

C.H.U.R.C.H. - Adult Guide

H is for Huge Generosity

Day 1: Acts 2:44-45

The early church really knew how to give and what genuine christian generosity looked like. Let's look at some misconceptions of what these verses mean.

Misconception #1 "Isn't this Socialism?"

I get where this misconception comes from on the surface, but this is not what socialism is, and here is why:

- First, the people in the Church **did not release all ownership** of all of their possessions, they only considered everything they owned to be available as people needed it. "As any had need."
- Second, socialism is a **political and economic theory** of social organization which advocated that production, distribution, and exchange should be owned by the community as a whole.

Now, the government would say that someone needs to actually be in charge of the ownership, so it would be them.

Socialism therefore is the government forcing on you the release of ownership of your possessions by whatever means, taxation or other means... to benefit others.

In other words, it's not your choice to participate, they make you participate.

Generosity is not at the heart of socialism, because generosity is voluntary.

Nobody in the early church forced anyone to be generous, they chose to. **HUGE DIFFERENCE** from socialism.

It is not a social order that is imposed, it is a heart condition that is exposed

The **Church handled the outflow** of what came in, but was led by the Spirit in doing so.

Day 2: Misconception #2 - I have to give like the early church did to be a good Christian

The fear with this is... so in order to be a Christian do I have to release ownership of all my stuff?... I don't want to do that.

I'd say two things to those of you that may have thought that.

- The First is you have a misunderstanding of what is being done here.
 - They only made their stuff available to be owned, used, or consumed by others as needs arose.
- The second thing I would say is this... If your response to this text **is not**, "I can't wait to find opportunities to be generous like they were." and it's more "I'm afraid of making my possessions available."
 - Then I would ask, what's the root of that?
 - What's in your life and in your heart that immediately turns to selfishness?
 - Our reaction shouldn't be fear... God didn't give you a spirit of fear. It should be joy... I love to give... giving is at the heart of Jesus.
 - We should always be looking to take what God has given us to be made available to someone who needs it more.
 - Besides what you have... is not YOURS anyway. At the snap of a finger God can make it all go away.
 - Release it and find real wealth, cling to it and lose what you do have.