

No Inheritance and The Vow of Poverty

The vow of poverty means that the Ordained Ministers of His Holy Church do not hold any property as their personal estate but holds all things in common for the benefit of Jesus and the Father.

Jesus was the King of the kingdom of God. That kingdom and the right to rule it preexisted the first century. He was the highest son of David who was the anointed king of Israel which was the kingdom of God on earth passed down through Noah to Shem and to Abraham, Jacob and their descendants. They were set free from the bondage of Egypt by Moses but went under the authority of the rulers that were chosen by the "voice of the people". The first with Saul and then David. Finally Jesus came as the Messiah and took the kingdom from those who had again twisted it into an apostate state with their statutes and ordinances.

Matthew 21:43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

In that original kingdom God set aside a certain group of people who were called Levites because most of them came from that tribe. This took place when the people were 'called out' of the walled in camp of the golden calf. Most of those who came out were Levites. These people were separated from the main body of the nation in several ways and for particular purposes.

Numbers 18:23-24 But ... shall do the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, and they shall bear their iniquity: [it shall be] a statute for ever throughout your generations, that among the children of Israel they have no inheritance.

This clear stipulation was to do with owning land as a personal estate.

Numbers 18:20 And the LORD spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel.

There was a great deal of detail added by Moses as to how these ministers of God's kingdom were to operate but this is often misunderstood because of the metaphors of the language.

Deuteronomy 18:1 The priests the Levites, [and] all the tribe of Levi, shall have no part nor inheritance with Israel: they shall eat the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and his inheritance. Therefore shall they have no inheritance among their brethren: the LORD is their inheritance, as he hath said unto them.

In the verses that followed, it was outlined that they were to be able to partake personally of a part of the contributions of the people that were given to God. There was a practical side to this position and status. The Levites were only tithed to *according to their service*. There was no compelled tax upon the people by the Levites as an exercising authority for in those days there was *no king in Israel*.

By the time Jesus arrived the Levites had owned land for almost a 160 years by the 'grace' of the Hasmonian dynasty of kings in Judea. Some 70 years before Jesus entered the temple to cast out the money changers the Pharisees had managed to pass a statute that allowed the courts of Judea to enforce the contributions of the people as a compelled tax.

2 Corinthians 8:9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

When Jesus called men out he also set certain requirements upon those men chosen to minister his kingdom of God at hand. Applying precept upon precept we see that he also required that they have no inheritance in property or land.

Luke 14:33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be

my disciple.

This was a direct statement not a general suggestion and was in accordance with the statements attributed to God in relationship to his bondservants, the Levites. By making this a requirement in the Kingdom of God it was assured that the public ministers of the kingdom would truly remain public servants unless the people allowed otherwise.

Contributions to God's kingdom and its servants are always based on individual choice. They are not compelled by men or statutes of men.

Matthew 6:3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

Jesus informed his disciples that he would appoint to them the kingdom that he was taking away from those who at that time sat in the seat of Moses.

Luke 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

He went on to restate what was required of them.

Luke 12:33 Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

In the kingdom of God the people were not to put all their gold and silver into a central place, vault or golden calf. They were to keep their money in their purses and give it upon the altar of God according to need and service. This established liberty in the land and in their hearts and the responsibilities and rights granted by God in their hands within their families.

Luke 12:34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Christ knew that if the ministers were to focus on riches in the royal treasuries of the temple that they would soon forget about service to the people but if they were only allowed tithings according to their service and the wealth of the kingdom remained in the hands of the people that the kingdom would remain healthy. As soon as wealth is centered in the temple or Church the wrong kind of servants and ministers are attracted to the service of the people. The ministers must remain servants.

2 Corinthians 4:5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

Power corrupts and the wealth is power. Those who seek wealth and power make poor servants and desperate tyrants. The ministers of the kingdom will only stay pious or dutiful public servants if all they get is the opportunity to serve. If they can get wealthy they will come to be wealthy. You cannot teach men to live by faith on a guaranteed salary.

The Levites had proved their faith and courage but still Moses forbid them to own land in their own name. Jesus did the same requiring that his ministers were to sell all they had, give to the poor and follow him. These Christian bondservants like the Levites before them did the same. Joses in Acts 4:37 sold land in Cyprus which as a Levite he should not have had, laid the money at the foot of the apostles and became Barnabas. "But" immediately following that Ananias does the same but held back some of the wealth and is struck dead. [see Acts 4:37 through Acts 5:11]

The ministers of Christ's kingdom were dependent upon the contributions of the people who only shared a portion of their personal wealth through contributions according to the service of their ministers. These ministers did many things through education, charity, counseling to make their constituents successful. Every aspect of the lives of the people was important to the ministers of Christ's kingdom.