

*All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need.*

—Acts 2:44-45

It might be difficult for Christians today to understand that only a few decades ago, these words from Acts were viewed with some suspicion, as they sounded a bit like Communist propaganda. To the Cold War generation in America, this description of the early believers' communal life was enough to make Christian capitalists quite nervous.

But it is not political ideology that is being promoted in the Acts of the Apostles but rather a glimpse into what it means to live together in Christ. The beauty – no, the miracle – of what was happening in that first-century community is that a group of otherwise different, diverse people found the grace every day to see Christ in one another and to care for each other as they would wish to be cared for. It was not a state decree that compelled them to share, to give, to be stewards of one another. It was the love of God that inspired them to do so.

The early Church grew not simply because of great preaching or astounding signs but because people around them noticed with awe that these members of the Jesus Movement truly loved one another. The world could see they were Christians by their love. May it be so today with us.

—C.K. Robertson