreation Services
- S Other (e.g. Religious, Personal)

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## Social System

(Social Cohesion)

this deals with the **integration** of people

- N Administrative and Support Services
- O Public Administration and Safety
- P Education and Training
- Q Health and Social Assistance

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## Personality system-

(Productivity)

this deals with goal attainment and **productivity**

- A Agriculture,
- B Mining,
- C Manufacturing,
- D Electricity, Gas and Waste Services,
- E Construction.

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## Behavioral Organism

(Ability to move and adjust)

This deals with **adjustment** e.g. the economy

- F Wholesale Trade,
- G Retail,
- H Accommodation and Food Services,
- I Transport, Postal
- J Information, Media and Telecommunication
- K Finance, Insurance,
- L Rental, Real Estate,
- M Professional, Scientific and Technical Services,

# "Raise the bar in a social organism"

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Where do these fit with the Commandments?



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**Thou shalt not**  
**Thou shalt not**  
**Thou shalt not**

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Consider the positive of:

*"Thou shalt not kill"*

Leading to

**Empowerment**

As in:

S Other (e.g. Religious, Personal)  
R Arts and Recreation Services  
Q Health and Social Assistance  
P Education and Training

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Consider the positive of:

**Social Security**

*"Thou shalt not commit adultery"*

As in:

O Public Administration and Safety



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Consider the positive of:

*"Thou shalt not steal"*

Leading to

**Material Benefit**

**Productivity Industries**

A Agriculture,  
B Mining,  
C Manufacturing,  
D Electricity, Gas and Waste Services,  
E Construction.

and

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# "Raise the bar in a social organism"

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Consider the positive of:

*"Thou shalt not steal"*

Leading to`

**Material Benefit**

## Adjustment Industries

F Wholesale Trade,  
G Retail,  
H Accommodation and  
Food Services,  
I Transport, Postal

J Information, Media and  
Telecommunication  
K Finance, Insurance,  
L Rental, Real Estate,  
M Professional, Scientific and Technical  
Services,  
N Administrative and Support Services.



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Having another look,  
How do the Commandments  
fit in with these industries?



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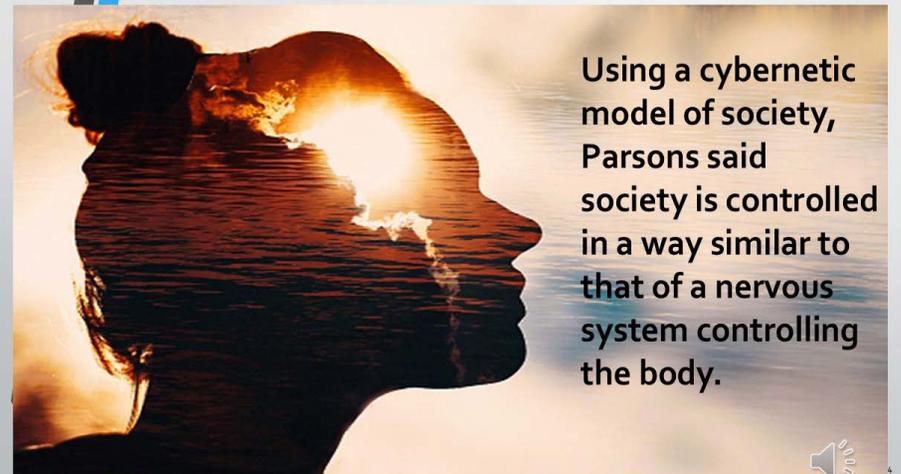
Consider Parsons' first "function", that is,  
the need for values maintenance, a cultural system and  
..... a **Sense of Direction**



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Using a cybernetic  
model of society,  
Parsons said  
society is controlled  
in a way similar to  
that of a nervous  
system controlling  
the body.



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# "Raise the bar in a social organism"

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This can remind us of St Paul talking about the "Body of Christ" with Christ and his dynamic values at the head

(cf. 1 Cor. 12:27)



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## Using the imagery of Parsons

Parsons said Key values influence the direction of the whole, like the tiller of a ship.



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If the Christian, positive approach to the Commandments sits at the cybernetic level of a society, then there is a constant, on-going drive to "raise the bar" of industry performance



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i.e. "raise the bar" of improving on

Giving Direction and Helping to "empower"

In Religion, the Arts, Health, Education



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# "Raise the bar in a social organism"

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Giving Direction and Helping to "empower"	In Religion, the Arts, Health, Education
Providing Social support	In Administration and Defence

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No. 270

Giving Direction and Helping to "empower"	In Religion, the Arts, Health, Education
Providing Social support	In Administration and Defence
Providing for Material Needs	In Production of material goods In Distribution of material goods

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Of course all three Commandments and the driving force to improve on them, apply to all the industries.

e.g. full home ownership should be a right

- Empower
- Provide family security
- Provide material benefit



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In any case, the three Commandments are usually mentioned together

Empower
Give Social Support
Give Material Support



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# "Raise the bar in a social organism"

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Why are the three Commandments usually found together?



Empower  
Give Social Support  
Give Material Support

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Empower  
Give Social Support  
Give Material Support

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Because Over-stress on the one Commandment can undermine the others

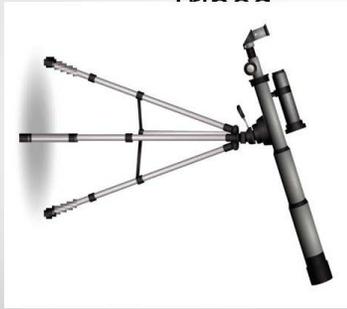
The three key social commandments are like a tripod.

With a tripod when there is over-focus on one leg the whole thing topples over



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Tripod



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# Why the three together



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Tripod



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In a parallel way  
in industry - there are of course multiple  
connections between all the industries and all  
the Commandments.

There needs to be!  
On the one hand there can be special focus  
on one function  
**BUT**  
over-focus on the one function can also be  
to the detriment of the rights of others  
and even oneself



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- Over-focus on making **money**
- Can lead to theft and destruction of habitat etc.  
*(cf. "Thou shalt not steal")*
- Can lead to destruction of people, health etc.  
*(cf. "Thou shalt not kill")*
- It can lead to destruction of main social support groups  
*(cf. "Thou shalt not commit adultery")*



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- Over-focus on **power** can lead to **killing**.
- It can destroy **social support groups**
- It can deprive people of **basic material needs**



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# Why the three together



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- Over-focus on **sex and relationship**

can affect **relationships**

can restrict **self-determination**

**restrict productivity**  
(and so on)



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## Christian Moral Teaching would claim



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that in a functional society the following Core Values should be found in Religion and the Arts and in all the other industries as well!!

Empower	cf. <b>"Thou shalt not kill"</b>
Provide social support	cf. <b>"Thou shalt not commit adultery"</b>
Provide material support	cf. <b>"Thou shalt not steal"</b>

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## What about Other World Religions?



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