

ches, and restorers of Paths to dwell in; and their Names shall be had in precious remembrance, when they are dead and gone; and after Generations will have cause to speak of them with an honourable mention, and erect Monuments for them in their hearts, which shall outlast Marble it self.

[ JANUARY II. 1703. ]

## SERMON CLXXXIV.

Secondly, **I**T follows that we proceed to consider the *Duties which Subject owe to their Civil Rulers*. And these may be gather'd from the *former*; the principal and most comprehensive whereof may be briefly considered. Here then,

1. **IN General**, *The Duty of the Subject is to pay all due respect to the Magistrates, according to their Dignity and worth*. And this is a proper and genuine return of acknowledgment, for their laying out of their Authority, for the good of the Subject. We observed, that there are several Orders of Men in the Civil Government, who, tho' every one hath his part, yet have not a like Dignity or Authority in the Government: accordingly, there is a different respect to be paid to them: Hence the Apostle hath such a Remark in, 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14. *Submit your selves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be unto the king, as Supreme; Or unto governours, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers and for the praise of them that do well*. And this is due to them for the sake of the Office they bear, which is honourable; and Government can never obtain it's proper End, unless the Honour due to the Rulers be upheld. If once their Persons come to be despised, their Authority will be trampled on, and all Miseries will ensue thereupon: There is also a respect due to them for the worth of their Persons, when they approve themselves to be worthy Patriots and Fathers to their People: As God is to be thanked for such, so are they to be had in precious esteem, And highly valued for their Works sake. Now the things wherein this respect is to be paid to them, are

2. **MORE Especially** such as these,

(1.) **THEY ought to be much in hearty and earnest Prayer to God for them**. This is indeed a Duty universally incumbent on all *Inferiors*, with regard to their *Superiors*, in every sort of Relation which God hath Ordained to be among Men; and cannot be neglected by them, without bringing Guilt upon themselves, for omitting a necessary Duty. And there are none that do more stand in need of our Prayers, than those who are put into so great Trust; on their right discharge whereof, there are so great Dependences: and not only our Obedience to God, but also our own Interest and deep Concern, for their good Management, will engage us thus to do. Hence we have this Duty strongly pressed on Christians by the Apostle, 1 Tim. 2. begin.

I Exhort therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men: For kings, and for all that are in authority. And yet we know what manner of Rulers they were under the Command of. And there are Three things more peculiarly wherein we should apply our selves to the Throne of Grace in their behalf;

1. WE should Pray, That God would afford to them a *right Spirit of Government*. This is a Gift of God, and He is to be sought unto for it: All have it not, and the want of it will be attended with evil Consequences: Hence we have that, Eccl. 10. 16, 17. *Wo to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning. Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness.* And to this belongs both *Skill, and Discretion*, to know how to order Affairs for the Glory of God and the Welfare of the People. This *Solomon* prayed for in his own behalf, 1 Kings 3. 9. *Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad: for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?* And every Subject should seek it for the Rulers. It is therefore the Commendation of these, 2 Chron. 12. 32. *The children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do.* These are Blessings worth the asking for. And also those *Virtues* whereby they may be disposed rightly to apply these Gifts to the End of them, and so be rendred great Blessings in their Generation; viz. That they may love Righteousness and hate Iniquity; favour the Good, and discountenance the Evil; promote the Interest of the true Religion, and suppress every thing that is contrary either to Piety or Probity: This therefore is specified, 1 Tim. 2. 2. *That we may lead a quiet & peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.* And we find how *David* professed concerning himself, *Psal. 101. 3, — 8. & 75. 2, 10.*

2. WE should Pray, That God would influence them in all their Administrations, to do that which is Right. Their Work is great and difficult, their Temptations are many, and their Discouragements great, and their Mistakes of dangerous Consequence. Their Authority is from God, and they are accountable to Him; and if they provoke Him, they seldom suffer alone. They have Corruption in them, and without Heaven's Aid, they cannot do well; and do therefore stand in need of Prayer to Him, who alone can assist them with His Counsel and Conduct: for He hath said in, Prov. 8. 15, 16. *By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.* And this also is included in the direction about our Praying for such, 1 Tim. 2. 2.

3. WE should Bless God for them, when he Spi-rits and Assists them in their Work, to do that which is Right. Thanksgiving is one essential part of Prayer, and is a proper return of sui-

table acknowledgment to God for Benefits received; and this also is contained in that, 1 Tim. 2. 1. And we do not deserve Good Rulers, if we cannot cordially Thank God for them. God is wont to shew much of His Mind to a People by the Rulers whom he Providentially sets over them. It is recorded as a Token of God's Anger against *Israel*, when He set some over them to be their King, in, Hof. 13. 11. *I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath.* If they had not sinned, He would not have done so; whereas it was in Kindness to them, when he gave to them *David*, a Man after his own heart: Hence that in, *Psal. 89. 20, 21. I have found David my servant: with my holy oyl have I anointed him. With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him.* And the Queen of *Sheba* could make that remark upon her Observation of *Solomon's* great Wisdom and Prudence in his Administering Government, 1 Kings 10. 9. *Blessed be the Lord thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.*

(2.) THEY ought to pay them a singular and cordial Fear. The Wife Man puts those Two together in, Prov. 24. 21. *My son, fear thou the Lord, and the King.* And we have something like it, 1 Pet. 2. 17. *Fear God: Honour the King.* The Honour indeed, as was formerly observed, which is enjoyed in this Command, includes in it all the Duties between every Relation which God hath appointed; but the manner of the Payment of it is to be measured by the Quality of the Relation to whom it is due: Now when God and the King are put together, they do not stand in Co-ordination, for Princes are God's Subjects; but it may intend, That because God hath devolved such Power from Himself upon them, and they bear some dark resemblance of His Government more than other Men, He requires a peculiar Expression of this Fear towards them. This Fear is not to be *Slavish*, (for that can never be Cordial, but such as is attended with Hatred;) but it is to be Free and Liberal. Good Subjects have no cause to dread Righteous Rulers: for tho' they are a Terror to evil-doers, they are a Praise to them that do well, Rom. 13. 3. It is a Fear of Reverence, and should be like that of Good Children to their Fathers: we therefore observed, that they are so called: And this is to flow from an entire Love to them, which makes them afraid to provoke them, and take pleasure in giving them content: And this is to manifest it self, in a suitable demeanour towards them, in keeping a due distance, shewing them all Civil Respect, and avoiding every thing that should look like Contempt: And this respect is due to the Office which they bear: they are therefore called Gods, tho' Mortal ones, *Psal. 82. 6.* And it is certain, that except their Honour be upheld, their Persons will be despised, their Authority trampled upon, and their Government will be vilified.

vilined. And when they carry themselves faithfully in their Station, they command this respect to their Persons; and it is the least acknowledgment that can be paid to them for their good Management, by which every true Subject is made happy. And this respect ought to be paid them, in proportion to the dignity of the Post which they are posted in: Hence that distinction in, 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14. *Submit your selves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governours, as unto them that are sent by him.*

(3.) THEY ought to pay a due Subjection to their Laws & Administrations. We before observed under the Duties of Magistrates; that Two comprehensive ones are, the making of Good Laws, and the Righteous Execution of them; in both of which a main part of the Civil Happiness of any People doth consist. Now that these may attain the End, and a People may be truly Happy in them; there is of necessity a Subjection hereto, to be paid by the Subject; else they will lose their End, and Misery will ensue instead of Felicity. Nevertheless, this matter must be rightly stated, otherwise Men may fall into an Error on one hand or another. That there is a Subjection due, the Word of God acquaints us; and without it, the Ordination of Civil Government among Men, would be vain, and lose the End of it. Now this Subjection or Obedience, hath a respect either to the Laws themselves, or the Administration of them; and with regard to these, there is either Active or Passive Obedience required of the Subject.

[1.] WITH respect to the Laws themselves, They ought to pay *Active Obedience* to those that are *Just* and *Righteous*. As to the Unlimited Obedience which some require, as a matter of Conscience, to all Laws indiscriminately, under the Obligation of the Fifth Command, as if a Man Sinned if he yielded it not, it is a great Error, nor will it be proved from 1 Pet. 2. 13. For by *Ordinance* in that place, is not intended a Law, but a *Magistrate*; and he is called an *Ordinance of Man*, both because the designation of his Person, and limitation of his Power is Humane. Here then observe;

1. THERE are some Laws of Men, which are in themselves Duties; and expressly required by the Moral Law. These we ought to Obey, whether they be a Civil Ordinance or no; because they proceed from the Authority of God, who is our King and Lawgiver, Isa. 33. 22. When therefore these things are required of us by the Magistrate, this doth not make the things themselves more our Duty than before; but they add to the Obligation, because, besides the Divine Precept in regard of the things, there is Lawful Command of Lawful Authority, commanding in God's Name, and by Divine Warrant; so that by Neglect we not only break that particular Command, to which the Duty it self relates, but also the Fifth, which also aggravates the Guilt: Hence that, Rom. 13. 4, 5. *For he is the minister of God to thee for good: But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he*

*beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil: Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.* If he be the Minister of God, and Acts according to His Warrant; not to Obey Him, is to Disobey God, who not only Commands the thing, but also Commands this Obedience.

2. THERE are Laws Prudential; which God hath Authorized the Civil Magistrate to Enact for the Good of the Subject: There is therefore an Active Obedience due unto them by the Divine Precept. There are things which in their own Nature are indifferent, but yet in their Circumstances, are either Expedient, or Inexpedient, and the Publick Benefit or Damage may be concerned either in the Practising or Omision of them by the Subject: Now tho' Man's Liberty in such things is not to be restrained by the meer Pleasure of the Law-giver, when no Good comes by such restraint; yet when the Publick Good is advanced by such Laws, and Damage will arise unavoidably by not making them, it belongs to the Care of Law-makers to provide for such things, by Laws accommodated thereto: So that such Laws must be Obeyed for Conscience sake, because the mind of God is discovered to us by such Circumstances; and they are herein the Ministers of God for our Good: Rom. 13. 2. *Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation.* And tho' we should not so well see the Prudence of them, yet because we may do the thing, or avoid it, without Sin in the matter of it, we ought to comply with it, rather than disturb the Publick Tranquillity.

3. THERE are Laws which are Unjust, and which all the Civil Authority in the World, cannot by their Sanctions, make them to be Just. Such Laws are presumed to be sometimes Enacted by Men in Civil Power, Psal. 94. 20. *Shall the throne of Iniquity have fellowship with thee, which frameth mischief by a law?* For no Man or Men can make that to be Righteous, which God Himself hath determined to be Sin. Now such are all Laws which require such things to be done, which the Moral Law forbids; or prohibit such things, as that doth require. It is therefore certain, that it is a Duty of the Subject to refuse Active Obedience to all such Laws; and the Reason is irrefragable, because they are under a Superior Power, which hath enjoined them on their Peril not to do it: And whatsoever Penalties they expose themselves to, by so doing, they ought to adventure it; as knowing there are greater which they will run themselves into, in case they, for Fear comply. This therefore is the Caveat in this regard given by Christ himself, Matth. 10. 28. *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.* There are some Cases in which Men may certainly with good Warrant, make the reply to these that require and threaten them, which the Apostles did to them, Acts 4. 19. *Whether it be right in*

the sight of God, to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. And it is a vain wheedle for any to say, as some do, The *Lawgivers* must bear the blame, the *Subject* is bound to Allegiance, and is to look no farther: for every one hath a Conscience, and must Obey it, so as to do nothing against the plain Dictates of it, for he must give an Account of himself to God.

[ 2. ] WITH respect to their *Administration*. There is a Submission due from the Subject to these, which brings in the Doctrine of *Passive Obedience*. This Doctrine hath been abused by the bigotted Patrons of that which they call *Non-Resistance* and *Passive Obedience*, to the just prejudice of all Men of Sense, who are not interested. There is indeed such a thing as *Passive Obedience* due from the Subject, but it is not unlimited; and needs Consideration. Here then,

1. IF the *Administration* be Just & Legal, the Subject ought to submit patiently to the Penalty, which he hath deservedly brought upon himself. Nay, He ought to take the Blame to himself, and acknowledge the Righteousness both of the Law, and of those by whose Authority it is executed. The Thief on the Cross could say of himself, Luk. 23. 41. *And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds.* This Profession also Paul made when he stood before the Civil Bar, Acts 25. 11. *For if I be an offender, or have committed any thing worthy of death, I refuse not to die.* If he suffers no more than what he hath deserved, he should Repent of his folly and seek to make his Peace with God, but not to murmur at his Punishment from Men, because they Obey the Will of God in what they do.

2. IN Judgments that are Illegal & Injurious, a particular Person ought to use no Unlawful Means, to save himself from the Execution of them; but commit himself to God, and leave it with Him. Such an one may and ought to Plead his Innocency, and Vindicate himself before the World, in the presence of the Judges; and where there is room for it, Appeal to an higher Court, as Paul did, Acts 25. 11. And sometimes he may call upon God to Vindicate him, as He did, 2 Chron. 24. 22. Nevertheless, he ought not to bear inveterate Malice against his Persecutors, but Die with Stephen's Prayer, Acts 7. ult. *Lord, lay not this Sin to their charge.*

3. IN all well regulated Governments, there is a Power seated, to redress prevailing Male-Administrations, and relieveth the intolerable Disorders, which by reason of them, are destructive to the very End of Government. Not but that something will be amiss, as long as these things must pass thro' the hands of Sinful Men, who labour (even the best of them,) under many Infirmities; but this is to be done orderly, and it in no wise justifies Plots, or Insurrections of Male-contented; for Evil is not to be suppressed with Evil. But then things depend upon the diverse Civil Constitutions, and come not particularly under a Theological consideration.

(4.) THEY ought to maintain, and on all occasions, to signify their Fidelity to them. It hath been a Custom, Time out of Mind, for Subjects

to have Oaths given them, wherein they Swear Allegiance, in which they invoke God to be a Witness of their Faithfulness in performing them: Hence we have that Advice given, Eccl. 8. 2. *I counsel thee to keep the king's commandment, and that in regard of the oath of God.* As to that Question, *How far the Subject's Oath is Binding?* Because it is mutual, and supposeth a Covenant, I shall not undertake here to enter upon it: But this is certain, that Oaths are not things to be dallied withal; and every Person ought to consider, that if he violate this, he thereby lays himself open to the Wrath and Judgments of God. They ought therefore to stand by the Government to which they owe Loyalty, and not to foment Conspiracies, nor to join in with such Male-contented, as are weary of Good Government, and have a hand in contriving the Subversion of it; or join with the Enemies of it, and take up Arms against it, from private Pecks, or supposed Defects in Administration: The best managed Polity, will have such in the bosom of it; yea such as will be the more uneasy under it, because the Administrations are Righteous: And therefore these are put together, Prov. 24. 21. *My son, Fear thou the Lord, and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change.* Nay, They ought cheerfully to take up Arms, when lawfully called to it; and hazard their Lives in the High Places of the Field, in defence of their Rulers and Country: They ought also seasonably to detect and bear a Testimony against all Consultations, which may be on foot, to undermine and overturn the Laws, and Liberties, and Government of the Place where they are Subjects: Hence that brave Speech of Joab, 2 Sam. 10. 12. *Be of good courage, and let us play the men for our people, and for the cities of our God.*

(5.) THEY ought to be cheerful in paying their share for the Support of the Government whereof they are Members. It is a Precept laid down by the Apostle, Rom. 13. 7. *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom.* Which assures us, that there is such a thing due by the Moral Law: and indeed, no Government can be upheld without it. There is an honourable Maintenance due to such Persons as are in Publick Trust, and have the Burden of Government lying upon them, which ought to uphold them in a Post answerably to the Dignity that is put on them: And it is a Disgrace to a People to withhold it from them, argues a sordid and ungrateful Spirit in them, and tends to make the Government it self despicable: And because every one hath a Privilege in the Blessing of Good Rulers, they ought to be concerned in maintaining the Charge of it. There are also many Publick Charges, necessarily arising from many unavoidable Occasions which call for them; and for this there should be a Publick Treasure for the upholding of Alliances, for the supporting of Ambassies, for the Rewarding of well-deserving Persons, for the Encouragement of Schools and Colleges, for the Magazines of War, and Fortification of Places of Defence, for the

carrying

## SERMON CLXXXV.

carrying on of a just War with Injurious Enemies, besides whatever other Emergencies may fall out. It is a great, tho' a common fault, for Subjects to be always crying out of the Intolerableness of Taxes when their own Consciences tell them, that the Providence of God calls for them, and the Precept of God requires it of them: Whereas they ought to acknowledge the hand of God in these things, and be humbled under His Hand, to accept of it as a just Chastizement upon them for their Sin, and seek to Him by Repentance for the removal of it. Tho' if Rulers should become Oppressors, and Fleace their Subjects, only to gratify their own Lusts, or to keep the People Poor, they may well grown under it, and in a peaceable way ask for redress; but when they think, that all that goes that way, is Oppression, and do it grutchingly or deceitfully, they therein provoke God, to make them to experience the difference, between Rulers that love them, and such as hate them. And how many Places in the World, have been Instances of the woful Miseries, which they have justly brought upon themselves, by their woful Parsimony, who have lost Liberty, and Estates and Lives too, because they were not willing to expend a part, for the Preservation of the rest?

THUS, we have taken a brief Account of the most essential Duties between Magistrates and their Subjects; and let it not seem to us as a light matter whether we observe and practise them. Mankind cannot live like Men, unless they combine in Societies, who must Mutually Support each other. Civil Societies cannot uphold this Combination comfortably, without Government; but must become a m. e. R. and either disband, or be a continual Plague one to another. Government cannot be upheld, so as to be for the Civil Happiness of the whole, and the parts, unless the Rulers do Studiously, and Industriously manage themselves according to the Rules of Government justly & righteously, but will turn Oppressors & subvert all. And unless the Subjects carry themselves with all suitable demeanure, towards them who bear Rule over them, they will render themselves and each other, and their Rulers too, Unhappy. Whereas, when in these respects, every one complies with the Duties which belong to them, in Obedience to God, it is the way to be Happy, and render themselves formidable to such as Malign them; yea, this is the way to enjoy God's presence among them, to defend them, and prosper them: And as the former is a witness of God's anger against such a People, so is this His kindness and good will. Let us then seek earnestly to God, to give & continue such a Spirit, and study, in both Rulers & Ruled; and endeavour, each in our Post, to contribute, by our wise and faithful demeanure, to the advancement of this; and Bless God for what of it we find and observe, ascribing it to Him, who is the Author of every good and perfect giving. And let us all heartily subscribe to that, in Psal. 144. ult. *Blessed is the people that is in such a case, yea blessed is the people whose God is the Lord.*

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