

Here we see the bottom-line results of the social gospel. Experience demonstrates that it is impotent to accomplish what it claims to be able to do. Why is this? It is because socialism, at its best, is simply a plan for a distribution of what is already being produced. It has in it no dynamic or realistic incentive system which can increase production, and thus advance a nation economically and industrially.

During the Middle Ages, the great bulk of the population of Europe was sunk in deepest poverty, compelled to work long hours for very meager rations. There just was not enough produced to go around. A small class of knights, whose armor made it possible for one of them to overcome any twenty common people, lived in comparative luxury--luxury, however, which would seem poor indeed, compared to the standard of living of the average person of western Europe today. Had the leaders of the World Council of Churches been active at that time, they might have said, "What is necessary is to take what the knights have and divide it up among the peasants, so that all will have an equal amount, and then with a socialistic system of distribution, there will be justice for all." The trouble is that to take what the knights had and divide it up among the rest of the people at that time would have raised the standard of living of the mass of the people hardly one percent. The only result would be to sink the knights to an equal level with the others.

At least once a century during the Middle Ages, in almost every country of Europe, there was a great uprising of the peasants against the tyranny of the knights. These peasant uprisings were put down with terrible slaughter. They were a cry of protest against the hopeless want in which the people lived. Yet, to have divided up the property of the knights would not have helped any of them substantially.