



## Christian Charity vs. Socialism

All Bible doctrine is 100% in opposition to Socialism. Dialectical materialism has rationalism as its basic criterion. There is nothing good in Socialism - ever. Bible doctrine's basic criterion is the Word of God. The Word of God is the chief source of opposition to Socialism now and forever. Acts 2:44-45 troubles some people who are ignorant of the conflict between Christianity and Socialism.

*"And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need." (Acts 2:44-45, NASB)*

Christianity says accept Jesus Christ as Savior. The solution to man's problems is personal. Regeneration is the only answer. Socialism says reject God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. The solution to man's problem is collective. The greatest good for the greatest number. Changed environment is the answer.

The phrase "had all things in common" in Acts 2:44 does not refer to Socialism. It refers to believers helping other believers in a time of crisis, emergency or catastrophe. Acts 2:42-47.

*"They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved." (Acts 2:42-47, NASB)*

In Acts 2:42-47, this was an emergency situation. Believers, because of their faith in Christ, were ostracized by both Hellenistic Jews (Grecians) and by the Judaistic Jews. Two cultures were in conflict in Palestine for about 100 years. As a result, many believers found themselves in dire straits - without food, shelter, or help of any kind.

Persecution came from Roman informers reporting Christians to the procurator who would take them to the praetorium where they would be tried. If found guilty, the Romans would confiscate their possessions and 10% would go to the informer - so there were many informers in Jerusalem. This explains the background of the emergency.

Acts 2:44-45 indicates how the early church met this catastrophe. Believers helped each other. They provided charity and helping those in need. Charity is the operation of the individual's volition in helping those in catastrophe or less fortunate conditions. If there is coercion, then it becomes an infringement on freedom.

Christianity and Socialism are not only exact opposites, but antagonistic. Christianity emphasizes the Godhead and relationship with God whereas Socialism denies God and glorifies man and believes that man by man's efforts can create a perfect world. Christianity recognizes the freedoms and rights of individuals, including the right of private business and property, private ownership of business, etc. This is Divine Institution #4 - Nationalism. Socialism rejects all of these things. Socialism says everything belongs to the State.



Acts. 2:44-45 does not teach or advocate Communism or Socialism. The Bible says that the poor will always be around. You cannot legislate away poverty through poverty programs. In this passage, you have believers operating under the principle of divine good. Socialism at its best can only produce human good. Christianity where believers are filled with the Holy Spirit are producing divine good at this point. Divine good is not only produced by the filling of the Holy Spirit, but by the application of Bible doctrine to experience reflecting of the edification complex of the soul. Under the persecution background of this passage, dispossessed believers were being helped by those who had not been dispossessed.

When the situation in Jerusalem became so critical so that all believers were dispossessed, it was the Apostle Paul who went through Northern and Southern Greece, Macedonia and Achaia and took up offerings for the relief of the poor saints in Jerusalem. This permitted the survival of the believers who remained in that difficult spot. In Acts 2:44, they were sharing. This was Christian charity in action.

*“And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common;” (Acts 2:44, NASB)*