

Teacher ; and apart from the question of the Church's wealth or poverty. By as many as would not be connected with the Church of Christ if it were poor, the real Kingdom of Christ has fewer citizens than it appears to have.

Another reason for this voluntary poverty of Christ is in the prevailing vice of His day, which, from all we can find, was avarice. More than once our Lord directly exposed this evil, accusing the Scribes, Pharisees, and Lawyers of having passed over judgment and the love of God, and, full of extortion and excess, binding on men's shoulders grievously heavy burdens. The same thing appears also in the demand which Christ made, in many cases literally insisted upon, that those who would be His disciples must forsake all and follow Him. The fraternal communism of the first apostolic years was the outgrowth of Christ's own example and spirit in this matter, for those who had lands and goods sold them and laid the price at the apostles' feet, and out of a common store had their needs supplied. The course thus pursued was surely not meant to be literally followed in succeeding generations, for its universal adoption would strangle commerce, and foster indolence. The latter evil had to be faced before long in those who would not work and yet expected to eat. This practice of non-property holding was of temporary force, intended to rebuke and correct the avarice of the age, at the same time supplying a *principle* of action applicable to any period, viz., that great ruling evils must be met by the most absolute practical protest. What would money-worshipping men have said when Jesus required them to forsake all and follow Him, if He had "nicely feathered His own nest?" They would have said it would be time enough to do that when He set the example. Under existing circumstances He would have been the subject of suspicion ; and evidently He deemed it the nobler and the mightier way to give no room for the thought of inconsistency between His example and His requirements.

Thus we have opened to us the meaning of our great Master's life, and of many of the strict words of sacrifice and self-discipline which He spake. Truth, as truth is in Jesus, must be obeyed, and Christ Himself must be loved and followed for His truth's sake. In the midst of any abounding and overmastering evil, our love of the truth that is in Him must lead