

Him services by means of their substance which could not have been given by the poor. In the early church, which showed the greatest willingness to follow Christ's example in this respect, there was no obligation to sacrifice one's property, as Peter's words to Ananias and Sapphira clearly prove. In Luke we find Christ's views on wealth set forth most definitely, and many charge him with Ebronism. Plummer remarks on this: "That Luke is profoundly impressed by the contrast between wealth and poverty, and that, like St. James, he has great sympathy with the suffering poor, and a great horror of the temptations which beset all the rich, and to which many succumb, is true enough. But this is not Ebronism! He nowhere teaches that wealth is sinful, or that rich men must give away all their wealth, or that the wealthy may be spoiled by the poor. In the parable of Dives and Lazarus, which is supposed to be specially Ebronistic, the rich Abraham is in bliss with the beggar, and Lazarus neither denounces on earth the superfluity of Dives, nor triumphs in Hades over the reversal of positions. In the story about Zacchæus, which is peculiar to Luke, this head tax-gatherer retains half his great wealth, and there is no hint that he ought to have surrendered the whole of it. . . . Throughout the third Gospel there is a protest against worldliness, but there is no protest against wealth." In special cases Christ required men to give up all their riches, but this was for particular reasons, and there is no ground for the view so often taken that He considered the possession of wealth a sin, and that He was the first Socialist.

2. *Christ showed the extreme difficulty of salvation for the rich.* On this point he was most emphatic. When the rich young ruler forsook him rather than part with his possessions, Jesus remarked to His disciples: "Children, how hard it is for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God." It is a striking illustration of this position that when Christ came to earth, He chose a condition of poverty, and that, when He called His apostles to become the heralds of His Gospel,