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SERMON CLXXVIII.

Secondly. WE have Considered the Order of Superiority, which is purely *Natural*, viz. of *Parents* and *Children*: It follows that we take an Account of that which is *Political*: The *former* is called *Natural*, because the Relation itself is made by Natural Generation; whereas those that *follow*, are not so.

FOR

For tho' the Light of Nature will teach us, that if there are such Relations, there are answerable Duties belonging to them; as also the necessity at least of some of them, for the well-being of Mankind; and that therefore the infinitely wise God hath ordained them: Yet the placing of these Relations between these and those Individual Persons is not Natural, but Arbitrary, and ariseth partly from the Governing Providence of God, partly from a mutual stipulation between the Parties themselves: And these may be distributed either into those that are more *Private*, and are called, *OEconomical*, or those which are more *Publick*, and are by way of speciality called *Political*. A brief Account of each of these may suffice.

I. THE *OEconomical* is that which belongs to the Constitution of Private Families; which are the first foundation of Humane Societies, and out of which all other do arise; and do necessarily require that there be Order in them, without which Mankind would fall into a Rout. And here are Two Relations to be observed,
 1. That which is between *Husband & Wife*,
 2. That which is between the *Master & Servant*: And these may be taken up in Order:

[1.] THE Relation is made between *Husband & Wife*: And I mention this first for Two Reasons,

1. BECAUSE *this Relation comes nearest to that which is Natural*. For tho' not Nature, but mutual Consent, makes these Individual Persons Correlates in this Order; yet the natural Necessity of this Relation was founded in the Order and End of Man's Creation. Humane Nature was at first confined to one Man, and one Woman, by whom it was to be Propagated and Multiplied in it's Individuals, which was the reason why God made a distinction of Sex between them: And to prevent Confusion, God from the First appointed Marriage, as a necessary Medium of it, (plainly intimated in, *Gen. 2. 14.*) And in this He laid a foundation for distinct Families, to set up each by themselves; hence one Man was to have but one Wife at once, nor would ever have had occasion for a second, if Man's Apostacy had not opened a Door for Mortality to break in upon him; and this the Prophet argues from God's making but One, *Mal. 2. 15.* So that if this Order be not upheld, either Mankind must cease, or Mankind must degenerate into the State and Order of *Brutes*, which is altogether disagreeable.

2. THESE are the most Necessary, as well as principal Parts of a Family. I do not say, that there can be no Family without these; the Death of one of these doth not necessarily dissolve a Family, tho' it doth mutilate it; nor is it compleat where this Relation is not. It was the first reason of making Families, and had Man continued in his Integrity, it would have been necessary; whereas, whether the other were not introduced by the Apostacy, may afford matter of consideration.

IN the further Prosecution of the Duties between these, we are to take Notice, that of all the Orders which are unequals, these do

come nearest to an Equality, and in several respects they stand upon even ground. These do make a Pair, which infers so far a *Parity*: They are in the Word of God called *Yoke-fellows*, and so are to draw together in the *Yoke*. Nevertheless, God hath also made an imparity between them, in the Order prescribed in His Word, and for that reason there is a Subordination, and they are ranked among unequals. And from this we may observe some Duties that are *mutual* or common between them, and others that are *proper* to each.

(1.) THE *Mutual* Duties are such as belong to each equally, by vertue of the Covenant Relation they stand under: And are more especially such as these,

1. *CONJUGAL Love*. We formerly considered, that Love being said to be *the fulfilling of the Law*, it is in that respect common to every Relation that is placed between Men. Nevertheless this Love is specify'd, according to the Nature of the Order Persons are in; that therefore which belongs to Married Persons is *Conjugal Love*; which is therein distinguished from that which is due to any other Relation whatsoever. There is also a *special Love*, which comprehends the whole Duty of the Husband to his Wife, in all the parts of it; and is put in contradistinction to the Submission, which expresseth the whole Duty of the Wife, *Col. 3. 18, 19.* But this Conjugal Love is *Mutual*, and is the proper Cement of this Relation: And it is enforced from that Conjugal Union, by which they become One Flesh: And tho' this Oneness be not *Natural*, but *Voluntary*, yet it is the nearest relative Conjunction in the World, and on that account it requires the intimatest Affection; and if it be rightly made, it follows from a Preference that these have, each of other in their hearts, above all the World, on account of this Relation: For which reason it is compared to Love between Christ & his Church, *Eph. 5. 25, &c.* *Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it*—And the true Comfort which is to be hoped for from this Relation, must derive from this Love, without which it will prove to be, of all the most unhappy.

2. A *special Care and Tenderness one of another*. And this follows from the Love now mentioned, and is indeed the end and use of it: And in this they ought with an holy emulation, to strive which shall outstrip the other. They are to be Helps one to another, and this Helpfulness is equally incumbent on them; and there are many things wherein they are to express this Helpfulness of theirs, which I shall not distinctly insist on. There is a *study and care*, to please one the other, which belongs to them in common: Hence that in *1 Cor. 7. 33, 34.* They should, so far as may be without sinning against God, endeavour to give each other *Content*, that they may fortify and preserve Amity and Sweetness in their whole Conversation; remembering that by Marriage they are made inseparable, and cannot without Sin, at least on one side, be put asunder, or depart
 one

one from the other. Hence they ought to study each others Tempers, and prudently accommodate themselves thereunto, so as not to irritate the Corruption that is in them; to bear with each others Infirmities, Natural or Sinful, considering themselves as the frail Children of fallen Adam; and making the Allowances which they stand in need of having made to them: To chuse the fittest Seasons to Reprove each other, for things which their Love and Duty calls for; and use the greatest meekness in the application of them: Such was that of *Abigail* to her Churlish *Nabal*, *1 Sam. 25. 36, 37.* They should be careful of each others Health: And carry to one another with greatest Tenderness in Time of Sickness, expressing a very peculiar Compassion. They are to be very tender of each others Reputation; not only to bear, but also to cover and not discover any thing, which may render them a reproach to others; and this either by silence when it may be kept secret, or by the best and most candid Interpretation, when it cannot otherwise be hidden.

3. A Mutual endeavour to promote each others Eternal Salvation. To do all they can to help one another to Heaven; and in nothing can they equally shew their best Love. Considering they have but a little while to converse together in this Life, they should do their utmost to be Instrumental, that they may meet and dwell together in the Kingdom of Glory, where their Love shall be perfect. And for this end, they should be to each others *Patterns of Piety*, and by their Exemplary Religious Carriages to stir up an holy Emulation between them; to call upon and quicken each other to the Fear of God; and freely to communicate their Experiences, and to be much in Secret Prayer to God for one another, That God would Bless them indeed, and make them partakers in His Love; and Travail in Birth for their Conversion and Salvation: And all this is intimated in that, *1 Cor. 7. 16. For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?*

4. A joint Interest in governing the rest of their Family. If God in his Providence hath bestowed on them Children or Servants, they have each of them a share in the government of them; tho' there is an inequality in the degree of this Authority, and the Husband is to be acknowledged to hold a Superiority, which the Wife is practically to allow; yet in respect of all others in the Oeconomical Society, she is invested with an Authority over them by God; and her Husband is to allow it to her, and the others are to carry it to her as such: Touching Children, the letter of the Command expresseth it; and it is urged elsewhere with Emphasis, as we formerly observed: And as to Servants, the Metaphorical and Synecdochical usage of the words *Father* and *Master*, heretofore observed, implys it; for tho' the Husband be the Head of the Wife, yet she is an Head of the Family.

(2.) LET us proceed to the Duties which are Proper to each of these Correlates, or belong to the Husband as he is Superiour, and the Wife as Inferiour. That there is such an inequality fixed by the Divine Precept, the Word of God abundantly testifies; how far this is augmented by the Apostacy, (as is intimated in *Gen. 3. 16. And thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee,)* I shall not now enquire; only observe, that it is become more grievous by reason of the sinful Frame befallen both, which makes the one Imperious, and the other Impatient of having any restraint: Nevertheless, this Order was placed from the Creation; and appointed by the Law of special Government, and therefore the Apostle argues it from Reasons fetch'd from the Order of Creation, as well as the Apostacy, *1 Tim. 2. 13, 14. For Adam was first formed then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression. And we are acquainted, that the Reason of the Woman's Creation was the supply of Man's Need and Comfort, Gen. 2. 18.* So that altho' it be Arbitrary, whether this Woman will accept of this Man for her Husband; yet in case she doth so, she in so doing takes him in that Relation which carries such a Superiority in it, and consequently engageth herself to carry it to him as so: For this belongs to the Terms of the Marriage Covenant. Let us then take an Account of these severally;

1. THE Husband's Duty as Superiour, is in Scripture called *Love*, by way of eminency and speciality; and therefore the Precept laid on them, is every where expressed by this Term; as *Eph. 5. 25. Col. 3. 19.* and elsewhere: And for the intenseness of it, it is resembled to the Love of Christ to his Church; and it is unquestionable, that the Spirit of God useth this word to intimate that he ought to manage all his Authority in all respects, so as to express the entireness of his Love to her; and not under pretence of Authority, to forget that she is the nearest Companion that he hath in the World, and is his second Self; so the Apostle argues, *Eph. 5. 28, 29. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies: he that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.* And tho' if the Wife finds her Husband not so Kind, as she would Rationally expect, she ought to acknowledge it a fruit of the Apostacy, and bear it as a Consequent of Sin, yet this is no excuse to him. Now from hence there are these Duties more especially belonging to the Husband,

1. HE ought to shew a singular Tenderness, considering her as the weaker Vessel. Thus he is directed, *1 Pet. 3. 7. Women are usually attended with more bodily Infirmities than Man; and peculiarly in breeding, bearing and nursing Children, which draw forth not a little of their sinful Impatience; and a great deal of bearing and forbearing is necessary to be used on the Husband's part; and the rather, because*

because they may read their own Sin in it, and ought to adore the Sovereignty of God in making this difference; and to acknowledge themselves to be instrumental, in much of the Trial which they meet with.

2. HE ought carefully to maintain her Honour and Authority in the Family. He is to give her Honour, 1 Pet. 3. 7. And indeed, He doth but consult his own Honour in so doing; for her Credit redounds to him: And particularly to see that her Place be maintained in the Family, and that both Children and Servants pay her the due respects, who are too apt to despise her, and will trample on her Authority, if they see themselves countenanced by him. How tender was Abraham of Sarah's Authority, when despised by Hagar, Gen. 16. 5, 6. He ought to be more peculiarly severe in bearing testimony against Contempt shewn to his Wife, because her wrong belongs to him to right.

3. In sum, HE ought to carry himself to her, so as in all things to approve himself worthy to be her Head. The Spirit of God by the Apostle, puts this title upon him, Eph. 5. 23. *The Husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and the Saviour of the body.* And this Comparison affords matter of suitable Instruction to the Man, how he ought to carry himself in his Place. The word *Head*, is not only used as a Note of Superiority, as it is very frequently in the Book of God; but being a comparison taken from a thing Natural, it carries in it Instruction about the Nature of this Superiority, and Way in which it is to be used, by all Persons to whom it is attributed: And there are more especially these Three Things pointed at in it;

1. TO shew a singular Wisdom & Knowledge in his whole Conduct. It is true, There is Duty from the Correlate, arising from the Relation it self, which obligeth the Conscience, tho' the Subject of it be defective in the discharge of the Duties arising from it: Hence that in, 1 Pet. 2. 18. *Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.* The reason whereof is of equal force in other Orders, because it intends the Connection which God hath made in the Precept, between the Relation and the Duties; and both the Relate and Correlate, are accountable to God for their demeanure; but still the Duty abides on Men in every Relation, to carry themselves worthy of it, and that is by acquainting themselves with the Duties of the Relation, and practising a careful Conformity thereunto. Now it is the Prerogative of the Head, in the Body Natural, to be the Seat of the Understanding, which it is to employ and apply for the right Conducting of the whole Body. And if the Husband would maintain his Superiority, he ought to study to excel in Wisdom and Prudence: And how shall he be a leader to his Wife in ways of Discretion or Piety, if he doth not excel in these Gifts? It is their Duty, 1 Pet. 3. 7. *To dwell with them according to Knowledge.* But how shall they do this, if they have it not? He ought therefore to do as the

Good Man is Characterized, Psal. 112. 5. *To guide his Affairs with discretion.*

2. TO use singular Care, in providing things meet for her. Tho' the Head be principal part of the Natural Body, yet it is a Constituent part of the Body, and hath therefore a Sympathy with it, and cannot but be careful for it; and its great Contrivance is for the Comfort of it; and keeping off of Injuries from it. As therefore it belongs to the Man to lay out his Providence, and Endeavours for the good of his whole Family, so more particularly & eminently for his Wife, who is more closely united to him, by special Bonds of Propinquity than any other Member of it: Hence that, Eph. 5. 29. *For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it.* He should therefore always be contriving and laying himself out for her Comfort, that she may not want any thing that is needful for it, that comes within his Ability, to do for her.

3. TO lead and guide her with Pious Counsel, and a Godly Example. He ought to use his Superiority, as with tenderness, so with greatest Reason. The Head is to guide the Body, and order it's Affairs, as it is it's own body; and as the Husband hath a Duty of Conducting his Wife, so he ought to do it, with that which may command her, as she is a Cause by Counsel, where-in there is a manifest difference between the thing used in the Comparison, and the Subject to which it is applied. We find such a Title put on the Husband, Prov. 2. 17. *The guide of her youth:* which implies a power of direction. Nevertheless, He must remember, that it is for God, and for his Glory that he ought to do it; and for that reason he is to require nothing of her, but what is agreeable to the revealed Will of God: As he is her Head, he ought to be able to back his Counsels with the Word of God; and lay before her a sufficient Conviction of her Duty, to comply with him therein; for he hath no Authority of Compulsion; tho' there are ways in which he may lawfully let her see his dislike of her refusing to comply with his just demands of her: And to give force to these, he ought to go before her in Exemplary Love and Godliness; and let her see, that he requires nothing of her, but what he is willing and ready to do, so far as it belongs to him in his Order and Relation. Thus in general we have the Husband's Duty. And as to particulars, I refer you to such as handle the several Cases depending.

2. THE Duty of the Wife, as she is Inferiour, is frequently in Scripture called *Submission*: See Eph. 5. 22. Col. 3. 18. The word used there is a general word, and signifies to be ordered under another, or to keep Order, being a Metaphor from a Band of Souldiers, or an Army; and comprehends under it the Duty of Inferiours, in every Rank and Order which God hath placed them in; and is therefore applied to Children in respect of their Parents; the Wife in regard of her Husband, Servants in respect of their Masters, and Young Persons with regard of such as are Aged, 1 Pet. 5. 5. And hence the

the Submission here required, is not to be measured by the Notation or import of the Word it self, but by the Quality of the Relation to which it is applied. It is therefore to be in general observed, that this Submission is not the same with the Subjection required of Children to their Parents, or the Obedience due from Servants to their Masters. But as there is such a subordination intended in it, as requires the Wife to testify her Acknowledgment of her Husband's Superiority; so it is such as is to be managed so by the Husband, as that his Wife may take delight in it, and not account it a Slavery, but a Liberty and Privilege; and the Wife ought to carry it so to her Husband, as he may take Content in her: And whatsoever is contrary to this, and is rendered grievous to either Party, deriveth not from the Precept, but from the Corruption there is in the Hearts of Men. Accordingly, the special Duties incumbent on Wives in this Relation, are such as these: (For I here meddle not with those that belong to them under the Seventh Command, but refer them thither.)

1. SHE ought to entertain in her Heart, a reverend Respect for her Husband. This must be the root and spring of all that Subjection which she pays to him, else she will either not pay it, or do it hypocritically. This therefore is required as a thing carefully to be looked after, Eph. 5. 33. *Let the wife see that she Reverence her Husband.* Therefore the word firstly signifies a Fear, and is of an Active signification: It sometimes is used for that Horror which seizeth a Person upon the apprehension of some great Danger Threatning: But for the most part it is improved in the New-Testament, to express the Reverence which an *Inferiour* conceiveth for a *Superiour*, on account of that Superiority, and is applicable to all the Relations of this kind: It is not a slavish Fear, which is nourished with hatred or aversion; but a noble and generous Fear, which proceeds from Love. The Wife ought to have such an Honourable respect for her Husband, as should make her to be very careful that she offer nothing to him, that should justly offend him; but count it her Conjugal Happiness to enjoy his kind and tender respects for her: And this she ought to maintain by a due consideration of the Duty of the Relation: Tho' the observation of his worth and good demeanure is a good help to fortify it, and the consideration that the Happiness of the Married Estate hath a main dependance on the good Correspondence between them.

2. TO study & use all lawful ways to oblige him. To do any thing Sinful for this, is too much, and will displease God, whom we ought to Reverence more than any Creature whatsoever: But there is an Art or Cunning which is Commendable, viz. To acquaint our selves with the Temper or Disposition or Inclination of one whom we have a peculiar respect for, and wisely to accommodate our selves to it; than which there can be nothing in Ordinary Conversation more obliging: And this is proper in the Case before us; this must not be to nourish any wicked way in them, which is another thing.

3. TO barken to him, in his lawful Counsels and Demands. It is true, as was formerly observed, if a *Superiour* advise, or Command one that is Subject to him, any thing which is contrary to the revealed Will of God, he is to refuse to do it, observing a suitable decorum in the manner of the refusal; and the reason is, because God is *Superiour* to both, and all the Duties of all Relations are prescribed and bounded by his Command: But in other things there is a Duty of Compliance; though a Wife certainly hath greater liberty of debating the Prudence of the thing: However, both respect and common Interest oblige her carefully to Consult him in every matter of weight; to take his Direction in things of common concern between them; and in things indifferent to chuse rather to gratify his Demands, than please her own Humours; and to be sure to do no unnecessary thing, which she knows will offer Provocation to him.

4. TO take delight in his Honour, as her own, & use means to uphold it. The Husbands Honour is her Credit, and she then Honours her self, when she most Credits him: It is therefore one piece of the Commendation of the *Vertuous Woman*, Prov. 31. 23. *Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.* She ought therefore to carry it in all things among Men, so as that Men may not for her foolish Behaviour, reflect on her Husband; as they will certainly do, if she be guilty on that Account. Nor ought she to indulge any thing to his disrepute; but if she knows any thing that would be so, to use all Means that it may not take the Air.

5. TO rest satisfied with, and take Content in his Condition. This Union was made upon Choice; and if she engaged in it deliberately, she knew his Condition in this World, and ought to be willing to be content with the Providence of God in all the Changes that may come over it. A Friend is born for the Day of Adversity; much more then, such a Friend as this: If therefore Providence frown on him, her Duty is to bear with him, and use endeavours by Cheerfulness and Counsels to Encourage him; and wheresoever God shall call him to have his Lot, to be a cheerful Companion to him, and Comfort, &c.

6. TO use Fidelity and Prudence, in managing the outward Concerns of the Family. It belongs to the Character of a *Vertuous Woman*, Prov. 31. 11. *The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.* She ought therefore to have an inspection over the Household Affairs, to see that nothing be wasted, or prodigally spent; that all have what is suitable in due season; that her Deeds of Charity be measured suitably; and nothing of any great moment disposed of, without his Knowledge and Approbation: And this belongs not only to such as are Poor, but to every Woman that will take this Relation upon her, let her be never so Noble: For doubtless, this Paragraph in the Chapter, contains a Description of one that is fit to make a Wife for a Prince.

U S E. WE may learn from the Premises, A good Rule for the making of Happy Families. Let such as stand in this Relation one to another, study and practice more these Duties, and endeavour to out-do each other in that Conjugal Love, and the regular expressions of it; and wait upon God for his Grace to help them in so doing. This is the way to have Piety, & Peace and Prosperity to dwell under such a Roof: For there God will command the Blessing. And if such do meet at any time with a Cross in this Relation, let them examine themselves whether there hath not been some notable Defect in these regards, and be humbled before God for it. This will be the way to recover His Favour, & to live together as the fellow-Heirs of Eternal Life.

[JULY 27. 1703.]

SERMON CLXXIX.

[2.] **III.** proceed to consider the Relation

not only a *Tribe*, but also a *Nation*, as we find it often used in Scripture; but in a more strict and appropriate sense, it intends a *Private Society* of Mankind, which is *Domestick*; to the compleatness whereof there are Three Orders combined, Husband and Wife, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants: Which Orders being different, there are the diverse Rules which belong to them: And because no Society can consist or attain the End of it, without Order, and every Member of it ought to be obliged to Order; there must be Duties answerable lying upon them: And this the very Light of Nature will give Testimony unto: Hence that, 1. Tim. 3. 4. *One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.* But these Duties must hold a subordination to, and not either clash with, or encroach upon those that are proper to *Publick Societies*, or *Civil Government*.

3. **THAT** such a *State of Servitude*, as is *Oeconomical*, was incompatible with *Man's State of Integrity*. For altho' there would have been inequality among Men, necessary to the