



Excerpt from ***Christ Our Pascha***

**Avarice (Love of Money) and its Opposite Virtue - Generosity**

Avarice is a *passion for money* and material goods. The Holy Fathers taught that love of wealth is not part of man's innate nature, but appears as a distortion of man's desire for eternal life. The passion for acquiring wealth, which takes possession of a person, makes someone a slave to money. The acquisition of wealth becomes an end in itself and leads to various sins. Such a passion gives rise to the illusion of one's self-sufficiency as we come to rely solely on material goods. Saint John Chrysostom teaches: "Wealth is not a bad thing, but avarice and love of money are. A covetous person is one thing, and the rich person is another thing. The covetous person is not rich; he is in want of many things, and while he needs many things, he can never be rich. The covetous man is a keeper, not a master, of wealth; a slave, not a lord."(#764)

The virtue of generosity and its concrete expression, almsgiving, make a person capable of properly managing material goods and growing rich in God. St. John Chrysostom exhorts: "... why then do we, to the neglect of our own selves, waste all our attention upon those things, which when we are gone we can no longer reach..."(#765)