


be injuriously treated, he may make his Orderly application to the Civil Magistrate, whose Duty it is impartially to afford him a redress, upon a clear Proof of it: Nevertheless, he is not to rise up against his Master; or by any way, take his own Revenge upon him: And if he have no door open to obtain regular Succour from Men, he ought with Patience to commit it to God, who hath said, that He is the Avenger of all such.

U^s E. LET all such as stand in this Relation, *Take heed to themselves, that they do serve God thus in it, as they hope to give up their Account with Joy another Day.* Let *Masters* consider,  they have a Master in Heaven, who will reckon with them ere long; and if they have abused their Power, or neglected their Duty, it will be ill for them. And let *Servants* remember, That whatsoever Entertainment their Service finds from their Earthly Masters, God will accept and crown their Faithfulness in it; and if they have served Christ, and done it as to him, great will be their Reward in Heaven: And how hard soever it may at present seem unto them, yet when Christ shall say, *Well done good and faithful Servant,* it will never Repent them.

[AUGUST 24. 1703.]

SERMON CLXXX.

II. **W**E are now to pass over to the consideration of those Orders which are specially called *Political*: The former were more *Private*, these more *Publick*, and refer to the larger Societies and Combinations of Men. For there are no sorts of orderly Societies among Men, but what are under the obligation of mutual Relative Duties. And here are Two sorts of Relations, which may come under our Cognizance; the one ariseth from the *Condition* of Men, whom God's Providence ordereth to dwell in such Societies; the other from the *Order* which God hath set up and appointed to be maintained in such Communities, for the well-governing and regulating of their Affairs; for both of which there are Precepts given in the Word of God; and may be a little enquired into.

[I.] **T**H^ER^E is that Relation & Order which ariseth from the Condition of Men, whom God's Providence disposeth of to dwell in such Societies. And that which I shall only insist on, and which is more peculiarly taken notice of in the Holy Scriptures, is that which is grounded on Old Age and Youth. There are in all Places, some that are *Aged*, and others that are *Young*; and both of these in plenty are promis'd to a People whom God will bless, *Zech.* 8.4, 5. Now, tho' there is not a special Relation between these, so as to give the one a right of Jurisdiction over the other; yet from the Condition that each is in, there is a Civil Respect due from the one to the other; and God hath Commanded an agreeable *Deference*; and the

light of Nature discovers it to be highly Rational; and the very Heathen Moralists, have taken notice of, & prescribed Rules concerning it. We may here only take a brief and general Account of this:

(1.) **A**N^CI^EN^T Persons ought to carry it towards them that are *Younger*, so as to adorn their Age. Their whole Conversation ought to be such as may Commend them to their *Seniors*, and command a venerable respect from them. They should adorn their gray Hairs with those Vertues which do every way become them. Tho' Age it self hath a respect due to it, yet if it is not becomingly managed, it may be unhappily exposed to Contempt: We therefore have that Observation of the Wise Man; *Prov.* 16. 31. *The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness.* We have a summary Account of the Exemplary Vertues, which they ought to adorn their Lives withal, *Tit.* 2. 2. *That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.*

1. **S**O^BE^R, or *Vigilant*: But it is frequently used for *Sobriety*; and that not only in respect of the *Body* but of the *Mind*. And it is not to be restrained to Meats, Drink, Apparel, for that comes afterward; but it comprehends the whole Department, and consists in a vigilant Care to keep a guard upon all their Words and Carriages, that they do not exceed the bounds of Sobriety; not bragging of themselves, or allowing themselves in any manner of Excess.

2. **G**R^AV^E. The Word signifies one of a Modest, seemly and venerable Carriage: The Word is translated *Honest*, *Phil.* 4.8. But it properly signifies a *well compos'd Carriage*, such as may command Respect from others; and is opposed to that which is *light*, and *frivolous*, and *juvencular*: And nothing more unbecoming Old Age, than *juvenile Levity*; and is as ominous as Flowers in *December*, and greatly Prejudiceth Youth.

3. **T**E^MP^ER^AT^E. The Word signifies one that *keeps his Mind*; and is often used for *Sobriety* in general, and is comprehended in that; but because in nothing are Men more endangered to lose the use of their Understanding, then in Excess in Drinking, it is often restrained to that; and though it's comprized in the first, and therefore the *Greeks* had a feast which they called *Nyctalia*, because no Wine was drank in it; yet the Apostle puts it in, because it is a Vice that Old Men are too easily allured to, under pretence of Age & Infirmitie, which needs Relief; and there is nothing more scandalous than an *Old Drunkard*.

4. **S**O^UN^D in *Faith, in Charity, and in Patience*: i. e. to carry themselves so, as to give all possible demonstration of their Soundness in these Graces, by the exercise of the Duties which refer to them. The word *Sound* is a Metaphor taken from the Health of the Body; and it intends *Sincerity*, which is Evangelical Integrity; and these Three Graces comprehend under them, the whole of a Christian's Life: By *soundness in Faith* we are to understand, adhering to the

Doctrines

Doctrines or Truths of the Christian Religion, without wavering; holding fast the foundation, and not suffering themselves to be imposed on, and led away with every wind of Doctrine, to be able to say as *Paul*, 2 Tim. 4. 7. *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.* By *soundness in Charity* is intended, *firmness in New-Obedience*, which is called *Charity* or *Love*; and is to be the discovery of a sincere Faith, *Gal. 5. 6.* And it comprehends in it, all the Duties required in both the Tables of the Moral Law; to be faithful and constant in the Duties of Worship towards God, and Righteousness towards Men; and therein to give an Example of a Sober, Honest and Godly Life, to the Rising Generation. And by *soundness in Patience* is to be understood, a submissive and cheerful bearing of all sorts of Afflictions, which they meet, and to which Old Age is incident. And herein they are to go before the Younger, that they may see the shine of these things in them, and learn by them, and be possess'd with a suitable Veneration of them; and set before them a convincing demonstrative of the reality of the Christian Religion.

(2.) IT is the Duty of *Younger Persons* to pay to the Aged, a respectful and submissive Carriage. And this is to be paid to them both in Words and Gestures: And there is a proportionable decorum to be observed in this, according to their Age; and this is peculiarly to be observed by such as are in their Minority; tho' there is a deference to be had to it, in the several distributions that are given of the Ages of Men: And here we may observe,

1. THAT *there is a respect due to Old Age for it self.* It is a general Rule under this Fifth Command, that whatsoever Order God hath put Men in, there is a Duty incumbent on the Correlate, which ariseth from the Order it self; tho' Persons will better deserve Acknowledgment in it, if they carry it according to the Will of God in that Order; yet for the sake of it, and as long as they bear it, it is not to be neglected: Tho' in some Orders which Persons are put into by Consent and Contract, Men may forfeit both the Order and the Honour belonging to it: But Old Age is a thing which ariseth not from Men's Choice, but God's Providence, and carries in it a dark adumbration of God's Eternity, who therefore styles himself, the *Ancient of Days*, *Dan. 7. 9.* That is therefore given as a Precept, referring to Old Age it self, *Lev. 19. 32. Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I am the Lord.* Under which Expressions are comprized many particular things. To be sure, besides an inward Respect, (without which all outward Reverence is but a Mockery,) there is an external Behaviour by which our acknowledgment of their Years is to be paid: And to this belongs Children's rising up to them, and standing uncover'd in their Presence; hearkning to them when they speak to them, and

giving them respectful Answers; bearing with their Infirmities, and not insulting over them.

2. WHERE *Old Age* and *Piety* are met in any, *there is a great Regard to be had to such venerable Antiquity.* And here I shall only mention Three things;

1. THEIR *Grave Discourses* are observantly to be hearkned unto. Not that we are to pin our Faith upon it; but we may expect from such to have well weighed and experimented things communicated to us: Younger ones therefore ought to allow them the liberty of Communicating themselves, and not interrupt them, as thinking themselves Wiser. *Elihu* tells us how he behaved himself among those Old Men in their talk; he attended diligently, and carried till they had done, *Job 32. 6, 7, 11, 12.* If therefore at any time we dissent from them, it should be with great Modesty of Expression.

2. THEIR *Counsel* is to be asked in matters of great moment. Men of Years and Observation, are most fit to give sound Advice, whose Experience hath greatly encreased their Practical Knowledge, and whose Years have brought their Judgments to more of maturity and solidity. For Young Persons to confide in their own Fancies, is folly and arrogance; and for them to relinquish the Ancient, and apply to those that are their Contemporaries, argues Contempt and forebodes Mischiefs; this was *Rehoboam's* Ruin, *2 Chron. 10. 8.*

3. THEIR *good Example* is to be acknowledged and imitated. God hath made it their Duty to set a Pattern of every Vertue before the Younger, who are to bless God for them, and to be followers of them, both while they are alive, and when they are dead, as we are exhorted, *Heb. 6. 12.* This therefore is one advice the wise Man gave to his Son, *Prov. 2. 20. That thou mayst walk in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous.* And if there were more of this spirit in our Young Ones; the Apostacy would not make such fearful advances, as it doth among us, whilst the present Generation decies the holy Zeal of their Ancestors, pretending to know more than the Ancients.

[2.] WE pass over to the Consideration of that Order which God hath set up, and appointed to be maintained in such Societies, for the well-governing and regulating of their Affairs. Now these Societies come under a double consideration, viz. *Civil* and *Sacred*; the one referring to the Government of the *Commonwealth*, the other of the *Church*.

CONCERNING both of these, we may in general observe, That the Power or Authority which some have over others; and the consequent Subjection which those others owe to them, Personally considered, doth not derive *Naturally* but *Providentially*: Nevertheless, the Light of Nature or right Reason, will abundantly tell us, that wheresoever there are Societies of Men, made so, either occasionally, or by Combination, there must be Order: And when we consider the State into which

Mankind

Mankind are fallen by reason of the Apostacy, this Necessity is augmented, because else all would certainly run into Confusion, and end in Ruin: And tho' the good Success of this depends on the over-ruling Influence of God, yet he manageth His Ordinary Providence in the way of Means. Now these Societies are *Civil* or *Ecclesiastical*; and because there is a great difference between these two, in more respects than one, it is necessary that they be considered separately and distinctly.

I. A *Civil Society* is a Combination of Men, for the carrying on of their Temporal or Secular Concerns for the outward Felicity or well-being of the whole, and every part of it: In the Administration whereof, there is necessarily supposed a Civil Government; and consequently, such as are to *Govern*, and such as are to be *Governed*. And here also it may be enquired;

Quest. *WHETHER Civil Governments were consistent with the State of Integrity?* Nor is this Case so easily resolved, as that which was formerly moved, concerning the *State of Servitude*; inasmuch as that is apparently the fruit of the Curse; whereas that of *Civil Subjection* seems not to be so, tho' the disorder which Sin hath brought in it, hath too much rendred it so eventually. I shall only here observe more generally,

1. THAT *Civil Humane Societies have their rise & reason from the Nature of Man*: Some therefore have thought it a good comprehensive Description of Man, that he is *sociabilis*, Man was made a Sociable Creature; and hath a natural disposition to hold converse with his own Kind: Nor doth this inclination arise, merely from the necessity of his lapsed Estate for mutual support and defense, though that hath augmented the necessity of it; but it was put into the Constitution of Man, and he sought it, not only by Instinct, as Brutes do with their Kind; but the Exercise of Reason, and the consideration of the Relations which God at first constituted between Mankind, and the Affection put into them towards their Correlates therein. It is therefore a brutish opinion of those, who would have Men, if their Integrity had remained, to have lived in the Fields & Woods after the manner of Wild Beasts, whereas it is evident that Men do seek familiarity with such whom they have the least necessity for.

2. THAT *the Order of Superiority, and Inferiority, was well enough consistent with Man's perfect State at first*. God did therefore put Mankind into such an Order, as soon as he made him, and gave him with it the Law of special Government. The Fifth Command was, as well as any other, a Precept of the Moral Law, and engraven upon Men's Hearts; and that, not merely as a reserve, after Relief against the Misery of his fallen State, but for his Practice in his State of Uprightness. The Order of Husband and Wife took Place as soon as God had made Man Male and Female, and brought them together: And had they continued in that Estate to have had Children, the Duties of that Relation would have been actu-

ally incumbent on them. Nay, the different degrees in Glory, are no obstruction at all, to the Perfection of the blessedness of every one of the Saints.

3. *HAD Man abode in his Primitive State, there would have been some naturally Superiours to others*. If Adam had lived till this Day, he would have been the Head of all his Posterity, and they would have owed to him, a suitable Subjection; and if Families descending had gone forth to People other Places, there would have been the same Relation between the Father of such a Family, and all the descendents from him; for this natural Relation would not have ceased, nor the Duties depending on it.

4. *AS Man's Happiness could not be impeded, so God's Glory might be Celebrated by Civil Orders*. A well ordered Government hath in it an Adumbration of God's Governing the World; and tho' there were no need of it to restrain Men's Lusts, yet it might tend to the Ornament of the Universe, and be a trial of our Obedience to this Precept: And we have good footing in the Word of God, that God hath placed an Order between the very Angels of Light. And it is Rational to conclude, that as the World had begun to be Peopled, there would of necessity have been a multiplying of Civil Societies, and these distinct, for the upholding of Civil Commerce & Amity. They are therefore in a great Error, who tell us, that so many Kingdoms or Common-wealths as there are in the World, so many Testimonies of Divine Displeasure; for tho' some of the Reasons of the Necessity of it are so, yet Government it self is not.

TOUCHING the *Moral Necessity* of Civil Government, with respect to Man's *sinful State* since the Fall, it is evident from Human Reason, and Philosophy pleads for it by Arguments fetch'd from this Topick, as being ignorant of any other State of Mankind Antecedent to it: So that the Precepts given for it in the Word of God, are not purely Positive or Instituted; but are built upon Moral Principles, and are all of them reducible to *One Head*, viz. *The deep interest which a Civil Happiness hath in it*. And tho' Men's Corruptions have too often abused it to a contrary issue, yet the blame of that is not in Government it self, but in the Instruments by whom it is managed; and it is frequently a Judgment with which God punisheth the grievous Provocations given Him by a sinful People: Hence that, *Hos. 13. 11. I gave thee a king in my anger, and took him away in my wrath*. But if it were not for this, there would be no living together for Mankind, but Humane Societies must disband; Murders, Adulteries, Rapine, and all manner of Oppressions would rage; and there would be less of Order in the Habitable World, than in Hell it self. God indeed is able to curb in the Lusts of Men; but he hath seen meet to use and appoint Means for the promoting it, in and with which He doth Co-operate: And among these, that of Civil Government is none of the least: And hence all the Powers are said to be of him, *Rom. 13. 1. Proov*

8. 15, 16. And it is noted as a Judgment upon Israel, *when there was no King in Israel, and Men did what they pleased*, and an inlet to great Tragedies, *Judg. 17. 6. 18. 1.*

AS to the *Form* of Civil Government, there is no one that is determinately fixed upon in the Word of God, to be a common Rule obliging all Communities, to take their Measure by; but it is a *Prudential*, and to be wisely accommodated to the Genius of the Place, and the best probability of attaining of the great End, and the well-being of the whole: And the sorts of it are Three, viz. *Monarchy, Aristocracy, and Democracy*, within which bounds all ought to keep it; so that it neither degenerate to Tyranny on the one hand, nor to Anarchy on the other, either of which is directly subversive of the Ends of Government, and is the Misery of a People which are under them.

AS to the so much Controverted Question, *which of these Forms is best?* If the Enquiry be only, which is so in it self? it is merely *Theoretical*, and more nice than profitable: But if it intend, which is so practically? or with respect to the People among whom it is erected and established, it cannot be absolutely and universally determined; inasmuch as there are differing Circumstances, which may render the one most accommodable for *this* People, and another for *that*; and there is none of them that will be without it's Inconveniences and hazards, whilst it is managed by Men, the best of whom labour of Sin and folly. Tho' it hath been generally thought, that one that is well tempered of all Three, is best suited to maintain Government, in it's due bounds.

IF Enquiry be made concerning the *Rights* of Government; or how the Power of Administration comes to be devolved upon *these* Persons, rather than *others*: This also is as difficult to determine as the former. If we speak of it, *de facto*, the Customs and fundamental Constitutions of Nations are various; and tho' there are general Rules for it in the Word of God, and to be gathered from the light of right Reason; yet the particular and personal determination of it is various. God indeed fixed the supream Government of the Kingdom of Israel, in the House of David, which was Typical; but He made it not a stated Rule for all the Kingdoms and Common-Wealths in the World: It may therefore be by Succession, or by Election, in either of which God over-rules, either for the Felicity or Penalty of a People.

IN *general*, all this is founded in Compact, nor can Conquest it self come to a fixation, so as to establish a well-ordered Government, till there be a Combination: However, then is a Government truly Happy, when it's Rulers are fitted and spirited for their Post: Hence that, *Ecc. 10. 16, 17.*

TOUCHING the *Rule* by which Civil Government is to be administered, it ought not

to be Arbitrary, nor can the Condition of the best of fallen Men bear it; but it is to be by wholesome and just Laws. For it is the Duty of all Rulers to do Justice and Judgment, as we shall afterwards consider; and this cannot be, but where there are fixed and established Laws, by the Execution whereof Men's Rights are to be upheld, and all Iniquity and Unrighteousness to be born witnesses against: And out of doubt, there was a Moral Reason in that Stature which God made for the Kings of Israel, *Deut. 17. 18, 19. And it shall be when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the Priests the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law, and these statutes to do them.*

BUT I come to a more-particular consideration of the mutual Duties belonging to this Order among Mankind. Now the Correlates here, are the *Rulers and Ruled*, or Magistrates and Subjects: And as this is a Relation which God Himself hath ordained, and placed between Men; so there are the Duties incumbent on either Party, which arise from the very Nature of the Relation; and about which Directions are given to us in the Holy Scriptures. For to suppose one of the Correlates to be under Obligation, and the other to be at entire Liberty, is contrary to the very End and Design of all the Relations which God hath put Men in, one towards another. As therefore, it is a Sin in the Subject to deny or withhold his subjection to Rulers, whom God hath in His Providence set over him; so it is no less Sin in the Ruler, to neglect or pervert the Administration of Government, which is for the good and benefit of the Subject.

NOW as in this Order of Men, they are distributed into Governours, and Governed; so there are divers Ranks and Orders among those who share in the Ruling a People: Hence that distribution, *1 Tim. 2. 2. Kings and all in Authority. 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14. Kings & Governours, &c.* And the Administration of Government requires that there be many subordinate Ministers and Officers in Power, both in regard of the Legislative and Executive part of it, who tho' Subject to their Superiors in Power, yet have a Superiority in regard of others; and the meanest Civil Officer hath a claim to this, according to the Authority he is vested withal. But I shall not take these a further, but only in general give Account of the general Duties required by this Command, on both parts.

[OCTOBER 19. 1703.]

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