

the following:—To show that “a man’s life consisteth not in the things which he possesseth,” but what he is in himself; to suggest in an unmistakable manner that a poor man is not necessarily a fool, and that dishonesty, meanness, and crime are not of course connected with poverty; and to prove that a man need not be rich in order to be either happy or useful. But there are two considerations of special importance, and which the reader will see for himself are quite enough to account for the life the Saviour of mankind lived.

First, He would have His kingdom triumph by no mere accident or secondary force. The truth must win its own way; it must be accepted for the worth of its own self. Those who become followers of Christ must not look for bribes or worldly return, but be ready for the daily cross and the living sacrifice. He knew in His day, as well as we know in ours, that there are always plenty of people who are in haste to echo the sentiments of men in high social places; and greater crowds still who are allured by the prospect of gain which following a rich leader seems to give. But He knew better than we do how much of unreality there is about all this, and how slight a hold the truth has of a man, who is strongly influenced by any other consideration than a love of the truth for its own sake. He would have had more followers if He had been rich, but fewer disciples. The Kingdom would more quickly have become universal, but it would also more quickly have become corrupt. Indeed, ever since the Church of Christ came to be made up largely of prosperous men, the strongest temptations and the worst vices have lain along this track of worldly glory and prestige; making it important to the point of imperativeness that we tell men now, as clearly and forcibly as we can, that the Gospel must be received for its own sake, and that Christian discipleship is a very different and far better thing than a profession which is looked upon as a guarantee of respectability. Supposing Christ had been wealthy, and people had crowded about Him on that account, He could not have felt that His unworldly kingdom had really been set up; as it is, mankind may be longer in responding to Him, but His kingdom will more surely ultimately be set up in its reality and power. Christianity is a success only so far as it secures the intelligent convictions of men’s judgments and the true affections of men’s hearts, apart from the question of what, socially, is the