

## Document E

**Source:** William Jewett Tucker, "The Gospel of Wealth," *Andover Review*, Vol. XV, June 1891.

**Note:** William Jewett Tucker was a professor of religion at Andover Seminary. He later became president of Dartmouth College.

... I can conceive of no greater mistake, more disastrous in the end to religion if not to society, than that of trying to make charity do the work of justice....

I quote Mr. Carnegie's words, slightly transferring them, but not changing their meaning, that "the millionaire is entrusted for the time being with a great part of the increased wealth of the community, because he can administer it for the community far better than it could or would have done itself." This, of course, if accepted and carried out in any complete way, becomes patronage....

(I)n the long run, society cannot afford to be patronized. It is better for any community to advance more slowly than to gain altogether by gifts rather than, in large part, by earnings. Within proper limits, the public is advantaged by the gifts of the rich, but if the method becomes the accepted method, to be accepted and relied upon, the decline of self-respect has begun.

... Why should there be this vast amount of wealth in the hands of the few? The question is not, How shall private wealth be returned to the public? but, Why should it exist in such bewildering amounts ... in the hands of the few?

... (I)t is estimated that two thirds of the property of the United States is in the hands of one seventieth of the population. It also seems safe to assume that more than one half of the wealth of the country is in possession of less than fifty thousand families.

... (T)he ethical question of today centers, I am sure, in the distribution rather than in the redistribution of wealth.

• patronage: As used by Tucker, the giving of gifts by the rich to the poor

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### Document Analysis

1. Who was the author of this document and in what year was it written?
2. What is the meaning of "patronage?"
3. Why is William Jewett Tucker critical of Carnegie?
4. What does Tucker mean when he says that the ethical question of the day is the distribution of wealth, not the redistribution of wealth?
5. In 1913 *The New York Herald* reported that Andrew Carnegie had given away over \$300 million, nearly double that of the next largest giver, John D. Rockefeller. Knowing this, do you think William Jewett Tucker's criticism of Carnegie is fair?