

Spirit of God will bless what is to be spoken and make it good for every one of us. I assume from the very outset, that the mind of man, naturally, is not disposed to be submissive to the mind of Deity—the carnal mind is enmity against God and is not subject to His will. We readily see that in the words of the Bible. We do not so readily take in the full meaning of it. There is opposition in the natural heart to the will of Deity and a reluctance to submit to that will. How frequently men have shown that opposition by their hostility to the servants of the Lord. The opposition does not always take the same form, just as hostility to God's servants has not always taken the same shape. It has taken its shape according to the times and places in which it was being exercised. In some instances, for example, they have been flung to wild beasts, in some instances they have been stoned, in some cases they have been crucified—the circumstances, the land in which the hostility has taken place, shape these things. They have been determined by the time and the place, but the hostility has been the same throughout. But one might put it in another way, if you want to illustrate it to the young. For example, there have been great varieties of ways in which men have contended with one another, they have fought with the stone, and with the sling and the stone, they have fought with the bow and the arrow, they have fought with the sword and the spear, they have fought with the gun and the cannon; the hostility is one thing, the form in which the hostility expresses itself is determined by circumstances. You might put it in another way. If a great city is to be fortified, it would be quite an idle thing to fortify it now as it would have been done two thousand years ago. In former days men had to guard cities against weapons that have long since ceased to be in use. Now, if a fortification has to be erected, it is not against the spear or the arrow or the musket; it must be against the cannon ball that may weigh a ton, or the power of dynamite that may blow it suddenly upward. The feeling of hostility exists, the shape it will take being determined by the differences of circumstances, time and place.

Now, I venture to indicate as one of the first,—the great difficulty—with which the Church of Jesus Christ has to contend, the position in which we have been led to put mammon, the favourable attitude in which we have been led to put what the Bible calls mammon. Mammon may stand for worldly advancement, particularly that form of worldly advancement that is found in the accumulation of a great deal of property. If a poor, miserable miser is existing in a den of the earth in comparative hunger and nakedness, we look at him with mingled pity and contempt. But that is not the way in which we look at a man, for example, who has accumulated a fortune, whom we call a millionaire. We have put money in a higher place than is given to it in God's Holy Word. It is a very natural thing for man to do so. Money is the *world* compressed, condensed into the smallest possible space. Have enough of it and you command respect, you awaken interest, you acquire a certain degree of power and influence, you will have notice from the community, you will have notice from the press, and you will have a certain degree of place and prestige in many quarters, because, simply because you have accumulated wealth. In many instances the end is held, practically, to justify the means. There is the magnificent result he has achieved, let us not look too narrowly into the ways by which the result has been attained. There are certain sins, stealing, lying, drunkenness, violence and the like, and public opinion stigmatizes these, but it is not so with the sin of covetousness. A man may be covetous and stand well in society, a man may be covetous and stand well in the Church, a man may be covetous and receive honour at the hands of Christians, while Christians accept the statement that is put down in the Word—“covetousness, which is idolatry.” We have made a great difficulty for the Truth of God, for the Church of Christ, in the too favourable aspect in which we let mammon stand. No wonder that Christ and His Apostles spoke as clearly and definitely as