What Jesus Taught Regarding Wealth

By
GEORGE JEFFERSON McNEW

With Introduction by
C. B. WILLIAMS, PH.D.
Dean, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary,
Fort Worth, Texas

1917

To

My Beloved and Loving Wife

Mary Chambers McNew

This Volume

Is

AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

INTRODUCTION

THE manuscript of this book was first presented by the author to the faculty of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Theology. It is one of the best theses ever presented to our faculty. The author was well equipped, both by natural tastes and a literary scholarship, for a thorough investigation of this interesting, up-to-date sociological subject. He has put his best thought and most painstaking research into this production. We heartily commend it to the reading public, not only for what is in the book, but for the facile and attractive style in which the thoughts are happily couched.

The problems of wealth are the paramount problems of the Twentieth Century. Leading statesmen, wide-awake ministers, and laymen of all economic conditions, rich, poor, and of moderate circumstances, are alive to the supreme significance of the problems of wealth. If these problems are not solved, more serious issues will be precipitated upon twentieth century society. Moreover, the modern world, in increasing numbers, is coming to feel that Jesus' program on wealth, its production and distribution for the highest interests of society at large (which is equivalent to saying for the glory of God) is the only economic program capable of settling the problems of our age.

Even G. Bernard Shaw has suggested in one of his latest productions that, inasmuch as all other programs have failed, we might now wisely put to the test the program of Jesus. This program of Jesus is clearly and cogently set forth in the following pages. All up-to-date ministers, social workers, Christian financiers, altruistic statesmen, and all kingdom workers will do well to read this excellent volume.

C. B. WILLIAMS.

Seminary Hill, Fort Worth, Texas.

DIVISION ONE

THE BACKGROUND

CHAPTER I

ECONOMIC TEACHING OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. WEALTH:
   1) Recognized and encouraged.
   2) Not to be too eagerly sought, nor too fully relied upon.
   3) Not owned absolutely by man.

2. JUSTICE:
   1) Practice of it exhorted.
   2) Failure to practice it condemned and punished.

3. CHARITY:
   1) Observance of—
      a. Explicitly commanded.
      b. Freely commended.
   2) Neglect of—
      a. Strongly condemned.
      b. Severely punished.

pp. 1-7

CHAPTER II

SOCIAL STATUS IN JESUS' DAY

1. SOCIAL CONDITIONS UNFAVORABLE:
   1) Divers kinds of lawlessness.
   2) Excessive taxation.
   3) Grinding oppression.

2. SOCIAL CLASSES UNHELPFUL:
   1) Essenes,—ascetic.
   2) Pharisees,—formalistic.
   3) Sadducees,—aristocratic.

pp. 8-17

CONTENTS

CHAPTER III

OBSERVATIONS REGARDING THE TEACHER

CHAPTER IV

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS AND SOURCES OF MATERIAL

DIVISION TWO

THE NEGATIVE VIEW

CHAPTER I

WAS JESUS AN ASCETIC?

CHAPTER II

DID JESUS ENJOIN COMMUNISM?

CHAPTER III

IS MODERN SOCIALISM IN ACCORD WITH THE TEACHING OF JESUS?

CONTENTS

CHAPTER V

GOD'S OWNERSHIP AND MAN'S STEWARDSHIP

CHAPTER VI

THE PLACE OF WEALTH IN THE REALIZATION OF THE KINGDOM

DIVISION THREE

THE POSITIVE PICTURE

CHAPTER I

RICHES ANTI-SPIRITUAL

CHAPTER II

WARNINGS AGAINST COVETOUSNESS

CONTENTS

CHAPTER III

THE DUTY OF BENEFICENCE

CHAPTER IV

HEAVENLY TREASURES *versus* EARTHLY TREASURES

FOREWORD

THE distinctness of a photograph depends very much upon a good background. To be sure, a good background does not *guarantee* a good picture; but it is certainly an essential even to the *possibility* of a good picture. With it, other things being favorable, a true likeness may be expected; without it, only an imperfect picture, at best, is possible.

This treatise will be an attempt to set forth as clear a view as we may be able to present of Jesus' teaching on wealth; and so, as in the case of physical photography, respect must be had to the background—for there were several influences that evidently had to do in giving certain shades of coloring to the Savior's sayings on the subject.

We shall first notice some of the elements that entered into this background; then we shall give attention to certain views which by many are regarded to have been held by Jesus, but which we shall endeavor to show are not in accordance with what He taught; and finally, our purpose will be to present the positive picture of both the specific and the more general teachings of Jesus on the theme under consideration.

DIVISION ONE

THE BACKGROUND

CHAPTER I

ECONOMIC TEACHING OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

AS the first element in the background, let us observe somewhat the teaching of the Old Testament as to social and economic problems; for as Jesus came "not to destroy, but to fulfill" the content of the "Law and the Prophets" (Matt. 5:17), the spirit of their teaching on such problems may be expected to find expression again in what Jesus taught on the same subjects.

The Old Testament very clearly recognizes man's right to the possession of wealth. This is evident from numerous examples cited throughout its pages. "Abram was very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold" (Gen. 13:2). David "died . . . full of days, riches, and honor" (I Chron. 29:28). "King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom" (I Kings 10:23). "Hezekiah had exceeding much riches and honor" (II Chron. 32:27).

And not only is man's right to riches recognized by the naming of the above and other ancient worthies who had great possessions, but the accumulation of wealth is encouraged by specific teachings. "The hand of the diligent maketh rich" (Prov. 10:4), we are taught; and the "worthy woman" pictured to us in the closing chapter of the same book is she that "worketh

willingly with her hands" (v. 13); "considereth a field and buyeth it" (v. 16); whose "merchandise is profitable" (v. 18); who is able to clothe her household "with scarlet," and who by her thrift and business acumen gives honor and prominence to her husband (v. 23).

Furthermore, not only does the Old Testament accord the right to wealth to man, and encourage him in its accumulation, but it teaches that God helps him in such effort. Solomon speaks of "every man to whom God hath given riches and wealth" (Ecc. 5:19), while the author of Deuteronomy says to Israel: "Thou shalt remember Jehovah thy God, for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth" (Deut. 8:18).

But while we have the foregoing teachings, men are again and again warned not to make worldly goods their chief objective. On the other hand, man is taught not to over-value them. "If riches increase, set not your heart thereon" (Ps. 62:10). "Let not the rich man glory in his riches" (Jer. 9:23). Again: "If I have made gold my hope; . . . if I have rejoiced because my wealth was great, . . . this also were an iniquity to be punished" (Job 31:24-28). The reason this trust in riches is not to be cherished is that "Riches certainly make themselves wings, like an eagle that flieth toward heaven" (Prov. 23:5). The most desirable state is the happy mean between dire poverty and luxurious affluence (see Prov. 30:8, 9).

The Old Testament teaches also that man had no absolute right to land (and land was the main item of wealth in the days when the Old Testament's laws were given). A man's right as against other men even

was absolute only with two exceptions: one of them was the right of a man who through misfortune had been compelled to sell his land, to buy it back when a kinsman came to his help or when he prospered so as to "find sufficient to redeem it" (Lev. 25:25-27); the other exception was the fact that in the Year of Jubilee all who had lost their lands could return to them, the title automatically reverting, in that year, to the original owners (Lev. 25:10, 13, 28). Because of this law of reversal of title, land was sold to be held only till Jubilee, whether that were forty-nine years or only one year. "The land shall not be sold in perpetuity" (Lev. 25:23). "According to the number of years after the jubilee thou shalt buy of thy neighbor, and according unto the number of years of the crops he shall sell unto thee. According to the multitude of the years thou shalt increase the price thereof, and according to the fewness of the years thou shalt diminish the price of it" (Lev. 25:15, 16).

Back of all these regulations is the teaching that, in the absolute sense, all wealth of whatever kind belongs to God. "Behold, unto Jehovah thy God belongeth heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth, with all that is therein" (Deut. 10:14). "Whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine" (Job. 41:11). "The earth is Jehovah's, and the fulness thereof" (Ps. 24:1). "The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith Jehovah of hosts" (Hag. 2:8). The practice of paying tithes to the Lord was in recognition of mere trusteeship on the part of the people, and Israel's failure to bring in the tithes and offerings was a virtual denial of God's ownership and His consequent right to expect

His proportionate part. Such conduct brought forth His severe rebuke: "Will a man rob God? Yet ye rob me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings" (Mal. 3:8). This passage not only teaches that God is the Owner, but also that men and nations are His tenants, and that they sin grievously when they fail to render to God His due. This principle will be more fully considered in a subsequent chapter.

In the matter of justice between man and man in the handling of material possessions the Old Testament is both explicit and insistent. Job 29:11-17 is a strong and pleasing picture of distributive justice, while Gen. 18:19 sets forth the duty of commutative justice: "For I have known him, to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of Jehovah, to do righteousness and justice."

The practice of justice is insistently demanded. "Just balances, just weights, a just ephah and a just hin shall ye have" (Lev. 19:36); "That which is altogether just shalt thou follow" (Deut. 16:20); "Do justice to the afflicted and destitute" (Ps. 82:3). These passages are unmistakably explicit.

The failure to deal justly is condemned strongly and punished severely. "How long will ye judge unjustly, and respect the persons of the wicked?" (Ps. 82:2). "Jehovah saw it, and it displeased Him that there was no justice. . . . And He put on garments of vengeance for clothing" (Isa. 59:15-17). "The violence of the wicked shall sweep them away, because they refuse to do justice" (Prov. 21:7). Nowhere else in the litera-

ture of the world is the teaching as to justice clearer and more unmistakable.

But the Old Testament does not stop at justice; it goes a step further and enjoins the exercise of mercy and helpfulness by the use of one's material possessions, in what in modern times is termed charity.

Deeds of charity are commanded repeatedly in the Law. "If there be with thee a poor man, . . . thou shalt surely open thy hand unto him. . . . Thou shalt surely give him, and thy heart shall not be grieved when thou givest unto him; because that for this thing Jehovah thy God will bless thee in all thy work" (Deut. 15:7-10). Note that in this passage there is not only the command to give to the needy, but the promise of God's blessing upon the one who obeys the command. (Cf. Prov. 28:27.) Again, "Thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest. . . . Neither shalt thou gather the fallen fruit of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and for the sojourner" (Lev. 19:9-10). On days of "feasting and gladness" it was remembered to send "gifts to the poor" (Esther 9:22).

Not only is such remembrance of the poor and needy frequently commanded, but it is also freely commended. A blessing is pronounced upon him "that considereth the poor" (Ps. 41:1), and we are taught also that "He that hath pity on the poor lendeth unto Jehovah," and that his good deed will be rewarded of the Lord (Prov. 19:17).

Those who mistreat the poor, either by neglect or by overt act of oppression, are bitterly denounced and

threatened with dire punishment. Isaiah, in his denunciation of the rulers of Judah, thrusts at them this charge from Jehovah: "It is ye that have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses: what mean ye that ye crush my people, and grind the face of the poor?" (Isa. 3:14, 15). "He that oppresseth the poor to increase his gain" is himself threatened with want (Prov. 22:16), while he that shuts his ears to the cry of the poor is warned that "he also shall cry, but shall not be heard" (Prov. 21:13).

Especially did the prophets in their preaching boldly champion the cause of the common people, and cry aloud and spare not in their defense of the rights of the poor. In the days of Isaiah, of Amos and of Micah not only did "the cry of the poor" for help fall on deaf ears, but even plain justice had been forsaken in the general greed for gain to such an extent that we find Isaiah pronouncing woe upon them that "join house to house" and "lay field to field, till there be no room" (Isa. 5:8); and then comes Micah with his "Woe" which is against those that "covet fields and seize them, and take them away"; and those that "oppress a man and his house" (Mic. 2:1, 2). Amos brings a still graver charge: "Hear this, O ye that would swallow up the needy, and cause the poor of the land to fail, saying, When will the new moon be gone, . . . that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and dealing falsely with balances of deceit; that we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes? . . . Jehovah hath sworn . . . , Surely I will never forget any of their works" (Amos 8:4-7).

As all of God's Word must be consistent, these Old Testament teachings of justice to all and mercy to the weak and dependent will surely echo through New Testament teachings as well; and especially may we expect to hear their repetition, if not in exactly the same phraseology, at least in re-statements of their principles, as we sit at the feet of the Great Teacher.

CHAPTER II

THE SOCIAL STATUS IN JESUS' DAY

A SECOND element in our background is the social condition that obtained in Palestine when Jesus lived and wrought. That condition was far indeed from favorable. Several factors contributed to make the state of the people at large the sad one that it was.

It would be an abuse of the word to call the rule that was exercised over the masses "government," for that is exactly what it was not. Instead of law enforcement, flagrant indifference thereto was manifest generally, and open disregard thereof shown by very many. Divers kinds of lawlessness went almost unheeded by those in authority who had the power, if they had had the care, to prevent or punish the perpetrators. It was the great mass of common people who bore the brunt of these violations, and the well-to-do, who were able to police and protect their property, and the official class, whose interests the plunderers feared to attack, paid little attention to the oppression of the poor.

Josephus characterizes Herod, the feudal king, in these words: "A man he was of great barbarity towards all men equally, and a slave to his passion; but above the consideration of what was right" ("Antiq.", XVII-8:1). That this estimate is conservative is

attested by his having his wife's brother secretly drowned, his putting his wife to death, and his ordering that two of his own sons be strangled. With such a man at the head of the nation, we are not surprised that marauding bands roamed at will the length and breadth of the land (see Jos.: "Wars", II-4:2, 3), and bold bands of robbers plied their work with scarcely any molestation (Jos.: "Ant.", XVII-10: 5, 6). Josephus draws a dark picture of the times. After enumerating certain seditions, revolts and insurrections, he adds: "Now at this time there were ten thousand other disorders in Judea, which were like tumults" ("Ant.", XVII-10:4), and a little later states: "Judea was full of robberies; . . . They were in some small measure indeed, and in small matters, hurtful to the Romans; but the murders they committed upon their own people lasted a long while" ("Ant.", XVII-10:8).

In addition to this open lawlessness, the people groaned under a system of taxation which itself was a sort of legalized robbery. The taxes were excessively high—just how high will likely never be known. The extreme rates exacted were occasioned, if not necessitated, largely by the wanton extravagance of the official circle, and particularly by the great governmental expenditures in building and repairing for which Herod's reign was noted. From Josephus we learn that he "built a theater at Jerusalem, as also a very great amphiterater in the plain", and that "Both of them were indeed costly works" ("Ant.", XV-8:1); that after rebuilding Samaria on a large scale, and compassing the city with "a wall of great strength",

he "erected a temple, which was illustrious on account of both its largeness and its beauty" ("Ant.", XV-8:5); that he built a palace at Jerusalem and a citadel six furlongs from Jerusalem ("Ant.", XV-9:3, 4); that he built Cesarea ("Ant.", XV-9:6), and then a temple to Caesar ("Ant.", XV-10:3); that he rebuilt the temple at Jerusalem, making it much larger than it had been ("Ant.", XV-11:1-7); and that he built Antipatris, Cypros, Phasaelus; and appointed revenues for the re-opening of "the olympic games, which were in a very low condition" ("Ant.", XVI-5:2, 3). Josephus says that Herod's magnificence, viewed alone, would seem to mark him as having a "nature vastly beneficent"; but that, considering the punishments he inflicted, even upon "his nearest relatives", one is "forced to allow that he was brutish and a stranger to all humanity"; and he concludes that all this building was done because Herod was "a man ambitious of honor, and quite overcome by that passion"; and that "the persons on whom he expended his money were so many that they made him a very bad procurer of it" (see "Ant.", XVI-5:4).

The last statement above is amply verified by the taxation system that was operated to raise the revenue for all these expenses. In addition to a poll tax paid by all males from fourteen to sixty-five, and females twelve to sixty-five years of age, the grain crop was taxed one-tenth and the fruit crop one-fifth; there was an income tax, and taxes on many of the trades, as well as on personal property; high duties were charged on imported goods, and there was much bridge and road toll to be paid by the users. City

taxes were also heavy, providing as they did for the building and maintenance of synagogues, public baths and city walls. (See Heuver's "Teaching of Jesus Concerning Wealth," pp. 32, 33.)

The burden was made heavier still on the taxpayer by the fact that the collector of the taxes had also to collect his own remuneration for his work; and not infrequently the owner was still further ground down by the tax-gatherer's yielding to the temptation to defraud. Zaccheus was doubtless guilty of such fraud (see Luke 19:8). This weakness added to the hatred the poor cherished against these subordinates of the Roman government. The ill-will felt toward them is indicated by the surprise manifested at Jesus' associating and eating with them. (See Matt. 9:11; Mark 2:16.)

Of course, as a result of the insecurity of property on account of robbers and other depredators and the unjust wresting from them, by the unscrupulous tax-gatherers, of so large a proportion of what might be left to them by the openly lawless, the great mass of the common people were abjectly poor, and growing poorer day by day. Prof. C. S. Gardner well says: "The economic conditions under which Jesus lived are well described by the phrase 'social deficit.' Poverty abounded. The masses of the people lived near to the border line of want, and many of them beyond it" ("Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress", p. 190).

As the poor became poorer and the rich richer, the chasm of ill-feeling between the two widened. Inordinate greed led the already opulent to severer oppression of the unprotected poverty-stricken, and these, in

turn, hated with intenser hatred their unscrupulous exploiters.

The indifference to the needy is well illustrated in the case of the Rich Man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19 ff.); while the probable prevalence of direct injustice to the unfortunate is shown in the fact that on another occasion Jesus, who generally, if not always, drew His illustrations from things familiar to His hearers, spoke a parable in which a man with his wife and children were about to be sold for debt (Matt. 18:25). This seems to indicate that just such things frequently befell unfortunate debtors. Furthermore, history records that an embassage of Jews that waited on Caesar at Rome to plead against Archelaus as Herod's successor, testified concerning Herod, "that whereas, when he took the kingdom, it was in an extraordinary flourishing condition, he had filled the nation with the utmost degree of poverty; and when upon unjust pretences he had slain any of the nobility, he took away their estates; and when he permitted any of them to live, he condemned them to the forfeiture of what they possessed. And besides the annual impositions which he laid upon every one of them, they were to make liberal presents to himself . . . and to his tax-gatherers, because there was no way of obtaining a freedom from unjust violence without giving either gold or silver for it" (Jos.: "Ant.", XVII-11:2). Nor had they any hope of better treatment at the hands of Archelaus, who "had given a specimen of his future virtue to his subjects . . . when he made slaughter of three thousand of his own countrymen at the temple," and whose kinsmen "would not join themselves to him,

out of their hatred to him" (See Jos.: "Ant.", XVII-11:2, 1).

Of Herod, G. D. Heuver has said: "To hate such a man is a credit to any people, a virtue in which the Jews did not fail. They hated him with a passionate hatred" ("The Teaching of Jesus Concerning Wealth", p. 29). Those are strong statements—the former one doubtless too strong, but the latter one true to fact, and emphasizing the difficulty Jesus would experience in inculcating His command to return good for evil (Matt. 5:44).

Nor was any one of the classes of society doing anything toward the amelioration of the people's sad estate. The leading social classes of the time were the Essenes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees.

The Essenes had many admirable traits of character, being just, pious, merciful, peaceable, filial and reverent. (See Jos.: "Wars", II-8:2-9). But being ascetic rather than social, these graces could be shown only among a chosen few, in their community of those who held like views. They practiced an extreme form of communism in their own small circle, their rule being that those who came to them must let what they had be "common to the whole order"—every one's possessions "intermingled with every other's possessions" (Jos.: "Wars", II-8:3). But, while professing such liberality and equality, they in fact, by withdrawing from the great multitude of their needy fellow-men, showed themselves to be selfish instead of altruistic; whereas those desirous of helping society must learn to "look not every man upon his own things, but every man also upon the things of others" (Phil. 2:4); and

for a man so to look upon others with a view to helping them, he can flee neither to hermit cell nor desert, but must dwell amidst those whose position he would elevate. Jesus did so dwell and work; but the Essenes, by the opposite course, proved themselves in this respect, as in many other ways, so utterly unlike Jesus that it seems passing strange that any one should have ever dared to hint that Jesus himself was an Essene.

The Pharisees were the formalists and literalists of their day. Their worship was a proud and prized ceremonialism which brought them what they sought—the praise of men (Matt. 6:1, 2, 5, 16; Luke 18:9-14). As to the Law, they magnified its letter to the neglect of its spirit. That the low regard in which they were held by the populace was as much as they had a right to expect is evident from the many denunciations recorded against them in the Gospels.

John the Baptist termed them "a generation of vipers", and, regarding them as unworthy to receive baptism at his hands on their mere profession of desire "to flee from the wrath to come", demanded of them proof by worthy works that they had been truly changed (see Matt. 3:7, 8). Luke, after giving Jesus' parable of the Unjust Steward, adds: "And the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, . . . scoffed at Him" (Luke 16:14). The likelihood is, in fact, that Jesus' special teaching in the preceding verses was directed to the Pharisees present, for He did not fail to speak in bold condemnation of them on various occasions. He called them blind guides of the blind (Matt. 23:24), vipers (Matt. 11:34), whited sepulchers (Matt. 23:27), hypocrites (Matt. 23:13-15), and in

the hardest thrust of all, perhaps, He styled them children of the devil (John 8:44). He taught His disciples that no such righteousness as that possessed by the scribes and the Pharisees would answer as a passport to heaven (see Matt. 5:20).

The "righteousness" of the Pharisees consisted of their minute and painstaking observance of certain parts of the letter of the law, with special preference for its ceremonial features. They stressed the less important matters while they practically ignored the more essential ones. Jesus so accused them: "Ye tithe mint and anise and cummin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law, justice, and mercy, and faith; but these ye ought to have done, and not to have left the other undone" (Matt. 23:23). Jesus did not here oppose tithing, or even minimize its importance—He commended it rather (note latter clause); but while commending and enjoining the minor matter of a faithful giving to the Lord of the proper proportion of even their smallest possessions, He severely censured their wilful neglect and utter disregard of the weightier concerns of their neighbors' rights. It was a question of over-emphasis by the Pharisees—of their giving such scrupulous attention to the former as to be led to pass the latter by with impunity. The twenty-third chapter of Matthew is a dreadful arraignment of those who did all their works "to be seen of men" (v. 5). Their formal prayers were but hollow pretences (v. 14; cf. Mark 12:40), as long as they laid heavy and grievous burdens on men's shoulders (v. 4), and devoured widows' houses (v. 14; cf. Luke 20:47).

There was even less chance of help to society from the Pharisees than from the Essenes. The latter did leave society and let it alone; the former staid, but only to oppress and exploit. While the Essenes sinned negatively, the Pharisees were positively harmful.

The third social order in Jesus' day was that of the Sadducees. They were the aristocratic class. They were well-to-do financially and enjoyed considerable social and official prestige. Many, if not most, of the priests came from the Sadducean party, though "there lay no intrinsic objection in the nature of Pharisaism to the priesthood as such, and there appear to have been not a few priestly Pharisees" ("New Schaff-Herzog Ency.", Vol. IX, p. 10). It may be safely said, though, that those whom the New Testament styles "chief priests", and who were made up of both former and officiating high priests and their families, constituted the nucleus of the Jewish aristocracy and were, for the main part, Sadducees. Of course, from this sect who, Josephus says ("Ant.", XIII-10:6), were "able to persuade none but the rich", and had not "the populace obsequious to them", and against whom "the multitude" had such an aversion (see "Ant.", XVIII-1:4), no social help could be expected.

Such was the state of society, and such the lack of any organized or systematic endeavor by any class to improve it. To be sure, there were some right-thinking, high-minded *individuals,* perhaps not a few, who were solicitous for better things. Among such there may be named Zacharias and his wife Elisabeth who were "both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless"

(Luke 1:5, 6); Joseph, the husband of Jesus' mother, who was "a righteous man" (Matt. 1:19); Simeon who "was righteous and devout" and who was "looking for the consolation of Israel" (Luke 2:25); and genuinely worshipful Anna, the prophetess, who made "supplications night and day" (Luke 2:36, 37). Such as these yearned for happier times, but they stood out like lonely oaks in the great Upas forest of the unconcerned, and evil-minded, and malicious multitudes that crowded them on every side and would have choked out their influence completely, had it been possible to do so.

Into this kind of environment Jesus came to live, to teach, to labor, and finally to die; and to do all this that He might "save that which was lost"—not merely the *souls* of men to an endless life hereafter, but also the *lives* that in the then deplorable social status were indeed "lost" to so much of the highest and happiest of earthly possibilities. As the Master Workman, during His three years' active ministry on earth, pressed the battle steadily toward the accomplishment of these ends, we may be sure that the untoward conditions that confronted Him every way He turned had an important bearing upon His pronouncements concerning Wealth.

CHAPTER III

OBSERVATIONS REGARDING THE TEACHER

IN this chapter there will be considered several things relating to Jesus that must have had to do quite materially with both the matter and the manner of His teaching.

In the first place the personal psychology of Jesus must be taken into account. Jesus was man as well as God; and as man, various psychological bents may be predicated of him, as of any other normal man. We do well to bear in mind that, in his human nature, Jesus *was* a normal man, it being remembered that a perfectly "normal" man is without sin—that sin is an abnormality. Adam was normal only till he sinned.

"In taking upon Him man's nature, Christ took upon Him all that is human in man. In the Lord Jesus Christ there was all that we think of when, in its best sense, we use the word human" (H. N. Bernard: "Mental Characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ", p. 18). These statements are correct, if we do not reckon sin as part of what "is human in man"; if we limit the term "human" to what he calls "its best sense." Barring sin alone, Jesus was much like other men, and, as such, he had certain distinguishing mental qualities; nor must these be forgotten, if we would correctly interpret his utterances. As H. C. King puts it, in addition to an "historical imagination", one needs

"what may be called a psychological imagination, to make the teaching real to himself"; for "the problem especially", he adds, "is to get all possible light on Christ's own state of mind at the time of the teaching, and so to see how the teaching grew up first of all out of his own experience and thought" ("Ethics of Jesus", p. 3).

In the first place, then, let it be remembered that, as to nationality, Jesus was a Jew. We would not, then, expect Him to use the same forms of expression as are used by occidentals; but we would expect him to think and to speak in the Jewish terminology of the day. On this point George Jackson has spoken well: "Finally, we cannot forget that Jesus was a Jew speaking to Jews. Son of God though He was, He was the son of a Jewish mother, trained in a Jewish home, in all things the child of His own time and race. Whatever else His message may have been, it was, first of all, a message to the men of His own day; therefore, of necessity, it was their language He used, it was to their needs He administered, it was their sins He condemned. The mold, the tone, the coloring were all largely determined by the life of His country and His time" ("Teaching of Jesus", p. 10). One word only in the above quotation we would change—his first "all"; though his "largely" near the close shows that the "all" cannot have its full meaning, for if Jesus had been in *all* things "the child of His own time and race", then what He said would have been, not only "largely", but *entirely*, determined by "the life of His country and His time." But, to say the least, we may be sure that nationality, environment, and training did influence *largely* the

phraseology with which he clothed his thought. (Cf. C. S. Gardner's "Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress", pp. 204 ff.)

Another point to be noted in the psychology of Jesus is the sense of justice he so strongly felt and so frequently and forcefully expressed. This characteristic of his nature was very pronounced, and his possession of it was many times manifested. His denunciations of the Pharisees, noted in the preceding chapter (see p. 14), were but an echo of his heart conviction, derived from observation, that simple justice was being denied to the common people by these formal legalists. This sense of justice on the part of Jesus amounted to a positive passion for the practicing of righteousness between man and man. To his auditors on the occasion of the Sermon on the Mount Jesus solemnly declared: "For I say unto you, that except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5:20). He taught that John the Baptist was an example as well as an exponent of righteous conduct (see Matt. 21:32), and in the parable immediately following (vv. 33-40), He not only characterized himself as having come to earth in the interest of such righteousness, but he adroitly led his unrighteous and wicked hearers to a condemnation of themselves for their own evil disposition and deeds (see v. 41). This intense yearning of Jesus to see men deal justly, and the disappointing fact that so few were so doing, without doubt lent a distinct coloring, on various occasions, to his social statements.

Again, Jesus was the very embodiment of pity and

compassion. No other man the world has ever known ever made anything like a near approach to the Son of Man in this characteristic which was one of his most noticeable. Mark 6:34 is a beautiful example of the compassion of Jesus: "And he came forth and saw a great multitude, and he had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd, and he began to teach them many things." How tender must have been his words, as he addressed this shepherdless flock! And where else in all literature is there such a picture of pity and compassion as that of Jesus weeping over Jerusalem, his heart breaking at her people's rejection of Him? (See Matt. 23:37.)

Nor did Jesus' compassion show itself toward friends only, but toward foes as well. Jerusalem's children above mentioned proved themselves enemies by not accepting him; yet he pitied them. Not only was the Master able to enter into the sorrow of Mary and Martha at the loss of their brother—all three of these his close friends, but when bitterest enemies pressed upon Jesus to take him, and Peter struck off the ear of the high priest's servant (see John 18:3-10), "the compassion and pity for others' pain which through all the earlier pages of the Gospels had appealed to our sympathy, is shown once more, as Christ puts forth His hand to touch the wounded Malchus" (H. N. Bernard: "Mental Characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ", p. 258).

Neither was this compassionate spirit of Jesus always accompanied by tenderness of tone and apparent gentleness of act; nevertheless, the explanation of many of those sayings and doings that, on superficial

notice, seem harsh and unkind, is really the yearning and solicitous spirit for others' welfare that was so distinguishing a mark of Jesus' personality. Manifestly it seemed to the rich young ruler an extreme demand when Jesus bade him sell all he had and give away the proceeds (see Luke 18:22), but it was in fact made in the greatest kindness. Jesus loved the young man (see Mark 10:21), and, desiring for him the richer, higher, fuller life, did not shrink from giving him the remedy requisite to its attainment. The Savior even lamented the man's rejection of the only thing that could do him good (see Luke 18:24). H. N. Bernard has gone so far as to say: "All Christ's miracles were works of pity and compassion. There is no exception. The fig-tree withered away; but its destruction was a sermon intended to save the inhabitants of Jerusalem from the ruin which would overtake them. The swine perished; but the miserable man possessed with the legion of devils was saved. And as with our Lord's acts, so with His spoken words" ("Mental Characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ", p. 28). Without doubt this compassionate spirit gave its coloring to many of Jesus' sayings to both friends and foes, and to the rich as well as to the poor; only sometimes we must look beneath the surface to discern the real motive and intent of a particular statement.

Once again, Jesus was optimistic as to the final outcome of His efforts; and His optimism at times reached almost the stage of enthusiasm, His actions and His speech appearing so extravagant to His friends one time, at least, that they "went out to lay

hold on Him: for they said, He is beside himself" (Mark 3:21; cf. John 10:20). Gardner says Jesus was not a "frigid and cautious conservative, whose chief fear was that he might go too far"; but that, while "His feeling never swept away the barriers of a will which was under the direction of a singularly clear intelligence", still it is true that "He was on fire with an enthusiasm such as never blazed on the altar of another soul" (see "Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress", p. 206). This enthusiasm is the kind born of confidence in the triumph of one's cause. Jesus had such confidence because he had an insight far beyond those about him, and was able to discern things that were not in the least manifest to the multitude,—not even, it would seem, to his own kindred in the flesh (see Mark 3:21). To understand the teachings of such a personality, the student must be *en rapport*, so to speak, with the teacher; in other words, in addition to the "historical imagination" already noted, the learner must possess a psychological sympathy with his instructor. The possession in common, by the teacher and the taught, of this sympathetic spirit will cause the latter to see in the utterances of the former, not impracticable or Utopian views, but words of "truth and soberness", such as was Paul's message at a later date, when he also was accused of madness (see Acts 26:24 f.).

Our second consideration is the primacy of the spiritual in both what Jesus said and what he did. He concerned himself *chiefly* with spiritual matters. This is set forth in his mission as he himself declared it in Luke 19:10: "The Son of man came to seek and to

save that which was lost." The same prominence given the strictly spiritual phase and the relegation to a secondary place of the merely social element of his work are shown also in his not being able to do "many mighty works" at Nazareth on account of the unbelief of those who heard him (see Matt. 13:58), and at which unbelief "he marvelled" (Mark 6:6).

In our opinion, though, Prof. Gardner takes an extreme position in holding that Jesus' social acts are all to be viewed simply as contributory to his efforts in behalf of man's spiritual welfare. Speaking of Jesus' purpose, he says: "His aim was purely spiritual. . . . He was profoundly interested in questions of poverty and wealth because—but only because—the economic conditions of men react so powerfully upon their spiritual lives" ("Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress", p. 201). This is, we believe, entirely too strong a statement. Jesus' nature recoiled from whatever was wrong, wherever found; nor can we conceive of his being oblivious to suffering or need, on the part of any creature, and especially man. Jesus was gentle and tender and sympathetic and merciful; nor did he confine his relieving of physical suffering to those who would be won in heart to him and his cause. Physically he healed ten lepers, but only one of the ten was touched spiritually (see Luke 17:12-17). Likewise he healed the servant's ear that Peter had cut off (see Luke 22:51); but was that servant benefited spiritually? We have no record that he was. Manifestly, Jesus was interested in men's *bodies*,—even entirely aside from their *souls;* but he was *much more* interested in their *souls*. It is a question of emphasis,—

less interest in the temporal, but greater in the eternal. This matter of emphasis on the main thing—this putting first that which is really primary—must always be remembered as a marked characteristic of Jesus. His interest in things that perish with the using, and in man's use of such things, while such interest was *real*, was only *secondary;* the spiritual always held the primacy in Jesus' thought and teaching, and *in comparison with it* the other interest is, as to value, largely negligible.

A third observation we would make is that the teaching of Jesus is to be deduced from *all* his acts and words bearing on the subject in question, and not from isolated passages. The explanation of the fact that there are so many widely different views held regarding various subjects treated in the Scriptures is that men have drawn unwarranted conclusions from a single passage, or at best, from a few passages, of scripture, instead of taking the trouble to make a thorough investigation of all that the Bible has to say on the theme, comparing scripture with scripture, and so arriving at the real meaning, from the whole tenor of teaching.

F. G. Peabody well says: "No vagary or extravagance of opinion has been too extreme to claim for itself the authority of the teaching of Jesus, or to fortify that claim through a fragmentary and haphazard eclecticism." Then after discussing the continuity of the life and teachings of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels, he concludes: "If, then, one seriously desires to know what Jesus taught about the rich and the poor, he must scrutinize, compare, and weigh the scattered sayings of the gospel and derive from them a general

impression of the life which gave authority to the teaching; and as he thus passes from the letter of the gospel to its spirit, there may perhaps disclose itself a scope and character of teaching which no isolated saying adequately represents . . ." ("Jesus Christ and the Social Question", p. 190 f.; cf. Shailer Mathews: "The Social Teaching of Jesus", p. 142).

On no other subject, perhaps, will a violation of due consideration of all the data lead one further astray than on the subject of wealth; for there are particular sayings of Jesus regarding material possessions which, standing alone and viewed quite apart from the light thrown on them by other passages, seem very radical, if not even revolutionary. But if these be placed in company with all the kindred passages, and the family relationship be recognized, harmony and agreement will succeed confusion and misunderstanding.

The final observation we make regarding Jesus is that he was a teacher of principles, and not of rules. The wisdom—in fact the practical necessity—of this is at once evident. Jesus' teaching was not for a day, nor for a generation only, but for all time and for all peoples. A set of specific rules and regulations that would have fit the economic conditions among the Jews in Palestine when Jesus lived would evidently be in large part almost wholly inapplicable to present day social conditions and business transactions in America. We here quote Shailer Mathews: "It would be, of course, unreasonable to expect him (Jesus) to legislate specifically for every new combination in the kaleidoscope of economic history." Further he says that "had Jesus attempted after the rabbinical fashion

to draw up minute rules for the conduct of industrial life, he must needs have filled his brief career with toil that would have been as superfluous as incomplete." Again, in discussing Jesus' various utterances about wealth, scattered, as they are, through the Gospels, he remarks: "We do for Jesus simply what we do for every teacher whose method was like his, if we attempt the discovery of a principle which underlies and a philosophy that binds together all special teachings. In the light of this principle and philosophy the hierarchy of special teachings may be properly established, and the significance of scattered sayings more correctly apprehended." (See "Social Teaching of Jesus", pp. 134, 143.)

So far was Jesus from being a stickler for rules that he denounced the Pharisees for so studiously and jealously observing the letter of the law in one respect as to neglect to obey the spirit of the law in the weightier matters of "justice, mercy, and faith" (Matt. 23:23). Let us then remember that, just as we are not to take Jesus' command, "Resist not evil" (Mark 5:38), as a literal, iron-clad rule requiring of us absolute passivity when others would impose upon us or abuse us, but rather as a striking emphasis of the principle that we are not to insist over-much on our rights, but to be generous in spirit, even toward enemies; so, also, when we find a saying of Jesus on wealth which, on its face, appears extreme, let us not regard it as a rigid *rule*, but interpret it in accordance with the *principles* underlying all his teaching on the subject. (Cf. Heuver's "Teaching of Jesus Concerning Wealth", p. 173 f.) Along with the other observations we have

made in this chapter regarding the Teacher, this characteristic of his must be kept constantly in mind, and applied as each particular passage is considered. If this be done, our reward will be a much clearer understanding of the mind of the Master than will be at all possible if we disregard the principle.

CHAPTER IV

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS AND SOURCES OF MATERIAL

IT is important to have a clear understanding of terms, and so in the beginning of this chapter several definitions will be cited, and some remarks made upon them. The latter part of the chapter will be given to the consideration of the sources from which we are to secure the material for the views we shall endeavor to present.

The word "wealth" furnishes an interesting illustration of how words degenerate in meaning with the passing of the years. According to Webster, it is derived from the old Anglo-Saxon word "weal," which itself still means "interest; well-being; prosperity." Agreeable to this, the primary meaning of "wealth" ("weal" plus "th") was originally "prosperity; external happiness." It is worth while to note, too, that the "well-being" defining our parent word "weal" has especial reference to "such things as more immediately affect our existence" (see Webster's "Imperial Dictionary", Edition 1906). It was with this exalted meaning of the word in mind, doubtless, that the English prayed for their queen, "Grant her in health and wealth long to live"; and not the low ideal that would cause them to neglect "saintly prayer for the queen's mind", and make them "ask neither

for light nor right" for her, as Emerson interpreted their petition, in his "English Traits" (issued in 1856).

Commenting on this principle of language decline, George Jackson aptly says: "Yet how strangely materialized our thoughts have become! Our very language has been dragged down and made a partner with us in our fall. When, for example, our Authorized Version was written in 1611, the translators could write, without fear of being misunderstood, 'Let no man seek his own, but every man another's *wealth*' (I Cor. 10:24). But though the nobler meaning of the word still survives in 'well' and 'weal', 'wealth' to-day is rarely used save to indicate abundance of material good" ("The Teachings of Jesus", p. 200).

The original primary meaning of wealth, as cited from Webster, is marked as obsolete, and there remains, as the present generally accepted meaning, this definition: "Riches; large possessions of money, goods, or land", etc.

"Werner's Universal Encyclopedia" defines "wealth" as "all useful and agreeable things which possess exchange value", etc. (See p. 6304.) This is the economic definition, while the one from Webster, given above, is what might be termed the modern business meaning of the word.

"The New International Encyclopedia" defines as follows: "The term wealth in political economy is applied to all objects possessing value. . . . Some authors would exclude, others include, under wealth, personal services; a few would include health, strength,

intelligence, and other personal attributes. The best usage confines the term to objects that are external to man."

Another good, yet brief, economic definition is that given by F. W. Taussig, as follows: "those things which men want, which are not free, and which present the problems of effort, of satisfaction through effort, of the organization of industry" ("Principles of Economics", Vol. I, p. 6). This is a fairly good working definition, though manifestly wealth presents some "problems" not necessarily included under any head of his classification. But this deficiency is explained by the fact that his treatment is from the purely politico-economic viewpoint, while ours is to be from the distinctively Christo-ethical viewpoint.

For the purposes of this treatise, perhaps as good a definition of "wealth" as may be had in as few words is the one given by C. S. Gardner, viz.: "material things which are capable of satisfying human wants" ("Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress", p. 187).

The terms "riches" and "poverty" are relative, the one being the opposite of the other. They are also considerably elastic. A man's being considered a "rich" man depends not so much upon the amount of his possessions as upon the excess of his possessions over those of the average man in his community. In this comparative way, a man living among people of ordinary financial circumstances may be "rich" on a hundred thousand dollars; but where the average financial rating of men runs high into the thousands, as in

the case of select sets in the upper strata of the commercial world, a man, to be "rich", must be a multimillionaire. It is a question of proportionate difference between the man a few rungs up the ladder of money values and the one several rungs above him; and if the former climb higher, the latter, to retain his designation of "rich man", must climb very much higher. The same principle of *difference* from the *standard* man, but this time *down* instead of *up* the ladder, determines the "poor" man; but in this case the principle does not hold in the same *degree* as in the upward climb: the word "poverty" is not so elastic as the term "riches," but is usually taken to indicate the condition of those at the bottom of the ladder,—those who are in a state of destitution, if not of abject want. (Cf. Gardner's "Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress", pp. 187 f.) Webster's definition of poverty is "want or scarcity of means of subsistence" ("International Dictionary", Edition 1895).

Let it be borne in mind that our use of the term "wealth" will be with the meaning given it in the economic definitions of Werner, Taussig, and Gardner, and not with that which we have termed the modern business meaning cited from Webster; that is to say, whatever material goods one possesses is to be regarded as so much "wealth," whether the amount be large or small. Webster, too, has an economic definition, in practical accord with those cited, but it has not been thought necessary to quote it; we have chosen rather, in citing him as an authority, to give special attention to the present primary meaning of the word,

as a synonym of "riches," for the purpose of showing the declension in meaning from the word's root idea.

We come now to notice the sources from which our material is to be obtained. There are three of them, viz.: the example of Jesus' own life; the utterances of Jesus on the subject, recorded in the Gospels; and the teaching of those apostles who accompanied Jesus during His personal ministry, it being reasonably presumed that their teaching on any subject accords with Jesus' teaching on the same subject. We shall consider these three sources in the order in which they have just been named.

Whether the old adage, "Actions speak louder than words", may have universal application or not, all will freely agree that certain things in the example of Jesus' early life, even though not taken as positive teachings, are at least of considerable value as emphasizing and confirming the lessons He taught by word of mouth. As He had the power of freedom and choice, not only as to the act of becoming incarnate, but as to the details thereof and thereafter (see II Cor. 8:9 and Phil. 2:6,7), there must be some significance in the fact that "He chose to pass by the capital, the palace, and the home of the mighty, and take up His abode with the humble" (Heuver's "Teaching of Jesus Concerning Wealth", pp. 134 f.). Why He made the choice He did will be considered later. For the present let it suffice us to know that His being born of humble parentage is not to be regarded as either arbitrary or accidental. Likewise, His remaining poor all His life; His choosing the Apostles, for the main part,

from the lowly walks of life; His manifesting so great an interest in the poor (see Matt. 11:5), and the fact that "the common people heard Him gladly" (Mark 12:37),—all these things certainly have, to say the least, some suggestive value in the study of the theme before us.

The second source of material, and of course the main one, is the utterances of Jesus on the subject, recorded in the Gospels. Of these John has practically nothing. He does recount the incident of Mary's anointing the feet of Jesus, Judas' criticism of the act as one of wanton waste, and Jesus' defense of Mary's course (12:1-8); and he also gives us a statement in connection with the Last Supper that would seem to indicate that Jesus practiced almsgiving (13:29): but aside from these two passages, one would scarcely know from reading the Fourth Gospel that the economic problem in Jesus' day was at all a serious matter. John does not even mention the covenant Judas made for money with the chief priests to betray Jesus into their hands, though all three of the Synoptists recite it with more or less detail. John's thoughts were in a different realm,—the almost entirely spiritual. Commenting on this Gospel, Walter Rauschenbusch says: "Christ's interests are religious and theological. The divine figure of the Son of God moves through the doubts and discussions of men like the silver moon sailing serene through the clouds" ("Christianity and the Social Crisis", p. 80). F. G. Peabody calls John's "a world of lofty philosophy, spiritual biography, and Divine communion" ("Jesus Christ and the Social Question",

p. 192). He is too much interested in the spiritual verities to take time to dwell upon the sordid things of earth. So we shall not look to his Gospel for social teaching.

Mark has very little on the economic phase of Christ's work that is not also given by one, if not both, of the other Synoptists, the only important exception being the account of the healing of a blind man at Bethsaida (8:22-26). Mark alone of all the Evangelists records this act of social service performed by the Master, but as it does not bear directly on our subject, we shall take Matthew's and Luke's Gospels as together constituting the basis for our study of what Jesus taught on wealth.

When we come to consider Matthew's and Luke's records on the subject there is found a radicalism of expression in the latter that is entirely foreign to the former, with one exception only. This single instance in which Matthew's language is stronger than Luke's is the statement in the Parable of the Sower as to the result of the Word's being choked by the "deceitfulness of riches." Matthew says (13:22), as does also Mark (4:19), that seed so hindered become "unfruitful"; Luke, for once, more mildly says that they "bring no fruit to perfection" (8:14). In all the other social passages where both report the same sayings of Jesus, Matthew's terminology is uniformly less radical than that of Luke. The comparison of a few parallel passages will make this evident. Note them in the following table:

MATTHEW	LUKE
1. (Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι); Blessed (are) the poor in spirit (5:3).	1. (Μακάριοι οἱ πτωχοί); Blessed (are) ye poor (6:20).
2. (Μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικιοσύνην); Blessed (are) they that hunger and thirst after righteousness (5:6).	2. (Μακάριοι οἱ πεινῶντες νῦν); Blessed (are) ye that hunger now (6:21).
3. (Τῷ αἰτοῦντί σε δός); Give to the one asking thee (5:42).	3. (Παντὶ αἰτοῦντί σε δίδου); Give to every one asking thee (6:30).
4. (Θησαυρίζετε δὲ ὑμῖν θησαυροὺς ἐν οὐρανῷ); But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven 6:20).	4. (Πωλήσατε τὰ ὑπάρχοντα ὑμῶν καὶ δότε ἐλεημοσύνην· ποιήσατε ἑαυτοῖς βαλλάντια μὴ παλαιούμενα, θησαυρὸν ἀνέκλειπτον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς); Sell that which ye have, and give alms; make for yourselves purses which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not (12:33).
5. (Πώλησόν σου τὰ ὑπάρχοντα); Sell that thou hast (19:21).	5. (Πάντα ὅσα ἔχεις πώλησον); Sell all that thou hast (18:22).

Luke makes Nos. 1 and 2 in the foregoing table still stronger by adding, a little later (6:24), his severe denunciations against the 'rich'' and the ''full.''

Not only are there such marked differences in the wording of the passages common to both these evangelists, but another reason for Luke's being styled by some the ''socialist-evangelist'' is the fact that he alone records several of the most radical lessons Jesus gave bearing on the subject of wealth. Of such are the stories of the Foolish Farmer (12:16-21), the Unjust Steward (16:1-13), and the Rich Man and Lazarus (16:19-31); and in this Gospel only is given the inheritance incident, with the consequent warning against covetousness (12:13-15). This special emphasis Luke lays upon the social phase of Jesus' teaching will be further considered as we proceed.

Our third source of material, which source may have a corroborative value in our discussion, is certain teachings of the Apostles who accompanied Jesus during His personal earthly ministry. Those of the Twelve who became New Testament authors were Matthew, John, and Peter. Matthew wrote only his Gospel, which, with the Gospel of Luke, we are using as the basis of our second, and main, source; but John, whose Gospel we found to have little social material in it, wrote also three epistles and the book of Revelation. In his first letter (2:15-17) he has some very strong language bearing directly on our theme; and his having passed the question by so nearly unnoticed in his Gospel naturally makes us note with keener interest what he says when his mind does turn to the subject.

Peter warns the elders to whom he wrote against

being greedy for "filthy lucre" (I Pet. 5:2). These teachings are quite significant, and in general tenor, when rightly interpreted, must be expected to accord with what Jesus had taught in the presence of these same Apostles when they were with Him, being trained to carry on the work He began.

James, the brother of our Lord, wrote the epistle that has been styled "Our one monument of the earliest Christianity", and he is almost as severe against the rich as is Luke. (See 1:10, 11; 2:6; 5:1-6. Cf. Shailer Mathews: "Social Teachings of Jesus", p. 136.)

Perhaps to these personal associates Paul should be added as also reflecting in his writings the teachings of Jesus; for, while not in the company of the Twelve, he testified that he had seen the Lord (I Cor. 9:1), and that he received his Gospel, not from man, but "through revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12). H. H. Wendt says: "The sources for our knowledge of the actual teaching of Jesus do not lie merely in the Gospel accounts, but also in the literature of the Apostolic age, especially in the Epistles of Paul. . . . Even had no direct accounts about Jesus been handed down to us, we should still possess, in the Apostolic literature, a perfectly valid testimony to the historical existence and epoch-making significance of Jesus as a teacher" ("Teaching of Jesus", Vol. I, p. 28).

In general, however, we shall rely upon the three sources already named, and chiefly upon the second one; that is, the Gospel records of Matthew and Luke. Whatever may be cited aside from these three sources will be used either as incidental or as confirmatory evidence.

DIVISION TWO

THE NEGATIVE VIEW

CHAPTER I

WAS JESUS AN ASCETIC?

CONSIDERING the great amount, and the almost as great variety, of the literature purporting to be Christian that has been written since the personal ministry of our Lord, it is not surprising that practically every social vagary in the whole catalogue, from the extremest type of asceticism on the one hand, to the most Utopian scheme on the other hand, has been set forth as the fittest expression of the ethics of Jesus.

This division of our treatise is to be a consideration of three of these cults, viz.: Asceticism, Communism, and Socialism. The adherents of each one of these theories, at least a large percentage of the representative advocates of each, claim to be in line with the example and teaching of Jesus.

Beginning with one extreme, our inquiry in the present chapter is whether or not Jesus was an ascetic.

Asceticism proceeds upon the assumption that all matter is essentially and inherently evil. Believing thus, the devotees of the system have ever reasoned that their spiritual well-being depends upon their fleeing all that is escapable of things material; and in the case of their bodies, which they cannot leave, they feel that no treatment is too severe that does not actually and wholly destroy the house in which the soul is

imprisoned. The fundamental cause of monasticism was "the belief . . . that 'the world' or 'the flesh' is an evil, and that consequently perfection in the religious life is soonest and best attained by retirement from the world and mortification of the flesh" ("New Schaff-Herzog Ency. of Rel. Knowledge", Vol. VII, p. 462; note by G. W. G.). This authority further says: "This was the motive in the asceticism of Brahminism and Buddhism, of Greece, and of the Hanifs of Arabia."

It was such a conviction and motive that led Francis of Assisi to give himself to a life of penance and poverty, going forth from "a gay life with the young men of his own age" in his native town, "clad in a rough garment, barefoot, and without staff or scrip, . . . to preach repentance" ("New Schaff-Herzog Ency.", Vol. IV, p. 356 f.). The best that can be said of this course of conduct on the part of St. Francis, and of the kindred conduct of the many others before and since his day who believed as he did, is that such course was consistent with the conviction that impelled it. The question is whether their premise be correct. Did they get such conviction from the teaching of Jesus? Is there any evidence in His recorded words or acts to incline to the belief that He regarded material possessions as an absolute evil? Let us consider these questions carefully.

If we take the example of Jesus' ordinary, day by day life, it would seem there is nothing in it to warrant the conclusion that He looked upon property as inherently evil. In the matter of dress Jesus certainly was not ascetic, as His fore-runner, John, manifestly was

(see Matt. 3:4); nor was He even eccentric, but apparently dressed according to the usual Jewish custom, barring, perhaps, the phylacteries (see John 19:23; Matt. 9:20). His dress was not conspicuous by having something not worn by the average man of His rank, nor was it noticeable by the lack of anything needed in the costume of one who, in modern parlance, would be called "a well-dressed man." (Cf. Shailer Mathews: "Social Teachings of Jesus", p. 162 f.)

The fact that Jesus Himself had no home to call His own is no proof that it is wrong to own a home. The facts are that He accepted the hospitality, and doubtless frequently enjoyed the comforts, of the Bethany home of Lazarus and his two sisters; that time after time He "sat at meat" in the homes of well-to-do people who gave feasts in His honor; and that He was, on one occasion at least, a self-invited guest in the home of the rich Zacchaeus. Also, He not only lent His presence to the wedding feast at Cana, but in an emergency, instead of leaving the guests to be served with water or not served at all, He used His power to provide more wine, so that the host was not embarrassed nor the spirit of festivity and good cheer destroyed. In all these and numerous other instances of kindred nature, Jesus not only showed no antipathy to property, as such, but evidently recognized the right of people to its possession and enjoyment.

Should any one presume to argue that Jesus' driving from the Temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and His overturning the tables of the money-changers, showed a disregard of property rights and

an enmity to business, the answer is ready that He had two very good reasons for doing as He did. One of these reasons was that the business being carried on there was not being conducted legitimately; this is indicated by Jesus' charging with robbery those who had there been plying their trades (see Matt. 21:13). The other reason was that they had desecrated the Temple which, while meant to be "a house of prayer", they had made "a den of robbers" (Luke 19:46). These men had no property or business rights where they were and doing as they were. Whatever rights they may have once had they had forfeited.

We should expect to find the *precepts* of Jesus regarding worldly goods in harmony with His *practice* respecting them; and such we do find to be the case, for nowhere is there an utterance from His lips that can be fairly interpreted as antagonistic to wealth, *per se*. True, He characterizes wealth "the mammon of unrighteousness" (Luke 16:9), and also speaks of "the deceitfulness of riches" (Matt. 13:22). But the former passage simply teaches that much wealth is handled by the ungodly and applied to unrighteous ends,—certainly not that it has any moral quality. All is dependent upon how it is used. David J. Burrell has spoken well in saying: "There never was a more obvious sophism than that of Proudhon, 'Property is robbery'. . . . Industry is honesty, and industry wins the penny. Money-making is a legitimate business, though multitudes pervert it" ("The Wonderful Teacher", p. 198). The fact that the reputation of money depends upon what is done with it is clearly evident from the injunction of Jesus to those

addressed in the passage under consideration to use this same medium which, because of the bad masters it so often has, must bear the name of "mammon of unrighteousness", in the worthy work of making for themselves faithful friends who would wait to welcome them into "eternal tabernacles".

The passage in Matthew warning against "the deceitfulness of riches" only illustrates the great danger there is that "wealth", when it amounts to "riches", may become its possessor's master to lead him, the while also deceiving him, instead of remaining a servant to do his bidding. Both these scriptures then, in reality, instead of arbitrarily condemning wealth as necessarily evil, emphasize its possibilities, if rightly employed.

But it may be asked if Jesus did not plainly and unmistakably demand the renunciation of wealth and thus show toward all material goods an uncompromising hostility. There has been no lack of zealous and ardent supporters of such a view. F. Naumann, "one of the few genuine orators of the German pulpit", says: "Jesus loves the rich, but he knows that their souls are free only when they are ready to throw their wealth away." "To save men's souls he is the enemy of wealth." (Quoted by F. G. Peabody: "Jesus Christ and the Social Question", p. 62). In the same connection Nitti, the Italian economist, is quoted as follows: "Christianity was a vast economic revolution more than anything else." "Poverty was an indispensable condition for gaining admission to the kingdom of heaven"; and then Peabody aptly remarks: "These extravagances of exegesis indicate how sharply the

pendulum of interest has swung from a Christology which ignored the social question to one which finds the social question the center of the gospel."

It is indeed true beyond question that there was a strong note of renunciation of worldly goods in some of the statements of Jesus. In a few instances it apparently amounted to a demand for the utter abnegation of all earthly belongings. But was such demand universal and iron-clad, or was it special and conditional? Let us determine the proper answers to these questions by examining the particular passages of scripture in which Jesus commanded the forsaking of property.

We begin by noticing the account of the rich young man who came to Jesus seeking the way to "eternal life" (see Matt. 19:16 f. and Luke 18:18 f.), and to whom Jesus said: "Sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me" (Luke 18:22). This command is explicit and absolute. But why so? Manifestly because, though it seemed severe treatment, it was in fact the only remedy in this very serious case. The young man's interest in his "great possessions" stood in the way of his claiming the "treasure in heaven" he seemed so anxious to obtain when he came running to the Teacher to ask what he might do to secure it (see Mark 10:17). Just as the surgeon spares not the knife when the life depends upon its being used, so Jesus in this instance promptly demanded that the young man be freed from the affliction of his wealth, which, like a cancer, was eating away all possibility of the higher life. (Cf. F. G. Peabody: "Jesus

Christ and the Social Question", p. 211.) With this particular man it was a matter of alternatives: continued possession of his wealth, and no part in the "true riches"; or immediate renunciation of all his worldly goods, that he might become an heir to "treasure in heaven". When thus called upon to face the issue squarely, he chose the former, thereby concretely illustrating the truth of the hard saying of Jesus about the camel and the needle's eye,—that is, that for the kind of rich man this one was to enter heaven is an absolute impossibility;—for the language is to be taken at what it says: "camel" means "camel" and "needle" means "needle". (See "Int. Crit. Com." and "Ex. Gk. Test.", *in loco.*) Nor is this "impossibility" to be regarded as in any way a limitation upon God's power, but only as showing that the man who makes gold his god and persistently refuses to flee such idolatry, can never walk God's streets of gold in the New Jerusalem. The will of the man in question was respected—as is the will of every man—and he, being "joined to his idols", found when the real test came that he preferred still to worship at their shrine, rather than at the altar of the Christ. Of every such one Jesus, in *apparent* harshness, but in *real* kindness and tender solicitude, asks the utter abnegation of earthly possessions.

Another passage demanding the renunciation of property is in Jesus' discussion of the terms of discipleship in the fourteenth chapter of Luke. In the midst of the plea He was making to the "great multitudes" following Him, to count the cost of alignment with Him and His cause, Jesus uttered this startling

language: "So therefore whosoever he be of you that renounceth not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple" (14:33). This was not a demand upon all would-be disciples, but was addressed to those comprising that unreasoning and unthinking throng that, mistaking His mission and His message as well, were, as Heuver says, "going up to Jerusalem with Jesus, expecting that Jesus would be crowned instead of crucified" (see "Teaching of Jesus Concerning Wealth", p. 143). In proof that the demand was not universal in application, note carefully the language of the verse,—πᾶς ἐξ ὑμῶν ὅς (whosoever *of you*). Jesus always considered the needs of His hearers, and, as in the case of the worldly-minded young man we have been studying, so also to this multitude of people who were forgetful of the great spiritual verities and values, and interested only in temporal hopes and earthly glory, Jesus preached the doctrine of material renunciation. He wanted to change their minds and hearts, and by nothing short of severe and startling language could He hope to influence or even arouse them. And it is very probable, as many interpreters think, that the demand in each of these two instances was more a test of willingness than an actual requirement of property surrender. Of those who hold this view is H. C. Vedder, who says of the latter passage we have considered (Luke 14:33): "An easy and short-sighted literalism may deduce a general law of renunciation from these words, but this is precisely one of the cases in which, as Jesus himself assures us, the letter kills, but the spirit gives life. We must, of course, understand this saying in the light of the other teaching of Jesus and

of his conduct. If we avail ourselves of this light, it will become plain that this saying, like those accompanying words, 'Whosoever does not bear his cross and come after me cannot be my disciple', is intended to describe a spirit, not to impose a rule of action. . . . The saying about the taking up of the cross obviously does not mean that every disciple of Jesus must actually die a death of shame, nor does the saying about renunciation mean that every disciple must formally renounce all his possessions; in both cases Jesus is telling us what sort of spirit His disciples must possess, of what sort of conduct they must be capable in emergency. They must so highly esteem his kingdom, and so rate the privilege of being his disciples above everything earthly, that they shall be willing to renounce property and life itself for the kingdom's sake" ("Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus", p. 419; cf. Rauschenbusch: "Christianity and the Social Crisis", p. 75). This view certainly seems reasonable; but, whether it be true that the demand in question was conditional and relative, or whether it was absolute, it manifestly is true that it did not apply equally to all people outside of the kingdom wishing to enter, but to a certain class on a particular occasion.

Let us now pass to the study of the subject as relating to those within the kingdom. If renunciation of one's wealth was not a requisite to *entrance* into the kingdom, was it a universal requirement of kingdom members *after* their entrance?

As regards the Apostles, the command to forsake their property was, on its face, without qualification. "Sell that which ye have, and give alms; make for

yourselves purses which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief draweth near, neither moth destroyeth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Luke 12:33, 34). This clearly calls upon the Twelve to release themselves from worldly entanglements. They were to go with their Master throughout the length and breadth of the land, witnessing His works, and themselves being trained in the things of the kingdom so as to be efficient laborers after His separation from them. It was not so much a matter of the *right* to possess property, as it was a matter of *expediency*. As with Paul at a later day, so it was with these specially chosen of Jesus in His early ministry: certain things were "lawful" for them, in the sense of not being sinful in themselves, which under the circumstances were not "expedient". (Cf. I Cor. 6:12.) So this was a special requirement, of a special company of disciples, under special conditions. That it was not intended as a general law to apply to all Christians is amply attested by the fact that many of Jesus' followers had more or less wealth, and so far as the records show, held it not only without any censure from Him, but with at least His tacit approval. Such was true undoubtedly in the cases of Zacchaeus, who, despite his large-hearted spirit of charity and his faithful practice of restitution, still must have had considerable wealth remaining (see Luke 19:1-10); Christ's three Bethany friends, who owned a home able to afford "an ointment of spikenard, very precious" (John 12:3); Joanna, and Susanna and the "Many others" of the women who, "of their substance", ministered unto Jesus and the Twelve

(see Luke 8:3); and Joseph of Arimathea who, "being a disciple of Jesus", furnished a tomb for the crucified Christ (see John 19:38 ff.). So it appears that, with the one exception of the Twelve Apostles, Jesus did not demand of any of His followers the absolute renunciation of their property holdings. Moreover, there are certain other scriptures not to be left out of consideration, and which seem to indicate plainly that the command we have been studying (Luke 12:33 f.) was not in actuality the iron-clad law which the strict letter of it would imply. For example, when Jesus, on the cross, commended His mother to John, the beloved disciple, "from that hour the disciple took her to his own home" (John 19:27). (On the absence, in the original of the noun "home", compare the similar Greek constructions of Luke 18:28 and Acts 21:6). The passage shows, at the least, that John still had things styled "his own" (τὰ ἴδια). Again, there is a passage near the close of Luke (22:35, 36)—the command of the Master to His disciples regarding their future missionary endeavors—which shows that they were not penniless; neither were they henceforth to depend wholly for support upon the people to whom they would minister, but were bidden to take with them purse and wallet. On this point Shailer Mathews says: "The advice to the Twelve and the Seventy" —when they were first sent out, he means—"was evidently due to some special cause, for afterwards, when giving them direction for their entire course of life after his death, he revoked it, advising a more normal manner of life" ("Social Teaching of Jesus", p. 147 f.). This command to *take means with them*

implies either that they had not been at first compelled to dispose of *all* their possessions, or else that since such disposal they had in some way accumulated other means. The least that can be said is that, even if it be granted that the command in the first place was absolute, this last scripture considered shows that it was not permanently binding. Thus we have come to find that, just before the Lord's betrayal, instead of committing His Apostles to the poignancy of perpetual poverty, He not only recognized their right to wealth, but enjoined its use by them in the extension of His kingdom. This teaching of His is not the fruit of an ascetic spirit.

And so, on the subject of this chapter, we conclude, with Shailer Mathews, that it seems "gratuitous to assert that Jesus was no ascetic or even semi-ascetic puritan" ("Social Teaching of Jesus", p. 159); with H. C. Vedder, that "Jesus deliberately avoided the life of an ascetic, and by so doing as deliberately challenged the condemnation of the censorious" ("Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus", p. 410; see Matt. 11:18, 19); and with H. C. King, that the "combination in Jesus of the earnest with the anti-ascetic spirit is always to be kept in view, and it is one of the evidences of the clearness and sanity of his ethical judgment" ("Ethics of Jesus", p. 101). So much for the negative answer to the question in general.

Respecting the question in the particular phase of the attitude of Jesus toward wealth, we agree with Alfred Plummer, that "Throughout the Third Gospel"—by far the most radical on social matters—

"there is a protest against worldliness; but there is no protest against wealth" ("Int. Crit. Com.; Luke", p. xxv). In a word, our answer to the question standing at the head of this chapter is here registered as an unequivocal "No!"

CHAPTER II

DID JESUS ENJOIN COMMUNISM?

COMMUNISM is one remove from asceticism. The communist does not regard property as necessarily evil, as does the ascetic, but his contention is against the private ownership of wealth, and in its stead the holding in common, by the community, all goods that have value.

Of the communist theory, the "New Schaff-Herzog Ency." says: "Communism, or collectivism, . . . is a theory as to the distribution of property in the interest of humanity and morality, and forms a definite social and economic system. It demands the abolishment of private property and the ownership of all industries and utilities by the State. . . . The individual then is an employee of the State, and has a right only to those commodities that are apportioned out to him from the common storehouse in remuneration for his contribution to the common work" (Vol. III, pp. 182, 183). The same authority tells us also: "Communism as a theoretical system first appeared among the Greeks, the most famous example being furnished by Plato's 'Republic'. . . . Similar reactions against the division of society into rich and poor are found in the Orient, where disdain of riches leads to renunciation of property; the Buddhist monks are particularly noteworthy. . . . The most important medieval com-

munistic experiment was that of the Taborites, the radical Bohemian party in the Hussite wars. Among the articles set forth by them in 1420 were the following: 'In these days there shall be no king, ruler, or subject on the earth, and all imposts and taxes shall cease; no one shall force another to do anything, for all shall be equal brethren and sisters. As in the town of Tabor there is no *mine* or *thine*, but all is held in common, so shall everything be common to all, and no one own anything for himself alone. Whoever does so commits a deadly sin.' . . . The more radical of the Taborites insisted upon community even in wives. . . . In the sixteenth century the propaganda for communism assumed the form of fiction. The most important work of this character was the 'Utopia' (1516) of Sir Thomas More. . . . The real father of modern communism was Saint-Simon. His ideas were taken up by Fourier; Enfantin, who advocated community of women; and others, including Cabet, who founded communistic colonies in America. Later Karl Marx attempted to reduce the more or less obscure and idealistic thoughts of Saint-Simon to a cold logical system by deducing common ownership from the nature of property. The position of the radical social party in Germany to-day is founded upon the theories of Marx. A product of the latter-day communistic thought was Edward Bellamy's 'Looking Backward' " ("New Schaff-Herzog Ency.", Vol. III, pp. 183, 184).

The preceding excerpts will serve to give us a good general view, through the years, of the communistic theory since its birth as a system, in the Greek mind, so long ago as Plato's day. In our study of the sub-

ject we shall relegate what is above quoted regarding community of wives, and consider communism simply in its relation to economic wealth. It is but fair so to modify the term, since those communistic individuals and organizations that went to the extreme of advocating that women be held in common were exceptional cases. Let us say then that representative communism does not go so far as to make that demand, but busies itself with the earnest advocacy of the common ownership of all forms of property. As H. C. Vedder puts it: "Communism would distribute all forms of wealth equally; . . . aims at the abolition of all private property" ("Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus", p. 6). With this premise in mind, our task is to ascertain whether Jesus enjoined upon His followers the practice of such community of goods; and if He did so enjoin *some* of His disciples, was the requirement intended as a rule to be applied to *all* accepting Him, and to be operative indefinitely.

The first, and the principal, argument upon which the communist bases his contention that he is in line with Christ's social program is the scripture passages relating to the Brotherhood composed of Jesus and the Twelve. Though there is no record of a definite, formal organization of the Apostles, there are certain passages that appear to indicate that there was such. Mark and Luke both tell us, more or less in detail, of the Twelve's being chosen by Jesus (Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16), the former saying that "He ordained twelve, that they should be with Him, and that He might send them forth to preach", etc. As quite a period elapsed after they were thus chosen before they

were sent out by the Master "to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick" (Luke 9:2), it is seen that they were "with Him" for a considerable time for special training. Between the time of their being chosen and that of their being sent out came that extended teaching of the twelfth chapter of Luke, which was "unto His disciples, first of all" (Luke 12:1); the Parable of the Sower, which the disciples asked Jesus to explain (Luke 8:9); also the Parable of the Tares, which, after the multitude had been sent away, was explained to the disciples (Matt. 13:36-43); the Stilling of the Tempest,—the tempest on the sea and the greater tempest in the hearts of the disciples (see Luke 8:23 f.); the entering of Jesus upon His third tour through Galilee, and His teaching the disciples to pray for laborers for the harvest (see Matt. 9:35-38). All this time the relationship between the Savior and the Twelve was very close; and, for that matter, it continued close till the very last, except on the part of one member only of the little band. They were much like a family of brothers. The fact that a special one of them is later named as carrying the bag and bearing what was put therein (see John 12:6 and 13:29) lends credence to the view that there was a kind of formal, even if rudimentary, organization. But the question is as to whether the foregoing scriptures (and some others, of kindred nature) teach that Jesus and this band of early followers must be regarded as unmistakably committed to communism. Not all agree on this matter. Shailer Mathews says: "Probably no one would soberly commit Jesus to communism because of Judas and the bag, and so far as any direct

word or single act of his is concerned, it is necessary to say the same" ("Social Teaching of Jesus", p. 152). On the other hand, C. D. Heuver, after quoting Luke 12:32-34, thus expresses his conviction: "It is unquestionably true that Jesus did not allow the apostles to hold property. They had to give up everything. . . . Being always with him he organized them into a brotherhood. Judas carried the purse. The organization seems to have been of a communistic nature" ("The Teaching of Jesus Concerning Wealth", p. 144). It should be said, however, that a little later Heuver adds: "But that he organized the twelve into a brotherhood, and allowed them no wealth, is no proof that he would not allow it to *any* of his followers." Heuver's opinion is therefore seen to be that Jesus required of the Twelve absolute renunciation of all private property, and instead ordained a strict communism; but that these extreme measures were not forced upon *all*, if upon *any*, subsequent disciples.

We have already endeavored, in a preceding chapter, to show (with what success the reader is to be the judge) that the forsaking of their property by the Apostles was only relative, not absolute. (See pp. 44, 45.) In line with the view there expressed, and for which we here still contend, we quote in this connection Thomas C. Hall: "This only"—that is, revenue-producing property—"is real wealth. Jesus himself had no such property, but he was evidently only opposed to it when made the goal, or when it interfered with our interest in a kingdom of God which he was trying to establish. The rich young man was told to sell all and follow Jesus, but the beloved disciple

had a house in Jerusalem, it seems, and was fairly prosperous" ("Social Solutions", p. 71).

But the communist also sets great store by the passages relating to the practice of the newly-won disciples, immediately following Pentecost (see Acts 2:44,45 and 5:1-6). He holds these passages to be strictly communistic in their content, and as such, he believes they echo the social teachings of Jesus. That the spirit of Jesus' teaching finds expression in the record of these events that occurred so soon after His death, is doubtless true; in fact, that is just what we should expect, especially when we remember that this having "all things in common" was one of the fruits that came, in so large measure, from the work on that memorable day of the personal companions of Jesus, —notably from the preaching of Peter. But that the procedure of the disciples regarding their property was communism, in the present meaning of the term, should not be taken for granted; but the scriptures in question should be carefully examined, and allowed to say what they do really mean; nor should certain subsequent teachings by some of these same associates of the Savior, as His disciples and servants, be ignored; for if on Pentecost and immediately following they reflected His personal teaching, in their conduct and their preaching, is it not almost equally sure that they reflected it also in their writings in later life?

Let us now look at the main passages in Acts on the subject. "And all that believed were together and had all things common; and they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all, according as any man had need" (2:44,45). Of the same general tenor is

the passage in 4:32-37. Note that nothing is said in either of these scriptures about this surrender of goods as being compulsory. Instead, it seems to have been, as F. G. Peabody observes, "a spontaneous, unique, and unrepeated manifestation of that elevation and unity of spirit which possessed the little company in the first glow of their new faith", and, in these respects, "like the gift of tongues described in the same chapter" (see "Jesus Christ and the Social Question", p. 24). That there was no compulsion brought to bear is manifest from the question asked Ananias when by silent, but no less real, falsehood he tried to win for himself a name for liberality: "While it remained, did it not remain thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thy power?" (Acts 5:4.) Very apposite here is the comment of Shailer Mathews on this incident: "Even in the case of the primitive Jerusalem church it is impossible to discover anything like communism in the modern sense of the word. Its members, be they never so rich, were not required to sell their possessions and to give to the poor, if we are to accept the words of Peter to Ananias (Acts 5:4). Indeed, the story of Ananias and Sapphira does not make their fate dependent upon their failure to share all their property, but upon their lying to the effect that they had so done" ("The Social Teaching of Jesus", p. 152 f.). So much to the point and so well said are the words of H. C. Vedder on the so-called communism following Pentecost that we here quote somewhat at length from his late book, "Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus": "It was the social element in the new faith that at once made the church at Jerusa-

lem communistic. And yet, strictly speaking, 'communism' is a misnomer as a description of the facts. . . . There was no economic theory behind the new conduct, and there was no equal division of property. Private property was neither condemned nor approved. . . . The disciples were so ruled by the spirit of Jesus that whatever each one possessed was at the service of his brother. 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself' was not among them a mere form of words . . . but was the actual guiding principle of life. 'And they sold their possession and goods and divided them all, according as any man had need.' The mention afterward of the cases of Ananias and Sapphira and Barnabas makes it plain that we are not to understand the method to have been a simultaneous sale of all possessions and an equal division of the entire proceeds, but a sale from time to time of property possessed by some, and distributed to those in need, from the sums thus contributed to the common treasury. Each member continued to hold his own property, but he held it subject to the needs of the whole body of disciples. In that sense they 'had all things in common', because they 'were of one heart and soul', so that 'not one said that aught of the things that he possessed was his own.' To such a point the teaching of Jesus . . . had brought his first disciples'' (pp. 439, 440). These words, we believe, are true to the facts in the case; and if they are, then the conduct of the disciples need not elicit so great surprise and wonder as is usually felt when this narrative of active brotherliness is read. Their conduct was not erratic or unreasonable; it was simply unselfish and fraternal. Their brothers were in need.

They relieved that need. Did they not do, under the circumstances, just as a Christian ought to do to-day in the face of like conditions? In fact, does not every follower of Christ who is at all worthy of the name prove again and again his kinship, in some degree at least, to these early Christians who gave of their substance "according as any man had need"? If it be otherwise with a professed servant of the Savior, to what profit has he read that searching social question by the beloved and loving disciple John: "Whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" (I John 3:17.) The multitudes won by Peter's preaching on the day of Pentecost "did not so learn Christ." What I have of material goods, however secure my legal claim thereto, is not all mine by moral right, if one of my fellow-servants in the kingdom is in dire need which it is possible for me to relieve. Just such an emergency, on the part of many of those that had "gladly received the word" that day (Pentecost), confronted those disciples who possessed more or less means. They met that emergency with a willing, joyous, and liberal sharing of their means,—sufficiently liberal to meet the need; for we learn a little later in the history that "neither was there among them any that lacked" (Acts 4:34), so generous and so continuous were these free-will offerings. (Cf. Acts 4:32-37.) Shall we call their course communism? A better name would be practical, or applied, Christianity. At least, it was not "a pre-arranged and institutional communism", but was an unstudied, immediate, and willing dividing

of possessions when a special occasion brought about special needs. (Cf. Peabody: "Jesus Christ and the Social Question", p. 25.)

Let us go a step further in our investigation and consider a very important fact, viz.: that the plan, whether it be named communism or what not, was not perpetuated. This is made evident by abundant scriptural teaching. Not many years after this having "all things common" the Jerusalem church is found urging the care of the poor, and making this plea for generosity, it appears, through "James and Cephas and John, they who were reputed to be pillars" (see Gal. 2:9,10), and who were former personal followers of Jesus. They certainly knew Christ's teaching, and could not have consistently enjoined upon Paul and Barnabas the helping of the poor, if Jesus had decreed that no disciple of His might possess private property. Also, such enforced penury on the part of subsequent disciples would have rendered contradictory and meaningless the statement of Paul that it was "the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints . . . at Jerusalem" (Rom. 15:26). Paul had the "mind of Christ" (I Cor. 2:16), having received his gospel "through revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:12); and doubtless he had not failed to impress upon the saints of Macedonia and Achaia their social obligation to their less fortunate brethren in Jerusalem, and so a worthy offering resulted.

The duty of giving is made prominent in the Epistles, not only of Paul, but also in those of James (1:27; 2:4-16) and John (I John 3:17,18; cf. 1:15); and the

doctrine of individual giving of money or other means is absolutely incompatible with communism. As for Paul, he directs Timothy to "charge them that are rich in this present world" to be "ready to distribute, willing to communicate", that by so doing they may be "laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come", thus taking firmer hold on "the life which is life indeed" (see I Tim. 6:17-19); and in writing to the church at Corinth, he urges that every one have his proportionate part in the support of the work sought to be done (see I Cor. 16:2). Let it be asked again what significance, what value, what reason such commands could have, if the people to whom they were addressed were strict communists. Well might Clement of Alexandria ask, "What means would be left of communicating one to another, if none had the means to bestow?" Shailer Mathews says: "As one would expect, thorough historians reject the idea of there having been communism in the Jerusalem church"; and cites Weizsacker and Keim (see "Social Teaching of Jesus", p. 151, note).

From our investigation of the subject we agree, therefore, with M. von Nathusius, as follows: "Arguments for communism are superficial and can be met by a simple appeal to the nature of man as a full moral agent. Communism based upon an equal enjoyment of this world's goods is unchristian and is not supported by revelation. God makes men to differ from one another, and this fact is recognized in the Bible." And again: "So far from commending renunciation of earthly goods, Paul declared work and remunerative work fundamental for every Christian (Eph. 4:28;

II Thes. 3:10); and Jesus emphasized the duty of faithfulness where private possessions are concerned (Luke 16:11). The New Testament teaches complete self-denial, but not communism; and to conceive of the first congregation in Jerusalem as communistic is to misunderstand both the passage describing it (Acts II-V) and Christianity" (Article, "Communism", in "New Schaff-Herzog Ency.", pp. 184, 183).

Then, as in the case of the question which is the subject of the preceding chapter, so also the question naming the present chapter must, we are firmly convinced, likewise be answered in the negative. *Jesus did not enjoin communism.*

CHAPTER III

IS MODERN SOCIALISM IN ACCORD WITH THE TEACHING OF JESUS?

THE word "Socialism" has been used, and is still used by some, with such a wide range of application as to make it exceedingly difficult, if not practically impossible, to define it satisfactorily. Every shade of social opinion, from Proudhon's "La propriété c'est moi le vol" ("Property is robbery"), to the mildest expression of sympathy for the poor by the modest and unassuming Christian philanthropist, has been, by *somebody,* labelled "Socialism". But of late, men who are more thoughtful and wish to be exact in their statements are coming to be more discriminative, so that now "Socialism" is confined within much narrower limits than formerly. In fact, whereas the word in its earlier history was very vague and indefinite in meaning, because abused by being over-used, such distinctions are now made between it and certain other terms, that we know, or *may* know, if we wish, what modern Socialism is, at least theoretically.

Socialism is defined by Webster as: "A theory of social reform the main feature of which is to secure a reconstruction of society, with a more equal division of property and the fruits of labor, through common ownership."

James Carter says: "As most frequently employed,

the term, socialism, denotes control by organized society of land and capital, of industrial production, and of the distribution of the income therefrom. Political socialists ordinarily demand State ownership of land and of the instruments of production. Under the fire of criticism there has been a tendency to abandon this extreme position. . . . The platforms of political parties, however, which alone can be accepted as authoritative utterances, have in no respect relinquished the full nationalist program" (Article on "Socialism" in "New Schaff-Herzog Ency.", *in loco*).

Socialism should be carefully distinguished from Communism, with which it has been often and much confused. H. C. Vedder makes this distinction: "Communism aims at the abolition of all private property; Socialism does not object to private property, except ownership of the means of producing wealth; these, it holds, should be owned by the whole community, and not by individuals or small groups" ("Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus", p. 6). Thus Socialists are only partly communistic.

A more vital distinction, for our purpose, is made by Webster: "A Socialist has a definite economic theory or political program indicating the results of the action which he advocates. A Communist, as a rule, has no such theory, but accepts the principles of common or communal ownership and lets the future take care of itself."

In line with Webster's statement above as to the Socialistic theory, Dr. Vedder, in picturing the economic state for which he is contending as the ideal, represents Socialism as saying to the laborer: "On

your part, you must work for six hours, on six days of the week, or possibly for only four hours, at whatever labor may be assigned you" ("Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus", p. 316).

The point to be specially observed from these citations is that Socialism's main plan and program are purely political,—that it hopes to reach its goal by governmental control of at least a large percentage of property, and legal compulsion of all the people as to the labor they perform; while the Communist goes entirely on the voluntary principle, being what he is from choice, and according to others the same right of option he himself exercises.

It is even more important to distinguish between Socialism and Sociology. The latter "treats of the general structure of society, the laws of its development, and the progress of actual civilization" (Webster); while the former, as we have seen, confines itself to the advocacy of a readjustment of property holdings, thus touching at one point only the comprehensive science of Sociology. The failure to note this marked distinction is, we believe, responsible for the fact that Socialism is credited with so much to which it has no just claim whatever. One illustration may be cited in the case of Dr. Vedder, from whose late, and in many points excellent, book we have already quoted more than once. He gives to Socialism credit that manifestly is wholly undeserved when he makes such extreme statements as the following, for example: "The Great Paradox of Jesus"—Matt. 16:24-26—"is the corner-stone of Socialism." "The spirit of self-sacrificing love is fundamental in Christianity, and it is

also what Socialism means by human brotherhood." "But it is to be borne in mind that, as the Christianity taught by Jesus cannot be identified with any existing church or creed, so the essential thing in Socialism is independent of any particular economic or political programme" ("Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus", p. 513).

The fact is, however, as we have already shown from authoritative sources, that Socialism is "a theory of social reform the main feature of which is to secure a reconstruction of society, with a more equal division of property and the fruits of labor, through common ownership"; that, "as most frequently employed, the term, socialism, denotes control by organized society of land and capital, of industrial production, and of the distribution of the income therefrom"; that "political socialists ordinarily demand State ownership of land", etc.; and that political platforms, "which alone can be accepted as authoritative utterances" on the subject, "have in no respect relinquished the full nationalist program." Could any clearer or more unmistakable language be desired, to show that the "main feature" (Webster), "the essential thing" (Vedder), in the Socialistic scheme is *not* "independent of any particular economic or political programme"?

If it should be objected that Vedder's "essential thing in Socialism" is not the same as Webster's "main feature" of it, but that the latter is only the agency through which the former is to be realized, and were this contention to be granted, the fact of dependence upon a "political programme" would still hold, nevertheless. The error in Dr. Vedder's statement is, we

believe, that what he calls the "essential thing in Socialism" is in reality the "brotherhood" idea that is the chief requisite in *Sociology,* and which idea is manifestly implied in the last two phrases of the definition we have cited of that science. So far as his primary idea of *brotherhood* is concerned, the author of the statements in question is, in our opinion, for the time being, on distinctly Sociological, instead of Socialistic, ground; and we might have claimed him as a Christian Sociologist, had he not a little later made use of a still more extreme and indefensible expression, predicating it also of Socialism, as follows: "It would be close to the truth to say that Socialism is more nearly a reproduction in modern terms of the gospel of Jesus than the system of rites and doctrines preached in his name in the so-called Christian churches of the world." Note well the wording of his sentence. If he had modified it by saying "*some* of the rites and doctrines," or "in *many* of the so-called Christian churches," it would have been less objectionable to Christian readers, because manifestly more in accord with the facts; but we would be unwilling to accept the declaration as it stands as true even of Sociology, much less of Socialism. Just as the premise (as well as the conclusion) in that other assertion that "as the Christianity taught by Jesus cannot be identified with any existing church or creed, so the essential thing in Socialism is independent of any particular economic or political programme", will find little acceptance in Christian circles; so likewise his plea in this instance that Socialism is superior to present-day Christianity, must be rejected in no uncertain tone.

Sociology—even of the Christian type—is not to be put on a level with Christianity proper, as the definitions of the two will plainly show. But we have seen that Sociology *does* stand higher than Socialism; then it is evident that Socialism is at least two planes below Christianity.

Jesus' teaching was sociological in so far as it concerned the well-being of men while still in the flesh. What else than sociology were all of His kingdom pronouncements and commandments that are realizable in human society? But His teaching was that such *coming of the kingdom*—such improvement of society—is to be accomplished quietly and gradually, not by sudden revolution. He sought not to magnify class distinctions, but even apparently to disregard such, at times at least. He was not, indeed, unmindful of conditions or unconcerned about them; He was working all the time in His own unique and hitherto unheard-of way,—planting as seeds in the hearts of men principles that would finally come to fruitage. He was interested in no rich man, nor in any poor man, as such; but He *was* interested in *every* man, rich or poor, as a *kingdom subject and servant.* F. G. Peabody has spoken aptly along the line of Jesus' impartiality: "There is certainly no ground", says he, "for believing that Jesus proposed to array the poor against the rich, or to set the one social class on his right and the other on his left." "There is but one supreme end for the life of rich and poor alike,—the service of the kingdom; and there is but one fundamental decision for all to make,—the decision whether they will serve God or Mammon. . . . Thus the teaching of Jesus is,

in one sense, extraordinarily detached from the problem of social distinctions and commercial prosperity. Jesus is not a social demagogue; he is a spiritual seer. He is not concerned with the levelling of social classes, but with the elevating of social ideals." (See "Jesus Christ and the Social Question", pp. 204, 207, 208.) These are well chosen words; and how clearly they differentiate the Master's teachings from those of modern Socialists! The latter are admittedly very much concerned with "the levelling of social classes"; and, as one has observed, "in a levelling *down* rather than a levelling *up*." Perhaps no one will deny that the Socialist who is crying most lustily for a readjustment of wealth is looking above at some more fortunate or more successful man than himself and demanding a share of his earnings, rather than reaching a helping hand to the man below and offering to divide his own store with this hapless brother. Jesus, in giving an inquirer one day a pattern for emulation, told him the beautiful story of the Good Samaritan, in which the one who "proved neighbor" was, in this respect, the down-looker and up-lifter. Shailer Mathews strikes the same key when he says: "The gospel is not a new Declaration of Rights, but a Declaration of Duties" ("Social Teaching of Jesus", p. 173).

But in further proof of the untenableness of the position, held by Dr. Vedder and some others, that Socialism and politics are independent of each other, let us note something of the Socialistic movement in modern times, in different countries.

In Germany the names that stand out prominently as Socialists are Ferdinand Lassalle, Karl Marx and

Freidrich Engels. Lassalle, as a leading feature of his work, "advocated a new political party, devoted to the interest of the wage-earner." The names and works of Marx and Engels are closely associated. Marx, in his famous work, "Das Kapital", issued in 1867, "advocated governmental control of land, capital, and all productive industry, . . . and payment for all workers regardless of quantity and quality solely according to the number of work-hours." In 1862 the International Association of Working Men was organized, beginning with "the recommendation of co-operative societies", but later demanding "nationalization of the means of communication, mines, forests, and land, the abolition of rent, interest, profit, and all remuneration to capital." "The International" was disorganized in 1873, but frequently since then international congresses have been held, and the socialistic sentiment nurtured. "By a fusing of existing parties in 1875 was formed the present Socialist Working Men's Party, which aims to convert 'private property in the means of production into social property', and to conduct all production and distribution under social control." (See "New Schaff-Herzog Ency.", article on "Socialism", Vol. X, p. 484.) It is thus seen that in Germany Modern Socialism is very closely identified with politics.

In France Socialism was at low ebb for quite a while after the fall of the Paris Commune. Finally differences were settled by the organization in 1905 of a united party which declared for the transformation "of the capitalistic organization of society into a collectivist or communal organization." In England, "In

1908 the conference of the labor party of Great Britain, formerly conservative, declared for State control of production." So the Socialism of these two neighbor nations is by no means divorced from politics. (See "New Schaff-Herzog Ency.", as above.)

The present Socialist Party in the United States was constituted in 1899, its adherents are well organized, and its demands for governmental ownership and control are well known. In fact, this is the demand of the Socialists everywhere, as is stated by C. R. Henderson, who takes his definition of Socialism "from its friends, not from its enemies." He says: "These definitions vary considerably, yet they converge upon one point: the public control of all lands, machinery, and means of transportation, as contrasted with control by private owners and managers" ("Social Duties", p. 266). And so we have found that Socialism has a definite "economic" program; and that, furthermore, it is a "political programme."

Is this Socialist plan in agreement with the economic teaching of Jesus? That He was much interested in the social welfare of people is very manifest, as we have already seen (see p. 23); but in His plan for economic amelioration the unit was not the whole body social, or body politic, or any organized part thereof: the unit in His thinking and working was the *individual*, always. Instead of attempting to reach the individual through society, He sought to improve the social status through the influence of regenerated individuals. Socialism works from without; Jesus works from within. In so doing He is striking at the root of the disease—the wrongness of men's hearts—and not

simply treating the symptoms. It is not, primarily, better environment men need; it is a new nature. Apropos here are the words of Shailer Mathews: "Farthest possible was Jesus from the curse of most socialistic programmes—the assumption that the ideal social order is based upon an increase in creature comforts. If there is anything unchristian, it is the notion that bread and amusements and good drainage are going to bring in the millennium" ("Social Teaching of Jesus", p. 155).

Still wider will the chasm appear between the teaching of Jesus and the proposals of present day Socialists, if we remember that He, in carrying forward His plan for world betterment, never counselled coercion, even of individuals, much less of men in the aggregate; while modern Socialists frankly aver that, if their purposes can not be attained peaceably, they favor resorting to revolution to accomplish their ends. Perhaps it is unnecessary to cite proof that Jesus opposed exercising any force except that of moral and spiritual constraint in extending the reign of His kingdom,—or, to put it in modern parlance, in elevating human society; but if such proof should be asked, it will be sufficient to call attention to the fact that the Savior, instead of any act of compulsion, wept over Jerusalem because its inhabitants *were unwilling* to align themselves with Him and His cause (see Matt. 23:37); and that, so quiet and devoid of outward show was His method, He could say to the inquiring Pharisees: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation" (Luke 17:20).

As opposed to this peaceable program for progress,

let us note the avowed intention of Socialists to resort to violence in the event that more conservative means do not succeed. Eugene V. Debs, three times Socialist candidate for the presidency of the United States, will certainly be accepted as good authority on the subject. In a speech in Saint Louis, in August, 1897, he said: "The time will come to incite the populace. In the very near future there will be an uprising of the people. Congress will be dispersed and the Supreme Court abolished. When that time comes you can count upon me. I will be ready to shed the last drop of my blood" (Quoted by J. W. Hill; see "Christian Socialist", Dec. 1, 1910, p. 2).

To show that the same sentiment prevailed fourteen years later, we quote from an article published in the above-named Socialist organ, Nov. 9, 1911, from the pen of Bishop F. P. Spalding, of Utah; the article is reprinted in the "Spalding Memorial Edition" of said publication, in November, 1914. The Bishop says: "If it was right and Christian for our patriotic forefathers to stir up class feeling on the economic issue of 'taxation without representation' and bring on a bloody war with the mother country; if it was right and Christian for those who did not believe in chattel slavery to create class feeling and precipitate an awful civil war between the free states and the slave states, who shall say that it is not right and Christian for the Socialist to stir up class feeling and bring on the social and economic revolution, which alone can give life and liberty to the millions to whom now citizenship has no meaning and life confers no blessing?" The Bishop goes on to disclaim the impending struggle's being "a

bloody revolution," but closes the paragraph by saying it will be "none the less, as compared to present standards, radical and revolutionary action." Perhaps he believes that when the Socialists rise in revolt they will present such a formidable appearance that their foes will at once yield, rather than fight against such odds, and by such yielding bloodshed will be averted. To say the least, he counsels "radical and revolutionary action", that "the body corporate" may "become a 'new creation.'"

Once more, to show that this revolutionary spirit had not abated two years later, but rather had been intensified, we quote now from Dr. E. E. Carr, the editor of the "Christian Socialist," in the issue of Dec. 1, 1913, p. 4, as follows: "Sooner or later by the peaceful ballot and legal action, if church members will help, or by bloody wars and confiscation, if the church members take the wrong side as the class struggle nears its inevitable climax, the producers of wealth will realize how frightfully and how long they have been cheated, robbed, and crushed, and they will arise in relentless and awful judgment against the oppressive master class."

This is the doctrine of Modern Socialism. Who will presume to say that it is an outgrowth from seeds planted in men's hearts nineteen centuries ago by Him who spoke to impetuous Peter when he was inclined, on an occasion of great provocation indeed, to become reckless and "radical and revolutionary", the stern command: "Put up again thy sword into its place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword" (Matt. 26:52)? Jesus' battle that day was a

spiritual conflict; and the battles of the Lord's people since then have been, and will continue to be, spiritual struggles in which no sword, save "the sword of the Spirit", is to be brought into play.

But not only is Modern Socialism *un*-Christian; it is even *anti*-Christian. It shows itself to be so, first, in regarding present physical well-being the *summum bonum* of man's need. Its desires and its dreams are purely materialistic, whereas Jesus teaches that "a man's life"—the higher, nobler, and so the really worth-while life—"consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15); then forcefully illustrates His principle by the story of the foolish farmer (Luke 12:16-21); and still further emphasizes the same truth by asking that searching question, spiritual rather than social: "For what shall a man be profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and forfeit his life?" (Matt. 16:26).

Again, Modern Socialism shows its anti-Christian character by offering itself as a substitute for the Christian religion. "It is not enough to say that the socialist programme is indifferent to religion. It undertakes to provide a substitute for religion. . . . It sets itself against Christianity because, as Liebknecht said, 'That is the religion of private property and of the respectable classes.' It offers itself as an alternative to the Christian religion. It is, as a distinguished critic (H. Holtzmann) has remarked, not merely a new economic and social programme, but proposes to compete with Christianity in offering a comprehensive creed" (F. G. Peabody: "Jesus Christ and the Social Question", pp. 19, 20).

In proof that the above view of Prof. Peabody's is not far-fetched, observe the following from H. G. Wells: "Socialism is to me a very great thing indeed, the form and substance of my ideal life and all the religion I possess. I am, by a sort of predestination, a Socialist" (Sinclair: "The Cry for Justice", p. 830). Here is a man who has accepted Socialism as a substitute for religion,—who has, in fact, *made it his religion,* and regards it as quite satisfactory.

Under the topic, "Classic creeds of socialism", C. R. Henderson remarks: "It is proper to speak of creeds in this connection because socialism has with many taken the place of religion and because it is a set of articles of faith in a future social state on earth, rather than a description and explanation of an actual social system" ("Social Duties", pp. 266, 267).

The impotency of such substitute is well noted by G. D. Heuver: "Right conditions are not possible unless a people walk in fellowship with God. Men can be right economically only when they are right religiously. . . . It is the failure of not realizing the importance of a moral transformation on the part of the people that constitutes the weakness of modern socialism. Socialism makes no appeal to character.

> 'Ah, your Fourier's failed,
> Because not poet enough to understand
> That life develops from within.' "
> —"Teachings of Jesus Concerning Wealth", p. 121.

Of like import is the testimony of D. S. Gregory, based upon historical fact: "Human experience has demonstrated that, in man's present condition of moral

disorder, schemes of government, philanthropy, moral reform, and education are sources of blessing and elevation to mankind only as they have a solid Christian basis" ("Christian Ethics", p. 263).

Even Dr. Vedder, who has, as we have seen, a strong socialistic bias, frankly admits: "Socialism tends to substitute itself for religion, says Enrico Ferri, 'since its aim is for humanity to have its own "earthly paradise" here, without having to wait for it in the hereafter, which, to say the least, is very problematical.'" Then he goes on to say: "Many socialists are trying to make a religion out of their philosophy, and the devotion to the welfare of their fellows that it may inspire. But considered as a religion, Socialism is a tallow candle to the sun when compared to the religion of Jesus." And again: "Christianity, therefore, can neither offer nor accept a compromise with those socialists who flatly contradict the word of Jesus and ignore the spiritual need of man, teaching that the food is more than life, and that man can live by bread alone. . . . they will accomplish more for the uplifting of mankind when they shall succeed in teaching men to be less dissatisfied with their conditions and more dissatisfied with their character" ("Socialism and Ethics of Jesus", pp. 384, 385, 515). These words are very refreshing in contradistinction to the quotation we have previously made from page 513 of the same book (see p. 69 f.). They are manifestly true to the facts.

The final proof we offer that Modern Socialism is anti-Christian is that some of its most ardent advocates openly ridicule religion and blaspheme Christianity's Founder. Hear a few of their statements. "The first

word of religion", wrote Friedrich Engels, "is a lie." "The idea of God", said Marx, "must be destroyed; it is the keystone of a perverted civilization." "The revolution", says Bebel, "differs from all its predecessors in this, that it does not seek for new forms of religion, but denies religion altogether." "It is useless", says Belfort Bax, "blinking the fact that the Christian doctrine is more revolting to the higher moral sense of to-day than the Saturnalia of the cult of Proserpina could have been to the conscience of the early Christians; . . . It is only natural that the socialist should resent with some indignation the continual reference of ideal perfection to a semi-mythical Syrian of the first century, when he sees higher types even in some men walking this upper earth." (Quoted by F. G. Peabody: "Jesus Christ and the Social Question", pp. 16, 17.)

Comment on these unmistakably plain teachings of representative Socialists is unnecessary. Other declarations of the same general tenor might be cited, but the foregoing are sufficient to show that, instead of their theory's being in accord with the teaching of Jesus, the "revolutionary" scheme of modern Socialists and the economic plan of the Prince of Peace are, in fact, the poles apart.

DIVISION THREE

THE POSITIVE PICTURE

CHAPTER I

RICHES ANTI-SPIRITUAL

PASSING now from the negative view, we come to examine the positive picture of Jesus' teachings on wealth. These we shall classify, for convenience, as *specific* and *general*. This classification is by no means arbitrary and iron-clad. By *specific teachings*, as we are here using the term, are meant those teachings on the subject that are directly and clearly supported by positive, unmistakable Scripture passages; while by *general teachings* we mean rather those principles that are, to say the least, not directly provable from any particular passage, nor from any set series of passages, in the New Testament, but which principles are in large measure to be implied from the general tenor of the Scripture record. Of the former class we shall consider four; of the latter class, but two. Attention will first be given to the specific teachings; and the one of these to engage us in the present chapter is that *riches are anti-spiritual in their tendency*. A large number of passages might be cited in support of this proposition, but we select only three, believing them quite sufficient for the proof of our claim.

The first of the three is that part of Jesus' explanation of the Parable of the Sower where He speaks of "the deceitfulness of riches" as helping to "choke the word" and render it "unfruitful" (Matt. 13:22),

or, as Luke puts it, helping to prevent its bringing any "fruit to perfection" (8:14). The teaching here is clear that the possession of "riches" constitutes in the owner a strong predisposition against spiritual possibilities. The word used by both Matthew and Mark that is translated "deceitfulness" is very suggestive, being from the verb ἀπατάω: *to cheat; deceive; beguile.* The figure here almost passes over from an illustration in the vegetable kingdom to the personification of "ἀπάτη" into a wily, cunning pretender. Dr. John A. Broadus in his thought personifies "riches" when, commenting on this verse, he says: "Riches deceive men in many ways: as to the means of acquiring them, making things look honest that are not so; as to the reasons why we desire them, and the objects for which we intend to use them. . . . And we must remember that riches often as grievously deceive and distract those who vainly seek, as those who obtain them" ("Am. Com.; *Matthew", in loco*).

Paul personifies "the love of money" when he says that some, reaching after it, "have been led away from the faith" (I Tim. 6:10); and he shows also that the inordinate *desire* for it is as undoing as its actual *possession* is elsewhere shown to be.

In his comment on Mark 4:19, A. B. Bruce refers "ἀπάτη τοῦ πλούτου" to the "deceitfulness of wealth in the case of the commercial class", and cites as examples Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, regarding the last of which he remarks (Matt. 11:23): "Capernaum illustrated the common characteristic most signally. Most prosperous, most privileged spiritually, and—most unsympathetic, the population being taken as a

whole. Worldliness as unreceptive as counterfeit piety represented by Pharisaism, . . . " ("Exp. Gk. Test.", *in loco*).

In contrasting this class of hearers with those represented by the ones "on the rock", Dr. Geo. R. Bliss makes this observation: " . . . the causes of barrenness are now internal; not as before, outward onsets of persecution or temptation; but the truth has, in some apparently fortunate moment, found lodgment in a heart ordinarily occupied with 'cares and riches and pleasures of life'. . . . The heart already occupied with either of these kinds of experience, and especially if occupied by them all, mingled or in succession, has no room for the hospitable entertainment of purposes and activities involving improvement in holiness, and reaching out toward eternity" ("Am. Com.; *Luke*", *in loco*).

This section of Scripture we are studying does not seem to preclude absolutely the possibility of fruit, especially if we take the statement of Luke who, for once, is less radical than Matthew and Mark. He says, as already noted, that such hearers of the word "bring no fruit to perfection" (8:14). Whichever form of statement be accepted, however, as more likely the Master's exact language, the main lesson is the same, viz.: that riches, with the care and concern therefor that attend their possession, are not conducive to spiritual interests and endeavors. If from the soil of such a sordid soul any fruit at all grow, it will be scant in quantity and inferior in quality, instead of being "fruit to perfection."

We next consider the case of the foolish farmer,

recorded by Luke only (12:16-21). In this instance the thought of this world's "grain" and "goods" so engrossed the man's mind that there was not even a possibility of any harvest of "fruits" for the other world. So concerned about his increased store of earthly goods did he become as to leave God entirely out of his regard and his reckoning, thus arrogating to himself sole claim to both the production and the ownership of them. Some one has quaintly and not inaptly remarked that he had a grievous case of the "I" disease, as is indicated by the so frequent recurrence of the first personal pronoun, in his soliloquy with his soul (vv. 17-19). As close in line with this thought of utter selfishness as if they were a comment upon this particular incident, are the words of D. S. Gregory: "The seeking of riches *for their own sake* is one of the prevalent vices of all ages, and a vice of most degrading character, since it lifts a mere inanimate thing above man and God, and begets selfishness and godlessness along with covetousness" ("Christian Ethics", p. 224.) That which he says will follow such self-seeking as he characterizes, is exactly what did follow in the case of this man who vainly imagined that the products of his farm were suitable and sufficient food for his soul. With him material wealth was more than a *tendency* against spiritual things; it constituted an uncontrollable *power* which kept him a pauper as to the higher values, even to the moment when he was startled by the summons to surrender the soul for which he had so poorly provided. And we are taught, furthermore, that his was no exceptional case, but that the same fate awaits every one "that layeth

up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God" (v. 21).

In his comment on this parable, H. C. King urges us to "remember the danger of the benumbing effects of material prosperity", and further says that "merely material aims shut out all really great ambitions; one can, then, only 'build greater' barns, and multiply things, instead of building a greater life, and multiplying interests in common with the kingdom of God" ("Ethics of Jesus", pp. 174, 175).

Perhaps the most manifest and unmistakable New Testament proof of the anti-spiritual tendency of riches is the sad story of the Rich Young Ruler, recorded with slight variations by all the Synoptists. The story is familiar.

There is nothing in any one of the three accounts of the incident to indicate that the young man's question was an idle, curious one, nor yet that it was asked in any tempting, bantering way, as in the case of the lawyer mentioned in Luke 10:25 ff.; on the other hand, there is much to incline us to believe that the questioner was conscientious and really desired to know the price of the life eternal. Especially does it seem that genuine sincerity is indicated by his coming *running*, and his then *kneeling* (Mark 10:17), as also by his evident disappointment later, shown by his going away *sorrowful* when the conditions had been named. (See Matt. 19:22.)

On this matter of the young man's being in earnest, A. B. Bruce thus comments: "a man not belonging to the class of self-satisfied religionists of whom He had had ample experience; with moral ingenuousness, and

open mind, and a good, honest heart; a malcontent probably with the teaching and practice of the Rabbis and scribes coming to the anti-Rabbinic Teacher in hope of hearing from Him something more satisfying" ("Exp. Gk. Test."; Matt. 19:16); and again, Bruce thinks the "ἐμβλέψας αὐτῷ ἠγάπησεν αὐτόν" of Mark 10:21 "clearly excludes the notion entertained by many that the man was a self-complacent Pharisee" ("Exp. Gk. Test."; Luke 18:23).

The young ruler came then, no doubt, with an honest purpose, seeking relief from the dissatisfied state of soul from which his very commendable legal manner of life had failed to free him. It was a fair, straightforward, and withal an earnest, question he asked. Jesus met it with an unequivocal reply. The answer seemed to the young man too exacting, and perhaps unduly harsh. It was indeed exacting; but, instead of harshness, Christ's requirement was kindness in disguise. Jesus was looking right into his heart, even as He searches every heart, and His command must needs be apparently severe, because He saw that this rich young man was wedded to his wealth, and that unless his heart could be divorced therefrom his case was hopeless. The command was more in the nature of a test of the affections, to see if they could be shifted and centered upon another object, than it was simply a naming of one more thing for the questioner to do; though there is in the command an evident indication of his neglect of duty to the destitute. It is at this very point that the risk—the great risk—comes in the accumulation of large possessions. By some strange law of human nature, the more a man gets for himself

of worldly goods, the less he is apt to think of the needs of the poor. The more money, or its equivalent, he amasses, the more unsocial he is likely to become, until finally the point may be reached when, to all intents and purposes, he does not regard himself under any obligation whatever to the Kingdom of God on earth. Such a state this young ruler had reached. And the point of the Master's argument here is that he who would enter the Kingdom that is in heaven must be interested in helping to advance the Kingdom that is here on earth. Faithful attention to the latter is proof of fitness to enter the former. The man in question had no such proof.

Shailer Mathews has a good discussion on how a growing feeling of independence and self-sufficiency attendant upon material prosperity lessens one's social sympathy and activity. He says in part: "In the same proportion that the semblance of independence increases is there danger that a man will forget that he is always an integral part of society and that he can be truly a man only as he is dependent upon God and in sympathy with his fellows. This was the trouble evidently enough with the rich young man of whom we have already spoken. He was endeavoring to build up a perfection upon the corner-stone of a selfish individualism. This is the secret of Jesus' command to trust the Heavenly Father for clothes and food (Matt. 6: 31-33. See also his warning against covetousness, Luke 12:15). These things are not evil, but if once regarded as the highest good, they will inevitably lead to a selfish competition for personal advantage at the cost of generous impulses and faith" ("Social Teach-

ing of Jesus", p. 146). Very apt are these words regarding this young man. He was entirely lacking in the spirit of that lesson taught by a later author,—or rather *taught* by Jesus and *re-emphasized* by Paul, in Phil. 2:4, viz.: " . . . not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others." Jesus saw that his rich questioner's horizon was the boundary of his own farm, and He wanted him to lift up his eyes and "look on the fields" of opportunity to serve others; so He bade him appropriate to alms all his worldly goods. The test was more than he could stand. He had *some* interest in his future welfare; but that interest, though *real,* was *limited:* when it came to be compared with his regard for his temporal wealth, it decreased so much as to become practically negligible. True, "his countenance fell" at the command of the Master, and he was "sorrowful" as he went away (Mark 10:22); but *he went away,* nevertheless. That was the fateful thing—his going away! He went away from Jesus because he could not bear to see his "great possessions" go away from himself. He turned his back that day on his only Helper, and with fallen face and heavy heart "went away", because he loved his earthly goods more than his eternal good. In this case, too, riches exercised more than a mere *tendency* away from God; they wielded that subtle *power* the spell of which he could not break.

The truth of our proposition is still further emphasized in what Jesus said to the disciples after the young man's departure. "How hardly", said He, "shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!" (Luke 18:24). It is significant that all three Synop-

tists have the adverb δυσκόλως: *hardly; with difficulty;* and that it is used nowhere else in biblical Greek. Alfred Plummer suggests: "It was perhaps largely for the sake of Judas that these stern words about the perils of wealth were uttered . . . " ("Int. Crit. Com."; Luke 18:24). It was manifestly intended to be, to all the Twelve, and to all disciples and non-disciples since that day, a sober warning of the danger of putting gold above God, either purposely, as is often done; or unconsciously, as is evidently done much more frequently than many are aware. The Rich Young Ruler doubtless did not realize, till the test came, that Mammon, instead of God, held chief place in his heart.

Dr. John A. Broadus, commenting on the parallel verse in Matthew, remarks: "His saying 'How hardly' —i. e. with what difficulty—'shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!' is amply confirmed by experience. Christian men often become rich, but rich men rarely become Christians. The reason is not far to seek: the process of gaining wealth encourages self-seeking, and the possession of it encourages self-importance; but the spirit that can enter the kingdom is the spirit of a little child" ("Am. Com."; *Matt.* 10:23).

It need not appear strange to us that "not many mighty, not many noble, are called" (I Cor. 1:26), if we remember that the "mighty" and the "noble" are nearly always those who are also "rich", and so feel themselves independent and self-sufficient; and if we further remember the strongly anti-spiritual tendency of riches and the attendant evils exemplified in the concrete illustrations we have considered in this chapter.

CHAPTER II

WARNINGS AGAINST COVETOUSNESS

THE word "covet" has two distinct meanings and uses. In a good sense it means "to wish for with eagerness; to desire possession of" (Webster). In this sense Shakespeare uses it when he says:

> "If it be a sin to covet honor,
> I am the most offending soul alive."

The same usage is found in the New Testament where the word (ζηλοῦτε) translated "covet" in the Authorized Version is rendered "desire earnestly," in the Revised Version (see I Cor. 12:31). In this sense, "covetousness" is not only not a sin, but is a virtue, and so a duty.

But the word is most commonly used in a bad sense, meaning "to desire inordinately or unlawfully" (Webster). Such was its usual meaning in New Testament times. The Greek verb corresponding to this definition is πλεονεκτέω, which in its noun form Jesus used,—once in the singular (Luke 12:15), translated "covetousness", and once in the plural (Mark 7: 22), translated "covetings."

Still another word (φιλαργυρία) is used by Paul in I Tim. 6:10, translated "love of money." Trench in his "Synonyms", distinguishing between πλεονεξία and φιλαργυρία, says: "The first seeks rather to grasp what

it has not, and in this way *to have more;* the second, to retain, and, by accumulating, to multiply that which it already has."

One other kindred verb (ἐπιθυμέω) should be mentioned. In the New Testament it has various shades of meaning, from *simple desire* (Acts 20:33) to *extreme covetousness* (Rom. 7:7; 13:9; Jas. 1:14). Jesus is represented by Luke (22:15) as using a combination of the verb and the noun (ἐπιθυμίᾳ ἐπεθύμησα), to express the intensity of His desire to eat the Passover with His disciples. Here, of course, the word has its perfectly good meaning.

But our present study is of "covetousness" with its bad significance, as found, for example, in Mark 7:22 and Luke 12:15, mentioned above. By way of definition of the term, Geo. R. Bliss, on the latter passage, says: "Greed for more of worldly good, of wealth, and apparently with the added quality of intense selfishness, and disregard for others' rights, is the Scriptural conception of *covetousness*. . . . It was the very antithesis of Christ's own disposition, who 'emptied himself' of the glories of heaven" ("Am. Com.," *in loco*).

Since riches are seen to be so strongly anti-spiritual in their tendency, (as we found in the preceding chapter to be true), we naturally expect Jesus faithfully and urgently to warn men against that unreasoning and insatiable love of material things which is sure to pierce through "with many sorrows", even here on earth, those who indulge that spirit, and finally drown them "in destruction and perdition." (See I Tim. 6:9, 10.) Nor are we disappointed in our expectation, for the Master's teaching rings clear against the sin

of covetousness,—the sin that is so wicked and heinous as to be styled "idolatry" (Col. 3:5) by one who, a few years later than Jesus' day, observed its great prevalence and deplored the incalculable havoc it wrought. (Cf. I Tim. 6:6-11.)

Jesus had much to say of the danger of men's over-interest in merely present possessions. These sayings compass a wide range,—from His caution to the disciples against worrying about food and raiment (Matt. 6:25-34) to His solemn pronouncement regarding a man's real life (Luke 12:15). Of the many passages bearing more or less directly on the subject, we shall be able within our limited space to consider only a few of the representative ones, leaving others, which might well be noticed here, for discussion in our chapter on the Kingdom.

Let us first observe somewhat the incident of the anointing at Bethany and the following covetous criticism, by Judas, of the woman's act of devotion (Matt. 26:6-13; Mk. 14:3-9; John 12:2-11). The story as recited by these three Evangelists is well known wherever the Gospel has been preached, as Jesus said would be the case (see Matt. 26:13).

Mark, without specifying any class, simply states that "there were some that had indignation among themselves", and who asked as to the purpose of the waste. Matthew charges the fault-finding to "his disciples", from which phrase Westcott has drawn the conclusion that "Judas expressed what others felt"; but this view, Marcus Dods thinks, "is contradicted by the motive which John ascribes to Judas" (see "Exp. Gk. Test."; John 12:4, 5). John, by charging

the act to Judas alone, takes away from the Eleven the reproach which Matthew seems to have placed upon the whole company of disciples. For once we must look to John, and to him only, for the really significant statement in this social teaching. It is John alone who explains the real cause of Judas' question by adding: "This he said, not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and having the bag, took away what was put therein" (John 12:6). The verb ἐβάσταζεν may be translated either "he carried" or "he carried off, took away" (see Thayer, *in loco;* cf. our word "shoplifter"); but the fact that Judas is specifically called a thief makes the latter the logical, and so the more likely, meaning of the word in this instance. The Revised Version so regards it. John, in making so grave a charge, must have spoken not without proof of what he said. The imperfects in the following clauses of the verse imply that Judas was an habitual pilferer. (Cf. "Exp. Gk. Test."; John 12:6.)

So this is a plain case of covetousness, whether the entire Twelve were involved, as Matthew seems to say, or Judas only were guilty, as John states the case. And Jesus' coming to the defense of the woman's act is a severe rebuke to the spirit that forgets that there are non-utilitarian uses to which money or its equivalent should at times be put,—that it may sometimes be used to minister to "happiness and beauty", as F. G. Peabody suggests. "As the woman pours out her prodigal offering it is as if in answer to the deep human demand for the beautiful, the suggestive, the sacrificial" ("Jesus Christ and the Social Question", pp. 218, 219). Peabody says this, viewing the incident as pre-

senting "a clear issue between the use of money for imaginative symbolism and the use of money for almsgiving." If we consider it in the light of John's statement as to why Judas complained at the expenditure, the rebuke will appear much more striking and severe; and the "issue" will be seen to have been "symbolism" and *embezzlement*, rather than between "symbolism and . . . almsgiving."

The same greed for gain, disappointed at Bethany, forged to the front again just a little later, leading Judas to covenant with the chief priests "for thirty pieces of silver" to betray Jesus into their hands (see Matt. 26:14, 15). According to some Gospel harmonists this agreement was made the same day on which the Bethany anointing occurred; according to others, three days later. Whichever be correct, it is doubtless true that, as A. B. Bruce says, "that scene would help to precipitate the fatal step. Death at last at hand, according to the Master's words. Then a base nature would feel uncomfortable in so unworldly company, and would be glad to escape to a more congenial atmosphere. Judas could not breathe freely amid the odours of the ointment and all it emblemed. . . . Mary and Judas extreme opposites: she freely spending in love, he willing to sell his Master for money. What contrasts in the world and in the same small circle! ("Exp. Gk. Test."; Matt. 26:14, 15). Covetousness was the root from which these awful sins were growing. Jesus knew it, and His commendation of this woman's gift of loving service was at the same time a condemnation of the covetous complaint.

We next consider Jesus' question as to the compara-

tive value of worldly estate, on the one hand, and of a man's life, on the other hand (see Matt. 16:26; Mark and Luke, *in loco*). The lesson Jesus is here stressing is the incalculable worth of man,—both as to his present and his future ψυχή (life). The word for *life* as here used may well be regarded as having both the *present, lower* idea and the *future, higher* idea, indicated by the term in various New Testament passages. Even if the former idea be considered the direct, primary one in this verse, it is easy, if not necessary, for the mind of the hearer or reader to go on to the latter as the logical goal of the teaching; and especially is this so when it is remembered that in Jesus' teaching the main emphasis is not on the temporal, but on the eternal.

Alfred Plummer says: "We must keep 'life' for ψυχή throughout the passage: the context shows when it means life as men desire it on earth, and when life as the blessed enjoy it in the Kingdom. The Gospel has raised the meaning of ψυχή, as of ζωή, to a higher power" ("Int. Crit. Com."; Luke 9:23-27).

In his comment on Matt. 16:26 A. B. Bruce says: "The statement"—he regards the question as equivalent to a declaration—"in this verse is self-evident in the sphere of the lower life. It profits not to gain the whole world if you lose your life, for you cannot enjoy your possession; a life lost cannot be recovered at any price. Jesus wishes His disciples to understand that the same law obtains in the higher life; that the soul, the spiritual life, is incommensurable with any outward possession however great, and if forfeited the loss is irrevocable. This is one of the chief texts containing

Christ's doctrine of the absolute worth of man as a moral subject" ("Exp. Gk. Test.", *in loco*).

On the use of the word rendered "life", W. N. Clarke speaks in the same vein, as follows: "As for *psyche* here, either meaning seems to be allowed to it. The remark is transparently true in the lower and ordinary aspect: to gain the whole world is of no profit to a man who loses his life in doing it. How much more profoundly must it be true of life in its higher aspect, where loss means so much more! If life is regarded in its relation to God and eternity, then what can be the profit if one gains the world, but forfeits, lets go, his soul? The value of man to himself is here set above all other values in the world" ("Am. Com."; *Mark* 8:36).

This putting of man's real self "above all other values in the world" is, on the part of Jesus, a strong warning against the covetous spirit that reverses a man's views as to values, and causes things that ought to be kept *second* to be put *first* in his thinking and acting. (Cf. Luke 12:16-21; and contrast Matt. 6:33.)

Whether the words translated "forfeit his own self" (Luke 9:25) be taken to mean "to suffer the loss of himself", to be "mulcted of eternal life" ("Am. Com."), or as meaning "receiving damage in his own self, . . . taint, lowering of the tone, vulgarizing of the soul" ("Exp. Gk. Test."), the lesson of warning against too great interest in the things of the *world* holds good, the force of it being stronger of course if the former view be taken, by so much as an absolute loss is greater than a relative loss. The fact, however, that *the accusative case of the thing forfeited* is used

with the verbal form indicates an absolute rather than a relative loss (see Thayer: "Gk.-Eng. Lex. of New Test.", *in loco*).

The final passage against the sin of covetousness to which we call attention is the one referring to the inheritance incident (Luke 12:13-15). After refusing to act as "divider" of an estate between two brothers, at the request of one of the two, Jesus addressed this pointed injunction to the whole multitude: "Take heed, and keep yourselves from all covetousness"; and to impress the value of obedience to the command He immediately followed it with the statement that a "man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (v. 15). Then at once follows, in illustration of the principle, the story of the Foolish Farmer (12:16-21), which we have already noticed in the preceding chapter.

The three verses in question (13 to 15) constitute one of the most direct and most explicit of Jesus' teachings against greed for worldly gain. Shailer Mathews on the passage remarks that "the Jewish laws of inheritance were so precise that there could have been no question of "division" except one brother wanted to get something in addition to his share. The warning against covetousness that follows this incident is accordingly quite to the point" ("Social Teaching of Jesus", p. 141, *note*).

Looking back of the man's "outward appearance" and discerning in his heart the real motive that prompted his petition, Jesus sternly rebuked that unworthy and sinful motive in this particular man, and sought also to put the multitude of people on their

guard against allowing such a spirit to dominate them. The language is striking. Every word in the command is significant. The first word (a form of the verb ὁράω) is stronger than the corresponding form of βλέπω, its synonym. On these two forms Thayer says that the former "gives prominence to the discerning mind" ("Gk.-Eng. Lex. of N. T.", *in loco*). It means here: *watch; see to it; give special heed!* It is like the "Look Out!" danger signal that stands at a railroad crossing, to warn of the probable approach of a train any minute. Or,—to change the figure a bit: "He plants His danger-signal not at the spot where the ice ends and the water begins, but at the place where the ice begins to get thin" (J. M. Gibson: "Christianity According to Christ", p. 190).

The signal is in plain view, so that people may avert the peril that will come if it be not heeded. In like manner Jesus spoke out in time to the great company that thronged Him that day, so that its members, being fore-warned, might be fore-armed. That they would need to be well armed for defense is indicated, in the figure, by the next verb, which is scarcely less suggestive than the one just noticed. This word, translated "keep yourselves", is from the verb whose primary meaning is "to guard". To the other picture—that of vigilance—is added by this word the picture of effective resistance against an inveterate and even treacherous foe,—for this enemy, Covetousness, does in fact steal upon many a man wholly unawares.

Another expression in this brief but meaningful command of Jesus should be marked well, viz.: πασῆς πλεονεξίας, that is: *all covetousness;* or perhaps better,

as Alfred Plummer translates: *every form of covetousness* ("Int. Crit. Com."; Luke 12:15; cf. πάντα πειρασμόν in 4:13). It is also noteworthy that the stronger of the two words for "covetousness" (both previously noted) is used here,—πλεονεξία: *the greedy desire to possess more.* (Cf. Plummer, as above.)

The translation of πλεονεξία as "acquisitiveness", by G. D. Heuver ("Teachings of Jesus Concerning Wealth", p. 263), is far-fetched. In fact, "acquisitiveness" does not meet, by any means, the definition of πλεονεξία, which, according to Thayer, is: "greedy desire to have more; covetousness; avarice." Of a number of illustrative scriptures following the above definition, the first one given is Luke 12:15, which is the very passage Mr. Heuver is discussing when he gives the strange rendering we have cited. The corresponding verbs will bring out the respective ideas of the words better. Let us note their definitions:

"Acquire: to gain, usually by one's own exertions; get as one's own.—Syn., attain, win, earn, secure" (Webster).

"πλεονεκτέω: to gain or take advantage of another; to overreach" (Thayer).

The only evidence of similarity in the meanings of the two words is the idea of *getting* or *securing;* but that idea's being common to both no more establishes a *kinship* between these definitions than it does between *robbing* and *acquiring,* or *stealing* and *acquiring,* for *getting* is common to all these acts. The important point in each case is the *manner* of the getting. No; πλεονεξία does not mean "acquisitiveness", as the above definitions plainly show. Jesus clearly commended

the latter (Matt. 25:21, 29), but He always strongly condemned the former (Matt. 16:26; Mark 7:22, 23). The two, in fact, are almost, if not quite, as far removed from each other as are *intrigue* and *integrity*, or *hypocrisy* and *emulation*.

The characteristic of heart represented in the New Testament by the word πλεονεξία and its cognates is such a dreadful sin that Jesus catalogues it along with the most abominable acts of wickedness mentioned in the Bible (Mark 7:21-23), and urges His hearers to steer entirely clear of it (Luke 12:15). Paul puts it at the close of much the same category and, as we have already observed, calls it "idolatry" (Col. 3:5), with the injunction that it, along with the rest of the unclean company, be "put to death."

It is no wonder that the Bible teaches (Eph. 5:5) "of a surety, that no . . . covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God."

CHAPTER III

THE DUTY OF BENEFICENCE

THE word "Beneficence" above, instead of "Benevolence", is used advisedly. Literally, these words mean "good acting" and "good willing", respectively. It is probable that there may be "good willing" on the part of many who are not able to transfer the *will* into an *act*,—in fact, every right-hearted person wishes for the world's needy ones much more good than he is able to bestow; on the other hand, there can be, strictly speaking, no "good acting" without "good willing," for it is the motive that determines the character of any deed. So as we are to study about the duty of *good deeds* rather than about the matter of *good wishes*, the term "Beneficence," instead of "Benevolence," has been chosen. It will be used in its broad sense, as above indicated. So regarded it includes *all good acts of whatever kind* commanded in God's Word; but for our present purpose its application is limited chiefly to those good deeds, commanded by Jesus, that are to be accomplished *by the use of material possessions.*

The first one of these to which we direct attention is the duty of absolute frankness and fairness in all business relationships. At first glance, this proposition may seem foreign to the field of *beneficence;* but if it seem so, it is only because the modern business world

is not as keenly alive as it should be to the teaching of Jesus that there ought to be "good acting" among men in secular affairs. Right treatment at the hands of even his rivals in trade is the due of every business man. It is sadly true that such right is too poorly respected, but that fact does not in the least lessen its claims.

It is lamentable to think of the thousand and one unjust things practiced to-day for which justification is claimed under the name of "business." D. S. Gregory on this line speaks as follows: "Cheating is taking the property of another with consent unjustly or fraudulently obtained. . . . *In business,* cheating is involved in representing an article as other and better than it is; in the adulteration of articles of food, of medicine, and of the materials of clothing; . . . in depriving men of property, on the ground of any mere technical flaw or legal defect in their title. All these transactions involve the taking of what belongs to another, without rendering him any equivalent in return; and they therefore all break the commandment which says, 'Thou shalt not steal'; i.e., thou shalt not take what in the sight of God does not belong to you" ("Christian Ethics," p. 244). Then the same author quotes Dr. Hodge thus: "The code of morals held by many business and professional men is very far below the moral law as revealed in the Bible. This is especially true in reference to the eighth commandment in the decalogue. Many who have stood well in society, and even in the church, will be astonished at the last day to find the word 'Thieves' written after their names in the great book of judgment."

Whoever violates the eighth commandment violates also the tenth, and Jesus' commandment against covetousness (Luke 12:15) as well, because but for the *covetousness* as the root there would not be the *theft* as its fruit. F. G. Peabody well says: "The first searching of a man's heart should not concern the Christian distribution of his gains, but the Christian getting of his gains" ("Jesus Christ and the Social Question," p. 223). It is quite apparent that, as regards simple honesty between man and man, there is sorely needed in business circles a revival of real "beneficence."

But this business beneficence does not stop, in Jesus' teaching, at the point of *common honesty;* it goes further and enjoins what may be called *business generosity.* A very interesting passage in this connection is Luke 6:34-36, in which Jesus is urging and encouraging His hearers to show a considerate and helpful spirit to all,—even to the extent of loving the hostile (τοὺς ἐχθρούς). Then follows a very significant clause, viz.: "and lend, never despairing" (v. 35). No object, either direct or indirect, follows the verb translated "lend," but the verb itself (a form of δανείζω) helps to determine both objects. It being the regular word to indicate an interest loan, the natural inference is that the direct object (understood) is "money"; and as it signifies a purely business investment it is quite reasonable to suppose that the indirect object (understood) is not τοὺς ἐχθρούς two clauses back, but men in general who would borrow money on interest. That the Master's command contemplated a purely business transaction, and not a friendly loan without interest,

is evident from the fact that, had the latter been intended, the verb would have been a form of κίχρημι, as in the request for a loan of three loaves (Luke 11:5). The two verbs have definite and distinct meanings, and are used accordingly (see Thayer: "Gk.-Eng. Lex. of N. T.," *in loco;* cf. Plummer: "Int. Crit. Com."; Luke 6:35).

The rendering of μηδὲν ἀπελπίζοντες by "hoping for nothing again," as in the Authorized Version, is entirely inconsistent with the use of δανείζω, which carries with it the idea not only of the return of principal but the payment of interest as well. The rendering of the Revised Version, "never despairing," is much to be preferred. Alfred Plummer says: "The usual meaning of ἀπελπίζω, 'I give up in despair,' makes excellent sense; either 'despairing of nothing' or 'despairing of no one' (μηδένα). 'Despairing of nothing' or 'never despairing' may mean either 'never doubting that God will requite you,' or 'never despairing about your money.' The latter meaning is almost identical with 'despairing of no one,' i.e. 'never doubting that your creditor will pay.'"

The latter of the above is, we think, more likely the primary meaning. The former assurance though, as given specifically in the latter part of the verse, is also to have place in the heart of the lender; but that assurance of what God will do is conditioned upon *all three* of the imperatives, and not upon the *last one only.* The *last* command is really a call for greater faith in *men,*—a faith that would prompt to a more willing and generous business response to a man in temporary financial need, than Jesus' hearers that day felt in-

clined to give. The command is not a plea for the practice of *charity;* it is advice in *business,*—but business to be conducted in the Christian spirit. The *three* commands of the verse, taken together, constitute a call to unwavering confidence in God,—that implicit trust that relies upon Him to reward every righteous act. This we know, from the latter half of the verse, *God will* do, even if some *men should* prove ungrateful to their benefactors for such timely favors. And this very faith in God will beget in those who hold it the unselfish and altruistic spirit that is needed in business as well as in all other social relations.

The second phase of beneficence we consider is *almsgiving.* There is no lack of teaching on this Christian grace. It is directly commanded of the disciples: "Sell that which ye have, and give alms" (Luke 12:33). The latter part of the passage teaches that in proportion to disciples' willingness thus to distribute their earthly goods and to center their attention and efforts upon the higher and more enduring kingdom matters, they may expect to have "a treasure in the heavens."

F. G. Peabody says: "It is important, however, to note that almsgiving, though assumed by Jesus to be a habit of his followers, does not receive from him a high place among Christian virtues" ("Jesus Christ and the Social Question," p. 217). But the above scripture, it seems to us, does give it a rather "high place among Christian virtues." To say the least, it is more than the assumption that almsgiving was "a habit of his followers"; it is a positive and explicit command to them to engage in its practice. Truer to

the spirit of the Savior's teaching, we believe, are the following words of Chas. J. Vaughan: "Will any one presume to call this a self-righteous doctrine? If so, he must tear out many a leaf of his Bible, and deny Him from whom he learns his Gospel. The duty of giving, and the blessedness of giving, is one of the first lessons of the Divine Gospel" ("Characteristics of Christ's Teaching," p. 179).

Not only did Christ command almsgiving of His disciples, but on one occasion at least He made the same command of a non-Christian as part of the preparation of that one to receive the "eternal life" he sought (see Matt. 19:16); and moreover, the Master endeavored to encourage the young man to obey the command by promising him "treasure in heaven" (see Matt. 19:21). Both the command and the promise in this instance are practically the same as made to the disciples in the passage we have studied in the twelfth of Luke. While the primary purpose of Jesus' command to the rich young ruler was to get his wealth from between him and God, there is in the accompanying promise the teaching that earthly goods, elsewhere called "the mammon of unrighteousness" (Luke 16:9), may be exchanged for heavenly currency. If it be said that such opportunities are open only to the Christian, it is replied that the young man in question would have been a Christian if he had obeyed the command to give his goods to the poor; not that such giving would, of itself, have made him an heir of eternal life, but it would have indicated that the *one thing* he had lacked (see Matt. 10:21) was no longer wanting,—namely, his submission to Christ and thus, in the

homage of his heart, his putting Him above his "great possessions." His almsgiving, then, would not have *made* him a disciple, but would have *proven* him one.

Not only do we find these explicit commands of Christ regarding this duty of almsgiving, but we find also that the New Testament sets forth clearly that the failure to practice this social grace indicates wrongness of heart. Jesus so teaches in Matt. 25:41-46. Here we are taught that those who fail to minister to the needy "shall go away into eternal punishment" (v. 46), while those who do so minister will "inherit the kingdom" (v. 34). We are not to understand by this passage that salvation is conditioned upon service as its efficient cause; salvation is "by grace, through faith" (Eph. 2:8); but we *are* forced by the passage to conclude that a professed faith *within* that does not manifest itself *outwardly* is a spurious faith. Jesus is here simply saying in another way what He says in fewer words in the Sermon on the Mount, viz.: "by their fruits ye shall know them" (see Matt. 7:16-20). In a word, His teaching is that conduct is an index to heart condition (see Luke 6:45), and that one of the things a right heart will surely prompt is material aid to the needy round about.

The Apostle John, whose teaching we certainly expect to be an echo of the personal teaching of Jesus, strongly emphasizes this principle in his first epistle when he asks: "Whoso hath the world's goods, and beholdeth his brother in need, and shutteth up his compassion from him, how doth the love of God abide in him?" (I John 3:17.) To ask that question is, in fact, equivalent to saying that "the love of God" *does*

not abide in such a man. He who does not *give* as he is able, in loving, helpful service, is a stranger to the saving *grace* of God in his soul.

Luke goes a step further and tells us that Jesus not only commanded giving, but taught also that those who give would themselves be rewarded with "good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over" (6:38). In view of these plain scriptures, how sad is the fact that the professed Christian world at large is so remiss in its observance of this undeniable duty!

As to the manner of almsgiving, Jesus taught that it is to be unostentatious. "When therefore thou doest alms, sound not a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily, I say unto you, They have received their reward. But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right doeth: that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father who seeth in secret shall recompense thee" (Matt. 6:2-4). The teaching here is apparent. Those who gave to "have glory of men" received that glory as their only reward. Chas. J. Vaughan, commenting on the passage, represents Jesus as saying: "You set before yourself as your end the approval of men: you shall have it. It was what you looked for, it was what you aimed at: it shall be yours. But in having know that it is your all. The reward of such giving is all here: there is no laying up, no storing away, no safe husbanding, in that sort of almsgiving; what you sought you shall have, and this is a reward all of earth" ("Characteristics of Christ's Teaching," p. 142).

Those to whom these seekers of earthly glory gave

were, of course, helped regardless of the motive prompting the givers; but that was not enough. True giving brings a blessing to the donor as well as to the recipient. In fact, the former gets more joy out of the act than does the latter, for "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35), Jesus is quoted as having said. That this reflex blessing might come to those who heard the Savior on the mountain-side that day, He warned them against even the least ostentation in their giving of alms. Such beneficence, to bring the "recompense" of Him "who seeth in secret," must be so far removed from the intended knowledge of men that Jesus, to represent its absolute secrecy, used the figure of the left hand's not knowing the doings of the right hand. On this figure Dr. Broadus remarks: "It suggests the pleasing and striking image of a man passing one who is in need, and with his right hand giving alms in so quiet a way that, so to speak, even his own left hand does not know what is going on" ("Am. Com."; *Matt.* 6:3).

Another teaching of Jesus as to almsgiving is that it is to be coupled with self-giving. The story of the Good Samaritan is an excellent illustration of this principle. In addition to his gift of money, and *before* he gave the money, the Samaritan gave *himself* to the man in need,—gave his time, his kindly ministration in binding up the wounds of his "neighbor," and gave his personal companionship and assistance until he whom he had found a while before "half dead" on the Jericho road was safely and comfortably lodged in the inn. The record seems also to indicate that he cared for him through the night. Then, "on

the morrow," but not till then, he gave money for his friend's further needs. It is well worth noting too that the money was given not to the needy man directly, but to the inn-keeper to be used for him. That fact argues strongly against the injudicious giving of money. Many a man, in a case like the one we are studying, would have tossed a coin or two to the poor unfortunate in passing by, and gone on praising himself for what he regarded his large charitableness. But such an act would not be charity at all. D. S. Gregory well says: ". . . an *indolent liberality* is often exhibited by those who will give freely of their money for the good of others, but who have not enough of real interest in their good to see that the gifts are properly distributed and applied. Active kindness and liberality should, if possible, always go together" ("Christian Ethics," p. 255).

This stripped and beaten man's first need was not *money;* it was *mercy.* It came to him when the Samaritan was moved to turn aside from his journey long enough to bind up and mollify his wounds. To do this required human hands directed in their course by a sympathetic heart; that is to say, it necessitated the giving, by some one, of a part of himself. Manifestly, as Shailer Mathews says, "the neighborliness of the good Samaritan was certainly seen less in his expenditure of money than in his services to the unfortunate traveler" ("Social Teaching of Jesus," p. 220); and we shall do well to learn better than we know it the important lesson that, as H. C. Vedder puts it, "The teaching of Jesus is that all our life is to be a giving of self to the needy, the motive of such giving love, and

its purpose the saving of our brother" ("Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus," p. 423).

This *self*-giving is necessary in order that there may be *hope*-giving. It is hope in his heart that the average so-called charity object needs, and this hope can never be his until he has something upon which to build it. So he must have sympathy and encouragement,—sympathy in the real sense of the term, that "fellow-suffering" with the unfortunate, on the part of the more fortunate, that does not stop at simply being sorry, but that is sure to seek for him a way of escape from such a sad estate. F. G. Peabody has an excellent discussion on the distinction between political relief of poverty and the practice of Christian charity, from which discussion we quote as follows:

"Christian charity begins where political prudence halts. Its task is not that of quieting the restless poor by the anaesthetic of relief; it is the task of quickening the discouraged life with the stimulant of individualized love. Christian charity takes account not merely of conditions, but of capacity. Its problem is not that of relieving destitution, but of developing possibilities. Its aim is to convert a shut-in, stunted, spiritually defective life into a healthy, effective, contributory factor of the kingdom"; and again, in discussing the individual, rather than the community, as the objective unit for social endeavor, he says: ". . . one of the keenest joys of human life is felt by those who, dismissing great schemes of social improvement, give themselves to the patient service of a few discouraged lives, and discover that power may be communicated to those lives and may lift them into self-respect

and hope" ("Jesus Christ and the Social Question," pp. 261, 265).

The best help that can be rendered any one in need is that which most helps him to help himself. All efforts then at aid, if they are to prove really *helpful*, must be characterized by the giving of sympathetic encouragement along with material assistance, that there may be the kindling of a new hope in the dispirited soul. In other words, almsgiving of the New Testament type has a much nearer kinship to philanthropy than in the present day is usually accorded to it. Webster, in defining the synonyms *philanthropy*, *charity*, and *almsgiving*, is compelled by modern social conduct to put the last-named of the three on the lowest plane, because "applying only to the material relief afforded"; whereas, if the practice of this virtue had been kept in conformity to the Scriptural pattern, he would have been able to place it exactly on a level with the *philanthropic* "spirit of active good will toward one's fellow men, especially as shown in efforts to promote their welfare." (See Webster's definitions of the respective terms.) What the Christian world needs to do as to this beautiful and blessed grace of giving is to take it from its present position at the bottom of this three-runged ladder, and restore it to its rightful place at the top,—without lowering the present top-rung, but instead placing the two alongside. The two rungs of *practical philanthropy* and *New Testament almsgiving*, placed side by side as they should be, and thus made into one step, will make a safe foothold upon which Christianity may stand, and from which vantage point it can look the world squarely

in the face, no longer having to suffer the humiliation that now comes to it with the Master's rebuking question: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46.)

The one other phase of *beneficence* we shall consider is missionary effort. Of all the forms of "good acting" in which Jesus called upon His followers to engage, the one of winning other disciples to Him stands first in importance.

The *extent* of this missionary endeavor is set forth in the Great Commission: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you" (Matt. 28:19, 20). Here Jesus gives the extent as to territory ("all nations"), and also as to the constituent elements of the labor itself,—making disciples, baptizing, and training in obedience. These are the two *direct* teachings in the passage, but there is an *implied* teaching scarcely less evident than the two directly expressed ones. It is the use of means in the promulgation of the message. The command requires on the part of the commanded the use of whatever means may be necessary to the carrying out of the Master's behests, whether by personal effort or by the giving of money to others to do the work. Jesus' command made it obligatory upon the Eleven to go to the limit of their opportunity and ability—if not in person, then by purse—in bearing the Good News throughout the world. And again, as the two directly *expressed* commands are understood by all Christians to have been given not to the Eleven only,

but for all subsequent disciples as well, so we must reason that likewise the *implied* command of the use of means was intended by Christ to be observed by all who would ever become His followers. This teaching, even though indirect, is conclusive. The Commission is distinctly a missionary mandate.

But there are other scriptures that bear on this matter of the material support of the Savior's message-bearers. When Jesus sent forth the Twelve, He directed them to provide "neither gold, nor silver, nor brass," but instead assured them that "the workman is worthy of his food" (Matt. 10:9, 10). Again, when He sent out the Seventy, He gave them practically the same assurance (see Luke 10:4-7), only in the latter case the word μισθός (translated "wages; hire; dues paid for work") is used instead of the word τροφή (which means "food; nourishment") of the Matthew passage.

The Apostle Paul says (I Cor. 9:13, 14) that just as "they that minister about sacred things eat of the things of the temple, . . . so did the Lord ordain that they that proclaim the gospel should live of the gospel." The Apostle is here evidently referring to the teaching of Jesus on ministerial support as set forth in the two utterances of His we have just noticed (Matt. 10:9, 10 and Luke 10:4-7). The Revised Version so refers the Corinthian passage. Later Paul uses the exact expression (barring only the particle γάρ) that Jesus used (Lu. 10:7), viz.: ἄξιος ὁ ἐργάτης τοῦ μισθοῦ αὐτοῦ (I Tim. 5:18), which expression, Plummer thinks, "is given as a well-known proverb or saying of Christ" ("Int. Crit. Com."; Luke 10:7). Whether or not Paul's state-

ment be the quotation of a "saying" that Jesus had used so often as to cause it to be regarded a "proverb" of His, amounts to but little. It appears certain that Jesus did say once, and to all intents and purposes twice, that the people to whom the Gospel is ministered are duty-bound to minister to the temporal needs of those who bring them the Glad Tidings; and it seems equally clear that the Apostle to the Gentiles caught the spirit of the teaching, as is shown by the two passages cited, and also from II Thes. 3:9 and numerous other scriptures from his pen.

Dr. Broadus, on the passage in Matthew, remarks: "Some think the meaning here to be that as God's laborers they had a right to expect that *he* would give them sustenance, by his providence; but that view does not well suit the connection here, or in Luke 10:7, nor at all accord with Paul's use of the saying in I Tim." Again, he says: "Our Lord here distinctly sets forth the same truth concerning the preacher's right to have his wants supplied by those among whom he labors, which Paul teaches in I Cor. 9, and I Tim. 5:17 f." ("Am. Com.": *Matt.* 10:9, 10).

From these investigations we therefore conclude that, in the work of missions, as in the other phases of beneficence we have considered, money, or its equivalent in other material values, has its place; and that, while money is not the main thing, yet its place and power are by no means insignificant considerations. This is amply verified by what Jesus, in His many utterances regarding money, said as to its use in "good acting"; and the same truth, as we have seen, finds strong emphasis also in apostolic teaching.

CHAPTER IV

HEAVENLY TREASURES *versus* EARTHLY TREASURES

THE teaching of Jesus on the above subject is quite clear. The main passages to be considered are Matthew 6:19-24, which is part of the Sermon on the Mount; and the parable of the Unjust Steward (Luke 16:1-13), spoken some two years later. Both these scriptures are distinct in their teaching that a choice must be made by every man between the two kinds of treasures, as to which kind will be laid up. The word translated "serve" in each passage should be marked carefully, for, as A. B. Bruce well says, "The meaning is not 'ye cannot serve God and have riches,' but 'ye cannot be faithful to God and make an idol of wealth'" ("Ex. Gk. Test."; *Matt.* 6:24).

The primary meaning of the verb (δουλεύω), translated "serve" in the foregoing scriptures, is: *to be a slave,* and that idea must be preserved in both passages. It is worthy of note too that Luke qualifies Matthew's οὐδεὶς by the addition of οἰκέτης: *a house servant,*—"one holding closer relations to the family than other slaves,—a more restricted term than δοῦλος" (so Meyer, cited by Thayer: "Gk.-Eng. Lex. of New Test.," *in loco*). The question is as to which has first place in the heart, *God* or *goods;* for every man will be a servant —a domestic bond-servant—to one of the two, but to *only* one of the two.

On the expression "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth" (Matt. 6:19), John A. Broadus remarks: "Jesus does not mean absolutely to forbid the accumulation of wealth. It is a peculiarity of the Hebrew style, often occurring in Scripture, to make an absolute statement (especially a prohibition), which is to be understood relatively. See other instances in Luke 14:12; John 4:21; I Peter 3:3 f. This makes the expression more striking and impressive, like hyperbolical phrases, etc., and such statements were not meant, or expected, to be taken literally and absolutely, any more than hyperboles are so taken" ("Am. Com.," *in loco*). H. C. Vedder expresses the same thought when he says: "'Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth' is not to be taken as a prohibition of wealth, but as an exaltation of the spiritual above the material, as is shown by the words following: 'Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.'" And he adds another thought: "Many a man who is not worth a dollar is as abject a worshipper of Mammon, as true an adorer of wealth, as the most purse-proud millionaire. It is not necessary to be rich, but only to desire riches as the chief earthly good, to become a subject of Mammon. And upon a world that desires God *and* Mammon, Jesus presses the choice of God *or* Mammon" ("Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus," pp. 420, 421).

The Apostle John, in his later writings, shows himself to have been imbued with the spirit of the Master's teaching as to the irreconcilableness of serving both God and "the world." His language is very strong: "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the

Father is not in him" (I John 2:15). Evidently in this scripture, as in Jesus' sayings about God and Mammon in the passages we have noticed, the idea of relativity is to be understood. The things of the world, in their proper places and proper uses, are not to be despised; but "the world" that is to be held in continual contempt is that over-interest in things temporal that denies to God His rightful place in the affections and homage of every heart. If the *material* and perishing (see v. 17) be given precedence over the *spiritual* and eternal, he who so seeks to reverse values becomes an idolater bowing at the shrine of Mammon, and thus forfeits his privilege of a place at the altar of God. That shrine and this altar are so far apart that no man can in any wise worship at both, and so each must make up his mind for the one or the other.

The argument Jesus used to incline His hearers to make the right choice was to show the superiority of the heavenly over the earthly treasures. He taught them that "moth and rust consume" and "thieves break through and steal" the earthly treasures; but that the "treasures in heaven" are exposed to no such dangers (see Matt. 6:19, 20). James, the Lord's brother, doubtless had in mind the above language of Jesus when, in his letter, he wrote concerning those rich in worldly goods: "Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and your silver are rusted" (James 5:2, 3). At least there is such a marked kinship between his terminology and that of the Savior in the Matthew passages as to be strikingly noticeable (cf. carefully Matt. 6:19, 20 with James 5:1-3). How this teaching of Jesus concerning

the true riches impressed itself upon the mind and heart of Peter so that it became a very part of him, is indicated by the phraseology of his thanksgiving paean: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his great mercy, begat us . . . unto an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven" (I Peter 1:3, 4).

All of these passages teach that, in the light of eternity, (by which perspective only can true values be seen at their best), heavenly inheritances loom large; while, on the other hand, "all that the world has to offer—the things that our bodies crave for, the things that our eyes crave for, and a pretentious life" (I John 2:16)—fades into nothingness. So Jesus' injunction to His disciples to seek "first the kingdom of God" (Matt. 6:33) is exactly what we should expect Him to enjoin. It is the old lesson—as old as God's revelation to man—to *put first things first.* Humanity, ever since the Eden tragedy, has been prone to disregard this order, and to put the "all these things" *first.*

> "O blind and wanting wit to choose,
> Who house the chaff and burn the grain;
> Who hug the wealth ye cannot use,
> And lack the riches all may gain!"

J. Munro Gibson has a good discussion on how to right this wrong desire which, he says, "is 'a stream of tendency,' which not only readily becomes an idolatry, but which, when it has engrossed the life, is very apt to sweep away the barriers in its path. Conscience is a strong barrier to resist the outbreak of the evil

waters; but when the whole force of a man's life presses in one direction, the barrier needs to be very strong indeed—far stronger than it is, or can be expected to be, in the average man—not to give way at some point. . . . Now what does the law of Christ do? It does not simply fortify the barrier; . . . it diverts the stream of evil tendency, or rather so changes it that it becomes a stream of most blessed tendency. It insists on a man's pouring his life into another channel altogether. It calls upon him to 'seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.' Thus it not only keeps him from directing his life in such a way as to press and surge against the barrier which conscience erects against evil, but it aims to make conscience itself a master passion of the soul by insisting that he shall 'seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness'; and if he do this, if he even honestly try it, it is impossible for his eagerness to get rich to gain dangerous headway" ("Christianity According to Christ," pp. 201, 202).

Still another teaching of Jesus regarding heavenly treasures and earthly treasures is that the former may be increased by the proper use of the latter. Two of the passages discussed in the preceding chapter under the head of almsgiving support this proposition; but perhaps they have had sufficient notice on this point also in that treatment (see p. 109). A passage, however, that claims special attention here is the command of Jesus to His disciples, following the parable of the Unrighteous Steward, viz.: "Make to yourselves friends by means of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when it shall fail, they may receive you into the eternal tabernacles" (Luke 16:9). Let us study it carefully.

It has been said that the above-named parable has occasioned an "enormous and unrewarding literature." The principle of interpretation must be constantly borne in mind that *a parable generally,* if not *always,* is intended to teach *one main lesson,* and that *minor points,* though they may have some suggestive value, *are not to be pressed.* The principle holds preeminently in this instance, and H. C. King, commenting on the parable, has well said: "If this point"—of one leading idea, he means—"had been kept in mind, the literature upon it would have been less enormous and more rewarding. It is not pretended that the steward's procedure was right; he is called 'unrighteous.' The single point of approval is of his *wise foresight in providing, through his present opportunity, for the future.*" Regarding this principle of foresight, he further says: "Jesus applies the principle especially to pointing out how royally even money can be used in providing for one's future best self and service, in the rich store of friendships for all the future (v. 9).... We cannot carry our money, or the things which it can buy, with us through death into another life, but we can carry the results of its loving ministering use in eternal friendships" ("Ethics of Jesus," pp. 183-186).

It is worthy of note that in the Greek texts of ℵBLR the pronoun precedes the verb, and is thus emphatic. Plummer translates ἑαυτοῖς ποιήσατε: "In your own interest make friends" ("Int. Crit. Com.," *in loco*). Who the "friends" to be made are, we are not told; but the reasonable inference is that they are the needy poor, of whom the Lazarus of the following story was a type.

We do not think the interpretation given by Bruce of Jesus' command is necessarily required by the term "mammon of unrighteousness." He says: "The counsel is to use wealth in doing kindness to the poor, and the implied doctrine (is) that doing so will be to our eternal benefit." This, we believe, is correct, but we do not so regard his next few sentences: "Both counsel and doctrine are held to apply even when wealth has been ill-gotten. Friends of value for the eternal world can be gained even by *the mammon of unrighteousness.* The more ill-gotten the more need to be redeemed by beneficent use; only care must be taken not to *continue* to get money by unrighteousness in order to have wherewith to do charitable deeds" ("Ex. Gk. Test."; Luke 16:9). This interpretation is extreme. The introduction to the parable shows that it was spoken "unto the disciples" (v. 1). Bruce thinks "disciples" here "might mean the Twelve, or the larger crowd of followers (14:25), or the publicans and sinners (15:1) who came to Him" ("Ex. Gk. Test."; Luke 16:1); but we are inclined to agree rather with Plummer that the teaching "was addressed to the disciples,"—even if the term "would include many more than the Twelve" ("Int. Crit. Com.," *in loco*). The meaning of the word translated "disciples" is forsaken if it be made to include the company of "publicans and sinners," as given by Bruce above. Whether these "disciples" were few or many, we must believe they were really "his adherents" (see "Am. Com.," *in loco*); as Thayer defines the term, those "who favored him, joined his party, became his adherents" ("Gk.-Eng. Lex. of New Test.," *in loco*). And upon such

"disciples" Jesus is urging the right use of money. His calling it "the mammon of unrighteousness" in no sense charges them with unrighteous conduct in connection with the securing of the money *they* had, but simply shows that so many people in that day *did* get their wealth by unfair means that the name "unrighteous mammon" had come to be a general designation for all wealth. Manifestly, if Jesus had been directing these disciples what to do with "ill-gotten" goods, He would have counselled the restitution which He commended in the case of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:2-10). The command does not directly touch the question as to *how* the wealth had been obtained, but it is naturally *implied* to have been by legitimate means; for otherwise Jesus would appear in the role of encouraging a further misappropriation of funds fraudulently obtained, and such a position is, of course, not predicable of Christ.

It being presupposed, then, that money has been honestly made, Jesus' teaching here is that, whether possessed in large or small amount, it has, as R. F. Horton aptly says, "only one legitimate use. It must be employed in reference to eternal habitations. . . . Money is itself transitory and uncertain. In the eternal world it has absolutely no significance at all. But, while we are here, and when we possess any of it, it is capable of being exchanged into the currency of heaven. . . . the right use of the Mammon of unrighteousness is capable of . . . preparing a company who will welcome us on the far shore, when the transit from this life to another is accomplished" ("The Commandments of Jesus," p. 259).

The command of the Master, then, in this verse (Luke 16:9), is simply the call that comes to every man to choose between serving Mammon and making Mammon serve him. The former can but bring him unspeakable loss; the latter guarantees him immeasurable gain.

CHAPTER V

GOD'S OWNERSHIP AND MAN'S STEWARDSHIP

PASSING now from Jesus' specific teachings on wealth (see p. 85), we come to consider, in the two remaining chapters, some that are more general in the sense of being *largely inferable* from the whole scope of the Sacred Record, rather than *explicitly provable* from definite Scripture passages. Those things that are necessarily inferred from the Bible's general tenor (as, for example, the *use of means* in carrying out the command of Matt. 28:19) are to be accepted not only as true to God's will, but also as taught, indirectly at least. The following chapters are based in part on this kind of logical implication or necessary inference, though many scriptures will, of course, be cited as confirmatory proofs of positions taken.

The theme of the present chapter is one that not only rings clearly throughout the Old Testament, but echoes through the whole length of the New. The fact of God's ownership of the world has been noticed briefly in the first chapter of Division One of this treatise (see p. 3); but it may well claim somewhat further and fuller attention here.

God, speaking from the Mountain to Moses what he should say to Israel, claims "all the earth" as His own, and promises His people Israel, on condition of

obedience, that they shall be His "own possession" (see Ex. 19:3-5). Again, with a fine show of entire independence of Israel and of His having no need of anything which any of His creatures can bestow, God says, with a near approach to sarcasm:

"For every beast of the forest is mine,
And the cattle upon a thousand hills.
I know all the birds of the mountains;
And the wild beasts of the field are mine.
If I were hungry, I would not tell thee:
For the world is mine and the fulness thereof."
—Ps. 50: 10-12.

Thus the Old Testament teaches conclusively that this is God's world. It is His by creation, which is the highest right to ownership; and in addition, it is His by preservation and providential care.

Coming to the New Testament, we find this principle of Divine ownership assumed, rather than declared, in the teaching of Jesus. He evidently regarded it so well-known as not to need re-statement. Speaking on this line, Chas. S. Gardner remarks: "In coming to establish the Kingdom of God He (Jesus) was not invading foreign territory. He was simply claiming for God what was God's own; establishing, so to speak, a *de facto* sovereignty where a *de jure* sovereignty had existed all the time" ("Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress," p. 203).

This fact of God's ownership is the fundamental principle underlying the Bible doctrine of wealth; and only by bearing it in mind can one correctly understand *any* of the Savior's utterances on the subject, and

especially those sayings of His that have only an indirect or remote kinship to the problem of material possessions.

Naturally and logically resultant upon this premise of God's ownership follows the principle of man's stewardship. The one implies the other. God owns the earth, but man occupies it, it having been given to him for residence and use (see Ps. 115:16 and Gen. 1:28); therefore these two stand related as Owner and tenant. Man's right to property, then, is only a secondary right, derived from God's permitting him its use. Prof. Gardner has a good discussion of this relationship in his "Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress," saying in part: "The principle of Jesus is that ultimately property belongs to God; men do not 'own' it, and should not use it as they please, except on the condition that their pleasure is identical with God's purpose. God's purpose is the establishment of the Kingdom—the reign of loving righteousness, wherein all men are mutually stimulated and helped to the realization of their noblest capacities. A man's property is, therefore, a trust which he may not without sin administer for any purpose except the promotion of the well-being of his fellow-men, along with which his own well-being is realized. He is not authorized to expend any portion of it upon himself except as it may be necessary to maintain and develop his efficiency as a servant of God in the service of men" (p. 265; see his discussion at length).

That the user owes fidelity to the Owner, in the employment of His property, is well illustrated and emphasized in the Parable of the Talents (Matt.

25:14-30), as also in the somewhat kindred, though in many points essentially different, Parable of the Pounds (Luke 19:11-27). Each of these parables represents *servants* entrusted with *capital* to be *used*—not simply *preserved*—during the absence of *him who owns it*, and for the *stewardship* of which each several servant is to be held to strict account upon his master's return.

On the Parable of the Talents, A. B. Bruce remarks: "Difference of opinion prevails as to whether this parable refers to the use of material goods for the Kingdom of God, or to the use of spiritual gifts. It is not, perhaps, possible to decide in ignorance of the historical occasion of the parable, nor is it necessary, as the same law applies" ("Ex. Gk. Test.," *in loco*). Doubtless it was intended to refer to both and even more, the term "talent" to be taken as indicating *any* ability to render service, whether by material possessions, mental endowment, or spiritual enduement. In the Parable of the Talents no command is recorded as to the use the servants were to make of the goods entrusted to them. The inference is that they would understand the committal of the property into their hands as in itself constituting a command to use it aright, though in the other parable a specific command is given. If, in the application of the teaching in the Parable of the Pounds, any distinction is to be made in favor of any one avenue of service, the verb πραγματεύσασθε (v. 13) seems rather to indicate the use of material goods. This word is strictly a commercial term and is used only here in the New Testament. It means: *to be occupied in anything; to carry*

on a business; spec., *to carry on the business of a banker or trader* (see Thayer: Gk.-Eng. Lex. of N. T., "*in loco*).

If the above significance of the word be *pressed* (we do not think it should be), we must then understand Jesus in this parable to be giving direction to men as engaged in what F. G. Peabody calls their "common, unsanctified, daily business," which is, of course, to be conducted in a Christian spirit, as we have already noted. Regarding "this most Christian employment of possessions" which is "simply their scrupulous and honorable use in that special work which one is called upon to do," Prof. Peabody further remarks: "The pictures of the religious life which the gospels most frequently present are drawn from scenes of the commercial world." Then after citing Matthew 25:14, Luke 19:13, and Mark 13:34 and 12:2, he continues: "Who are these servants, these traders, these porters, these vinedressers? They represent the persons whom Jesus desires for his disciples; and they are performing precisely that kind of service which he wishes his disciples to render." (See "Jesus Christ and the Social Question," pp. 221, 222, 220, 222, in order.)

We do not agree with the last expressed view above. We would say rather of "these servants, these traders, these porters, these vinedressers," that *in their respective spheres* they are exhibiting, severally, the fidelity, industry, vigilance, and loyalty by which Jesus wishes the lives of His followers, *in every phase thereof*, to be characterized. He is teaching much more than the proper use of money. He does, to be sure, teach the right use of money and of all other material goods, for

the lesser requirement is included in the greater; but the lesser should not be magnified so as to obscure, much less to shut out completely from view, the greater content of the teaching.

To say the very least, however, the scriptures we have noticed, especially the parables of The Talents and of The Pounds, clearly demand the exercise of a conscientious and consecrated and Christian spirit in the employment of one's wealth, whether it be much or little. Not only was the one-talent man who buried his capital brought to the same account as was the five-talent man; but even the slothful servant who, because of the comparative smallness of the trust committed to him (one pound), succeeded in hiding it in a napkin, was held in no wise excusable for his conduct, but was called a "wicked servant." H. C. Vedder says: "Trusts differ in amount, not in character—stewardship is the universal fact. Anybody who possesses anything is, according to the ethics of Jesus, a rich man and a steward" ("Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus," p. 420). It is not, then, a question of quantity, but it is one of faithfulness; and unfaithfulness to a small trust proves a man not only unworthy to be entrusted with a larger amount, but also unworthy to retain that which he has failed to improve. (See Matt. 25:28 and Luke 19:24; cf. Luke 16:10.)

Another feature of Jesus' teaching along this line, and a very important one to be borne in mind, is that this debt of stewardship is to be paid indirectly. The *stewards* are here on earth, but their *Master* is no longer on earth, in person. Jesus, anticipating the excuse many will offer of not having had opportunity

to minister to Him, gave the picture of the Judgment of the Nations (Matt. 25:31-46). To those who will ask, "Lord, when saw we thee hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?" Jesus will reply, "Verily, I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto me" (vv. 44, 45); while those on the right hand will be assured that in having aided His *brethren* they are credited with personal ministry to Him (see v. 40).

The "brethren" (v. 40) are regarded by Bruce "the Christian poor and needy and suffering, in the first place, but ultimately and inferentially any suffering people anywhere" ("Ex. Gk. Test.," *in loco*). On the other hand, Morrison regards them as made up only of real disciples of Christ. He says: "When the Judge, as it were, points to *these* his brethren, and then refers to the *least* of them, it is not needful that we should suppose that they are different from 'the sheep.' . . . In pronouncing sentence on each"—of the condemned, he means—"he could point to surrounding brethren" who had, by these condemned ones, been neglected, but who, on the part of the accepted ones in general, "had been loved and sympathetically helped" (Quoted by Broadus: "Am. Com."; *Matt.* 25:40). This interpretation is to be preferred, as only the identifying of the expressions "my brethren" and "blessed of my Father" as referring to one and the same company, enables the giving of the true meaning to οἱ εὐλογημένοι. (See Thayer: "Gk.-Eng. Lex. of N. T.," *in loco*.)

The general teaching of the passage is summarized by Bruce as follows: "The doctrine of this passage is

that love is the essence of true religion and the ultimate test of character for all men, Christian or non-Christian. All who truly love are implicit Christians. For such everywhere the kingdom is prepared. They are its true citizens and God is their father" ("Ex. Gk. Test.," *in loco*). This summary is true to fact, barring probably his statement about "implicit Christians," which statement is open to question. If his word "implicit" is intended in its usual sense, that is, as meaning "tacitly comprised; fairly to be understood . . . ; implied" (Webster), then we would say that the word does not properly apply to Christians: for the matter of being a Christian is not a thing "fairly to be understood, though not expressed," or something to be "implied"; rather, being a Christian is an *explicit,* instead of an "implicit," matter,—explicit in the sense of "unequivocal" and "unreserved" (Webster).

Prof. Bruce, in the foregoing interpretation, comes near crossing the line that separates the *wish* held by many that there were some other way to salvation than by faith in Christ, from the *hope* cherished by not a few that there *is* another way—especially for the heathen—and that this other way is by kindness and helpfulness to the needy. Even to wander near such forbidden ground is not only an unfortunate but a dangerous thing to do,—a procedure indeed for which there is neither encouragement nor warrant in the Gospel. Dr. Broadus warns against this danger zone, and urges the Scriptural requisite of faith in Christ as the only safe ground of hope, when he says: "It would be a grave mistake to suppose that nothing will be

regarded in the judgment, nothing help in determining a man's future, but the simple question whether he has been benevolent toward suffering Christians; we are taught elsewhere that each will 'receive the things done in the body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or bad' (II Cor. 5:10 . . .). It is also a mistake to infer that only actions will enter into the judgment. The essence of the passage is that the actions in question will be accepted as indicating *personal relation to Christ;* and it is really personal relation to Christ, acted out in the life, that will fix eternal destiny" (Am. Com."; *Matt.* 25:35, 36).

The above are eminently orthodox utterances. The New Testament doctrine cannot be too strongly defended, nor too faithfully declared by Christ's ambassadors, that good deeds, whether wrought by the use of money or otherwise, do not *procure* salvation, but that they only, at best, *prove* salvation a possession of him who practices them. Jesus taught rightness of heart as the cardinal thing (see Matt. 5:28; Mark 7:21; Luke 9:47); Peter taught that hearts are cleansed by faith (Acts 15:9); and again, Jesus taught: "The good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good" (Luke 6:45). It is important not only to know truths, but to know them in their proper order and relation. Right heart condition is vital. The heart is purified by faith. The man with a heart so cleansed does good,—does it not to *make* his heart right, but because his heart *is* right. Such a man will be, in his use of his Lord's goods, like "the faithful and wise steward" of Luke 12:42 f., who receives honor and preferment when his

lord returns. He will be able to render a good account of his stewardship, because the Lord of all stewards and of all earthly store abides in his heart.

This is the secret of the whole matter of the right use of wealth,—this rightness of the heart. If the word and will of Christ were allowed to dwell more "richly" (see Col. 3:16) in the hearts of His people, there would be less occasion than there is for such advice to Christendom as this, from Walter Rauschenbusch: "The church should turn whatever moral insight it possesses, like a searchlight, on everything that claims to be ownership and scrutinize it to see if it is not in fact mere stewardship which has thrown off its responsibility and is running away with the property" ("Christianity and the Social Crisis," p. 387). If those who have named the name of Jesus would let His Spirit abide within as the Lord of their lives, then would the conviction sweep the land that "Every man who holds wealth or power is not only a steward of God, but a steward of the people" (Rauschenbusch, as above), and there would be begun the payment of a debt long over-due,—the debt of loving, helpful service (see Rom. 13:8) to the great hosts of needy ones, to serve whom, Christ said, is to serve Him. If men were more willing (a *great deal* more willing) to heed the call to Christian duty than they are, then might each begin to say within himself: "Disciples of Jesus are stewards of wealth, not owners. And the question for stewardship is not, How much of my wealth must I give to God and my brother? but, How much of God's wealth am I justified in using for myself?" (H. C. Vedder: "Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus," p. 420).

The whole matter of stewardship, then, resolves itself into this simple, yet solemn, question: Are we, as consecrated Christian conduct demands, sharing our means with those persons, and those objects that are in need of our material aid, and thus *glorifying God with that which is His own?*

CHAPTER VI

THE PLACE OF WEALTH IN THE REALIZATION OF THE KINGDOM

THE study of the above subject brings us first to a consideration of the Kingdom of God in its different aspects. It is presented in the teaching of Jesus from three view-points. These three are: first, the subjective phase; second, the objective phase; and third, the final, complete stage of the Kingdom in its consummation in heaven. (Note: In this chapter frequent and somewhat full use is made of a treatise, by the writer, on "The Realization of the Kingdom of God in Human Society," *q. v.*)

In the *subjective* sense, the kingdom of God is a state of the soul, the reign of the ethical principle of altruism in the inner man. This right principle is implanted in the heart by the making anew of the individual life, after the copy of Christ's character. Regarding the reality and the nature of this subjective phase of the kingdom, Chas. J. Vaughan, commenting on Matthew 6:33, has this to say: "If the Bible be true, God is already reigning. Already there is a true spiritual power, exercised by God himself, in Christ Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, over and in the hearts of men. When you see a Christian person, one who is evidently living by faith, one who manifestly speaks and acts under the influence of a present fear and a

present love of God, as revealed in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, you see a subject, a true living subject, of the kingdom of God. That person is what he is by virtue of a rule exercised in his heart by the holy and life-giving Spirit of God. That person has sought therefore, and is seeking still, a present place in God's kingdom; in that kingdom which (St. Paul says) is *righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost*" ("Characteristics of Christ's Teaching," p. 207 f.).

The change that gives to one such citizenship takes place in personal regeneration, and until it occurs no individual will be, nor can he be, a member of the kingdom, either subjectively or objectively. The right subjective *state* of the soul must precede the objective *show* of it in service. This fact must be constantly borne in mind. No proposed panacea for the human ills that beset the world should, for a single moment, secure favorable consideration, if it disregard or even minimize this absolute requisite of a new life in the soul.

It was this subjective phase—this right heart condition—that Jesus specially emphasized. Matthew reports Jesus as beginning His public ministry with the call for a change of heart, in view of the Kingdom's being at hand (4:17), in which call He seems to be echoing the Herald's message (3:2). Luke quotes Jesus as saying to His disciples: "Blessed are ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God" (6:20). Remarking on the content of the expression "kingdom of God" as here used by Jesus, Bliss says: "He had only to clear it of misconceptions and errors, and absurdities,

of earthliness and narrowness, in order to make it a fit vehicle of the true idea of spiritual and eternal salvation. . . . It brings to our thoughts the whole sphere of Christian welfare under the figure of a state, in which God reigns (Kingdom of God), through the agency of Jesus (Kingdom of Christ, Eph. 5:5), over souls renewed, through repentance and faith in Jesus, by God's own Spirit, and consecrated to his service without reservation or drawing back for time and for eternity" ("Am. Com.," *in loco*). The same prominence is given the subjective idea in Jesus' declaration to Nicodemus: "Except one be born anew, he cannot see (that is, *enjoy, partake of;* so Meyer, Weiss, and Calvin, cited by Marcus Dods: "Exp. Gk. Test.," *in loco*) the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).

In emphasizing this subjective phase as essential, and as necessarily antecedent, to the improvement of society, Shailer Mathews remarks: "Jesus expected the new society to be at last co-extensive with all society: or more truly, he expected that at last the world would be so thoroughly transformed into the kingdom as to cease to be distinct from it. . . . But evidently this process of assimilation must be preceded by a transformation that is moral (Matt. 12:33; 7:17, 18; 12:34, 35)." Again, he says: " . . . to make that which is wrong hated and that which is good loved; so to transform and improve and ennoble a man that instead of seeking his own selfish interests he will find his life by spontaneously losing it in the society of other lives about him; to develop a love for men because one is one's self a child of God; in a word, to make normal social life depend upon goodness—that is

the fundamental position of Jesus." And finally: "The world can become the kingdom only by a repentance and a moral change on the part of its members that replaces the spirit of revolt against goodness and a loving God with the spirit of sonship (John 3:3)." (See "Social Teaching of Jesus," pp. 207, 208, 209).

Discussing the teaching of Jesus on the "Kingdom of God," J. Gottschick says: "Jesus abolished the heteronomy of the legalistic attitude, and consequently the basis of a mechanical concept of a future reward, by laying all the stress upon the disposition of the heart (Mark 7:15; Matt. 7:16, 17), by substituting for the legalistic relation the relation of children to a father (Mark 10:14ff.), . . . and by promising the kingdom of God to those who long for righteousness (Matt. 5:6). At the same time, Jesus subordinated temporal rewards to the spiritual blessings of the kingdom, so that with him there is an organic relation between the moral condition in this world and the blessings of the world to come" ("New Schaff-Herzog Ency.," *in loco*).

This all carries us back to the principle of *the primacy of the spiritual* in Jesus' teaching, which principle has been considered in a previous chapter. As His teaching regarding everything else had to do, directly or indirectly, with the state of men's hearts, so also in His discussions and pronouncements regarding the Kingdom, He taught that in essence it is *internal*—that it "cometh not with observation" (Luke 17:20)—that, as Paul later taught, it is not an *outward* state, but an *inward* state of "righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Rom. 14:17).

But while Jesus dwelt specially upon the *subjective* phase of the kingdom, He also at times thought of it and spoke of it as an *objective* concept. The kingdom *that is to come* was mentioned by Him at various times in terms clearly objective. For example, He said in Matthew 8:11: "Many will come from the east and the west and will sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven." Again, Mark 14:25: "I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God." (Let it be remarked here that we have not felt it necessary to discuss the problem of the relative merits of the two expressions, "Kingdom of heaven" and "Kingdom of God," as to which one Jesus actually used, or whether He used both. For our purpose in this treatise the terms are regarded synonymous, and as used in the New Testament interchangeably.)

The foregoing scriptures present the kingdom as clearly objective, but future. Not only though did Jesus set forth the *future* phase of the kingdom objectively, but certain teachings of His show that to Him the kingdom was also *a then present* objective concept. Such a teaching is the Parable of the Tares (Matt. 13:24-30), and another is that of The Net (Matt. 13:47-50), *like* each of which the Kingdom is said to be. Still another scripture in which Jesus uses objective terminology is His saying: "And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and men of violence take it by force" (Matt. 11:12; cf. Luke 16:16).

In this objective sense of the Kingdom, perhaps Prof. C. S. Gardner's definition cannot be improved.

He says it is "a social order, a system of human relations, progressively realized, in which the will of God is the formative principle, and all the functions of which are organized and operated for the purpose of helping all men to realize the spiritual possibilities of humanity" ("Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress," p. 84 f.). Note well two very important things in this definition: first, that God's *will* is back of all kingdom progress; and second, that the *realization* in question is of the *spiritual* possibilities of mankind. In view of these two points, nothing that is manifestly contrary to God's will can be denominated any part of the coming of the kingdom; nor must social well-being, as such, ever be regarded as the goal toward which the world is to strive. Rather, let it be borne in mind that such right social order, in so far as it will ever obtain in the present dispensation, is to be the fruitage, the objective expression and exemplification, of the *real* kingdom which is in the *hearts* of its constituent members.

In line with this *objective* and *present* phase of the Kingdom, H. H. Wendt, commenting upon the report the disciples made to Jesus of their success on the preaching tour on which He had sent them (Luke 10:1-17), His promise to them of authority over the enemy (v. 19), and His blessing pronounced upon them (v. 23 f.), says: " . . . the disciples had it (the kingdom) present with them, and had a blissful experience of it." Again, speaking of Jesus, he says: "He had too direct and personal experience of fellowship with God and of possession of heavenly blessings already in His earthly life, to make it possible for Him to judge

of the kingdom of God as being *merely* something future, far-distant, and heavenly, and as standing in entire contrast to the forms and circumstances of the present earthly life." (See "Teaching of Jesus," Vol. I, pp. 374 f., 369, respectively.)

Jesus' actual teaching, it would seem, regarding the Kingdom, is that in reality it is ethical in its nature, and has its seat in the hearts of men; but that it *expresses* itself in men's right conduct toward one another as individuals and as classes, and also in the general social order, in so far as kingdom principles have yet affected society at large. True, there is a close relationship between this cause and result, and yet the two are, in fact, as distinct as any effect is distinct from its cause. Strictly speaking, the Kingdom is no more the social order than the fruit tree is the harvest of luscious apples it bears. Prof. Gardner states this distinction well when he says: "Ideally, the Kingdom of God as a subjective state means the complete conformity of the inner life to the character of God; the bringing of the thoughts and intents of the heart, the affections, the purposes, the ideals, the whole voluntary nature—including impulses, aims and decisions—not into subjection to, but rather into harmony with the divine life. But the incorporation, so to speak, of the will of God in the wills of individual men means, of course, the conformity of the actions of men to the will of God. If all the interests, purposes and ideals of a man are inspired by the will of God, then all the actions of the man which have any moral significance will be expressions of that will; and all actions which grow out of or affect the relations of men one

to another have moral significance. The Kingdom of God, therefore, becomes external—objectifies itself, so to speak—in all our social relations"—that are *right*, we think he should have said—"and is of necessity embodied in a social order exactly as far and as fast as it is realized internally in individual men" ("Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress," pp. 64, 65).

There is, then, in this secondary or resultant sense, an objective kingdom of God in the world to-day, and has been since Jesus' day. It came, thus objectively, with the ministry of Jesus on earth when He called to Himself that little band of believers, and began to teach them their duty and obligation to their fellowmen,—the great lesson of altruism. That *coming* or appearance of the Kingdom was indeed modest, but it was meaningful. It was, so to speak, but the beginning of its coming. Taking the figure of the prophet who compared it to a stone cut out of the mountain (Dan. 2:34 f., 44, 45), this was but the starting of the stone on its age-long journey; for the New Testament teaches that throughout the present dispensation the Kingdom is to grow, to develop, to reach out more and more and influence the whole social world.

There remains to be noticed the one other phase of the kingdom; that is, the stage of its complete consummation in heaven. Jesus had this view of the kingdom in mind evidently when He uttered two scriptures we have already noted,—the one regarding men's coming from the four corners of the earth and sitting down "in the kingdom of God" (Luke 13:29; cf. Matt. 8:11), and the other His reference at the Last Supper

to the new repast, in which He would participate, "in the kingdom of God" (Mark 14:25).

Regarding this future and final state of the Kingdom, H. H. Wendt observes that "the view that the kingdom of God is already being realized on earth, must yet, in the sense used by Jesus, be supplemented by this other, that the kingdom is also a future and heavenly one, and that the present kingdom finds its true and perfect realization only in the future heavenly state." And again, he remarks: "Since He (Jesus) was certain that the kingdom of God which was then already set up on earth, and was in process of development, would nevertheless not only attain to a future heavenly form, but only in this form would arrive at its just perfection, He could designate this perfected form of it as in a special sense the kingdom of God" ("Teaching of Jesus," Vol. I, pp. 375, 384).

On Matthew 6:10, regarding the petition for the coming of the Kingdom, Dr. Broadus comments as follows: "The reference is plainly to that Messianic reign which all devout Jews were expecting (Mark 15:43; Luke 23:51), and which John and Jesus had been proclaiming as now near at hand (3:2; 4:17). The prayer that it might *come* would in the minds of our Lord's hearers refer especially to the beginning of the reign, the introduction of the kingdom (Luke 17:20 f.); but just as in the prophetic view the whole period, from the beginning of Messiah's reign to its ultimate triumph, frequently appears as a point, so in the full sense the coming of that reign or kingdom includes the idea of its complete establishment. It is therefore perfectly legitimate for us to use the petition

with our minds specially directed toward the consummation of Christ's reign, the complete establishment of his kingdom, his final glorious triumph, when the kingship (sovereignty) of the world shall become our Lord's and his Christ's (Rev. 11:15)" ("Am. Com.," *in loco*).

Thus we have considered somewhat in detail the kingdom idea, noting its three phases and differentiating each from the others. We have sought also to point out briefly the *relation* of the different phases to one another, especially of the first two, and to emphasize the primacy of the subjective phase. It remains for us to notice somewhat the matter of the *realization* of the Kingdom, with particular attention to the part wealth is to play therein.

We naturally think of this realization as pertaining mainly to the objective aspect of the Kingdom; but our study already has shown us how vitally this *external* phase is related to the *internal*—how the latter is the source from which the former must flow. It is not difficult then, or ought not to be, to see that whatever is to aid in the real development and progress of the kingdom among men must be directed for the main part to the planting and cultivation of kingdom principles in the hearts of men,—for the *outward result* will not be greater than the *inward reason* for it. In fact, the *effect* will be lacking or inferior just in proportion as the *cause* is neglected. This point is worthy of the special emphasis we here give it, because of the far too common attempts to improve the social status independently of any effort to change men's inner lives. What has already been said in substance more

than once can not be too strongly impressed upon every one who really desires to have some part in advancing the Kingdom; that is, that there cannot be right social relation until there is right heart condition.

Jesus is King of this Kingdom which the world needs to see more and more developed, and its rule extended until all human society is blessed by its beneficent sway. The founder of an institution or organization proposing to reach and benefit the whole world would certainly be expected to have some plan for the accomplishment of so great an undertaking. Did Jesus have a plan for this Kingdom which He founded? Manifestly He did. Let us note that plan.

As Christ, after His public ministry began, was to be in the world personally but a few years, which seemed all the briefer because of the great work to be done, He must needs provide some way for what He had begun to be carried on after His departure. This He did by founding a visible society, His church, as the objective expression of the true kingdom state that had come into the hearts of the Eleven before He commissioned them (Matt. 28:19). Regarding this church, builded by Christ, David J. Burrell says that "history has never shown an organization so ideally constituted. It was not thrown together at random, but put together by a divine Architect after a symmetrical plan" ("The Wonderful Teacher," p. 79).

Thus Christ established the kingdom *objectively* in the earth, and committed to it kingdom interests by commanding of it the dissemination of kingdom principles. And so the church is seen to be the divinely originated agency of the kingdom—the main avenue

through which the latter reaches the world to save it and otherwise to bless it. Dr. Gardner makes the following apt observations which are well to our point: "The Kingdom is more than a church. However, the Kingdom must inevitably create a church. The new brotherhood of believers was constituted in the midst of an alien and hostile environment whose forms were molded by an organic principle quite contrary to that which drew the Christians into fellowship with one another. The new social spirit which animated this new association of men could not therefore express itself through those alien forms. . . . The new social group, whose aim was to substitute for the old social structure a new one, needed a fulcrum for the accomplishment of so stupendous a task. The church was the instrumentality created for this purpose" ("Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress," pp. 76, 77).

Other agencies through which Kingdom forces operate are hospitals, orphanages, and other benevolent institutions; but these, for the most part, stand close alongside the church in kinship: if not children of the church, they are at least largely fostered thereby. It is to be carefully borne in mind, though, that the church—of Jesus' own building (see Matt. 16:19)—is the *principal* Kingdom agency.

Now, as the church is the main agency through which the Kingdom operates, the problem of the place of wealth in the realization of the Kingdom becomes practically the problem of the place of money in the work of the church, the visible institution Christ founded. This latter problem we have been considering in the several immediately preceding chapters,—notably the

one on Beneficence and the one bearing on Stewardship. The injunctions in those chapters, regarding the use of wealth, even if not all addressed to church members, were intended for those who, if they came to obey them *in the spirit* and not *in the letter only*, must needs be Christians, and who, as Christians, *ought* also to be church members. Whoever is a Kingdom member should, under normal conditions, be also a church member. Then whatever such church members are under obligation to do with their wealth, is the answer to the question of the place wealth is to have in the extension of the Kingdom. That place, though not principal, but only agential, is by no means insignificant. Just as the church has been found to be the chief Kingdom agency, so it may be safely said that wealth is, at least, one of the very important church agencies. The right use of money is an absolute essential to the greatest success, as a Kingdom force, of any Christian congregation.

It is deemed unnecessary here to retrace our course over the ground already covered in previous chapters as to the various avenues through some or all of which one's means should pass. There are, as has been seen, many worthy ways money may be employed in helping men "to realize the spiritual possibilities of humanity." If men be really interested in the realization, in this world, of God's ideal of the brotherhood of mankind, they will find ample opportunities to show that interest in a material way. The greatest need of him who would help bring in the reign of brotherhood is a brotherly heart.

In his discussion of the meaning of brotherhood,

H. C. King observes: "If I am to love men, then I need to believe that they are my brothers, that is, (1) that the life of every man is knit up indissolubly with my own; (2) that he is like me; and (3) that in some true sense he has a sacred and priceless personality in Jesus' thought" ("Ethics of Jesus," p. 244). The man who so feels toward his fellowmen will not content himself with using his money simply for his own selfish satisfaction, but will put some of it into other lives. The spirit of such a Kingdom abettor is portrayed by F. G. Peabody when he says: "A man does not own his wealth, he owes it. Precisely as a business man says to himself, I must invest and distribute a certain sum with special scrupulousness because I administer it as a trustee, under a law which demands of me a special reckoning, so the disciple of Jesus acts in all concerns of his life as a servant who has heard the great word, 'Be ye also ready: for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh'" ("Jesus Christ and the Social Question," p. 213).

The right use of the petition, "Thy kingdom come" (Matt. 6:10), that Jesus enjoined His disciples to make, implies on the part of him who so prays, a consecration of his entire self—mind, heart, talent, money, *everything*—to the interests of that Kingdom for whose coming he asks. It is, in fact, a very serious and solemn thing to take that prayer upon the lips, lest it be too largely on the lips *only*. It comprehends so much that it should not be lightly regarded. "To pray for Christ's kingdom is to pray for the conversion of sinners and the edification and sanctification of disciples. . . . It is to implore that Antichrist may fall, and the

idols perish from under the whole heaven. It is to profess sympathy with all that relieves and elevates and enfranchises man; and to implore the removal of all that corrupts and debases him, and that sells him, soul and body, to the service of the Evil One" (Williams: quoted by Broadus, in "Am. Com."; *Matt.* 6:10). Would any one dare deny that all this, and more besides, is included in that petition of three words? And a mere glance at the words of the foregoing quotation constitutes a mighty call for the use of wealth as an agency in securing the things desired. Conversion of sinners, edification of saints, overthrow of antichrist, destruction of idols, uplift of man, removal of corrupting influences,—what a power wealth may be, and should be, in helping to accomplish all these! May we not in fact say that *apart* from its use these kingdom enterprises can never be achieved? Money has its place in Christian work, and if made to fill that place, its influence, instead of being detrimental, will be salutary, in a far-reaching degree.

Jesus recognized money as having a legitimate use at the hands of His followers, and more than once He directly commanded the consecrated employment of it. One such command is in Luke 16:9, which passage has already been considered, in another connection. It is also an important passage here, relating as it does to all three phases of the Kingdom. Manifestly those who were to be *made* "friends" were, in the process, also to be made heart subjects of the King (subjective kingdom members), else those who were to *make* friends of them could not, at the close of their own friend-making period on earth (as objective kingdom

servants), be awaited and welcomed by these former ones into the "eternal tabernacles" (of the consummated heavenly kingdom); for it must never be forgotten that only heart subjects here will be given heavenly seats hereafter (see Luke 12:37).

In his remarks on this command of Jesus (Luke 16:9) R. F. Horton very aptly says: "If money, or the love of it, is a root of all kinds of evil, money, though not the love of it, may become a root of many kinds of good. There is a right use of money—only one. If that right use can be understood, the very character of money may be changed. Though the Mammon of unrighteousness could not become the Mammon of righteousness—that would be a contradiction in terms—money may cease to be Mammon altogether and become a flexible instrument in the free action of God. And in this way, though you can not serve God and Mammon, you way with Mammon serve God, or rather in using Mammon to serve God, you rob it of its bad name" ("The Commandments of Jesus," p. 257).

So the spirit of Jesus' teaching is that whenever, wherever and however money may be robbed of this "bad name" which its abuse by ungodly men had fastened upon it in the time of Jesus, and which title to this day is far too appropriate, there is to be no delay in making it possible for it to wear *a new name*,—some such name as Minister of Righteousness, Medium of Mercy, or Messenger of Redemption. If allowed, it will prove itself to be all of these, and in addition will bring blessings to him who so employs it.

On this same passage (Luke 16:9), David J. Burrell

has remarked: "He (Christ) lays before us here the possibility of so using our possessions as to prepare for ourselves a generous welcome at heaven's gate. Our offerings to the Lord may accomplish things we dream not of. We are pilgrims on our way to eternity; and the right use of our talents will determine the plaudits that await us there. It is intimated by Christ that the faithful, as they approach the Heavenly City, shall be met by those whom they have made prisoners of hope, crying 'Welcome to the habitations of the gracious God!'" ("The Wonderful Teacher," p. 207.)

Whoever thus uses his wealth, whether it be great or small in amount, is aiding in the realization of the Kingdom,—first *subjectively;* then *objectively,* because first *subjectively*.. Furthermore, in so doing he is "hastening the coming of the day of God," with its "new heavens and a new earth" (II Pet. 3:12, 13), following which appearance "cometh the end, when he (Christ) shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father" (I Cor. 15:24), that in the final and complete *heavenly consummation* "God may be all in all" (v. 28).

With such a glorious prospect to encourage and inspire, let us pray *as Jesus taught His disciples to pray* (Matt. 6:10): "LET THY KINGDOM COME!"

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(Of the many works consulted, only those we have quoted at least once are listed in this bibliography.)

I. GENERAL LIST OF AUTHORS

BERNARD, H. N., *Mental Characteristics of the Lord Jesus Christ.*

BLISS, GEO. R., *American Commentary;* Luke.

BROADUS, JNO. A., *American Commentary;* Matthew.

BRUCE, A. B., *Expositors' Greek Testament;* Syn. Gosp.

BURRELL, DAVID J., *The Wonderful Teacher.*

CARR, E. E., *Christian Socialist;* Dec. 1, 1913.

CLARKE, W. N., *American Commentary;* Mark.

DEBS, EUGENE V., *Christian Socialist;* Dec. 1, 1910; quoted by J. W. Hill.

DODS, MARCUS, *Expositors' Greek Testament;* John.

GARDNER, CHAS. S., *Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress.*

GIBSON, J. MONRO, *Christianity According to Christ.*

GOTTSCHICK, J., *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge;* article on "Kingdom of God."

GREGORY, D. S., *Christian Ethics.*

HALL, THOS. C., *Social Solutions.*

HENDERSON, C. R., *Social Duties.*

HEUVER, G. D., *Teaching of Jesus Concerning Wealth.*

HORTON, R. F., *Commandments of Jesus.*
JACKSON, GEORGE, *Teaching of Jesus.*
JOSEPHUS, FLAVIUS, *Antiquities; Wars.*
KING, H. C., *Ethics of Jesus.*
MATHEWS, SHAILER, *The Social Teaching of Jesus.*
NATHUSIUS, M. VON, *New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge;* article on "Communism."
PEABODY, F. G., *Jesus Christ and the Social Question.*
PLUMMER, ALFRED, *International Critical Commentary;* Luke.
RAUSCHENBUSCH, WALTER, *Christianity and the Social Crisis.*
SPALDING, BISHOP F. P., *Christian Socialist;* Nov., 1914.
TAUSSIG, F. W., *Principles of Economics.*
THAYER, J. H., *Greek-English Lexicon of New Testament.*
VAUGHAN, CHAS. J., *Characteristics of Christ's Teaching.*
VEDDER, H. C., *Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus.*
WEBSTER, N., *English Lexicons.*
WELLS, H. G., *Cry for Justice* (compiled by Sinclair).
WENDT, H. H., *Teaching of Jesus.*
WESTCOTT AND HORT, *Greek New Testament.*

II. COMMENTARIES

American Commentary; Matthew, Mark and Luke.
Expositors' Greek Testament; Gospels.
International Critical Commentary; Luke.

III. ENCYCLOPEDIAS

New International Encyclopedia.
New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge.
Werner's Universal Encyclopedia.

IV. LEXICONS

THAYER: *Greek-English Lexicon of New Testament.*
WEBSTER: *International Dictionary;* Edition 1895.
Imperial Dictionary; Edition 1906.
Secondary School Dictionary; Edition 1913 (direct abridgement of *The New International Dictionary*).