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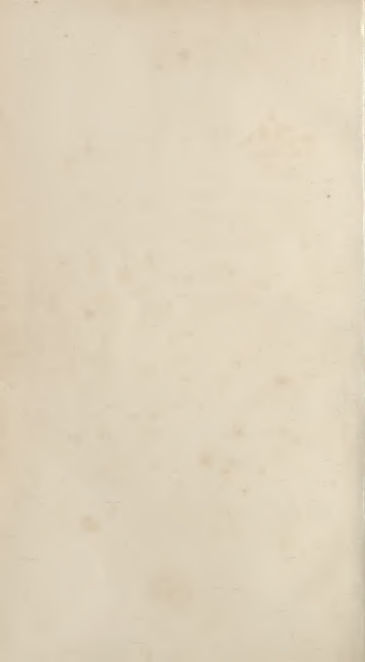
Henry Rott

~~J. W. Campbell.~~

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## Christian's Duty

T O W A R D

K I N G S.

A N D

T H O S E I N A U T H O R I T Y,

R E P R E S E N T E D

I N T W O S E R M O N S,

U P O N

T H E D E M I S E O F G E O R G E I I.

A N D

A C C E S S I O N O F G E O R G E I I I.

By G E O R G E M U I R, Minister of the  
Gospel at *Cumnock*.

G L A S G O W :

Christiana's Diary

K I N G S

MOSE IN AUTHORITY

PRESENTED

IN 2 VOLUMES

BY

AND MISS OF CHURCH

AND

OF CHURCH

OF CHURCH

OF CHURCH

C L A S S I C S

OF CHURCH



CHRISTIAN'S DUTY, &c.  
S E R M O N I.

I T I M. ii. 1, 2.

*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; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.*

**T**HE accession of *George III.* to the *British* throne; is the reason why we have pitched on these words, as a proper subject of your present attention. The relation between kings and subjects being mutual, the duties of that relation must be no less so. Those incumbent on the sovereign, will possibly be recommended by such public teachers, as are more immediately intrusted with the care of his soul. These binding upon the subjects, should, by their respective pastors, be no less represented and enforced. As therefore your instruction becomes more immediately our province, 'tis hoped we'll be forgiven in the present Essay through grace, to point out the new duties; which to us arise from this new relation. Nor, in doing so, can the servants of Christ be said to slide from their proper sphere, since the apostle of the *Gentiles*, in this letter to an eminent minister of the gospel, gave it so particularly in charge. And if it was the duty of pastors so to teach, and of Christians to practise, when kings and those in authority were mostly Heathens, what a forcible argument to it must necessarily arise from the important consideration of our king; and those now in authority, being, by profession, at least Christians.

Though the letter is address'd to *Timothy* alone, you'll easily see, that the duties in our text were not recommended as incumbent exclusively on him; but as equally and indispensibly binding upon all to whom the

knowledge of this Epistle should come. Without any critical remark upon the words at all, this conclusion might be justly form'd; but it will appear with greater evidence, if it's observ'd, that the *υπερ πάντων* may be render'd *of all men*, as well as *for them*. In that point of light, the universal obligation of those duties will bear no dispute, *Paul* being thereby represented as exhorting all men, to make supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, for kings, and for all that are in authority.

Besides, if the benefits arising from a well-constituted government, are diffus'd through all the different orders of men, it must follow, by a most natural consequence, that the proper returns of duty, should, from all quarters, terminate in such governors.

If this appears to be the case, from the light of nature itself, can the consequence, with any tolerable grace, be denied, when the authority of a divine revelation is put into the scale? There, as a duty to the Prince of the kings of the earth, Christians are enjoined to comply with the design of this text.

The nature and importance of the duties under view, are vastly mistaken, if men consider them as appendages only to the Christian practice, what may be neglected with impunity, or slightly discharged with approbation; for our inspired author, in his exhortation to *Timothy*, sets them on the very front, makes them lead the van, and by calling for the performance of them *first of all*, insinuates, that in the estimate of heaven they are duties of the highest consequence, and cannot be neglected, nor performed with indifference, but at the peril, the highest peril, of the unhappy delinquent.

The different terms us'd by our apostle, in expressing this comprehensive duty, serve to show the great extent, as well as necessity of it.

*Supplications* may imply the deprecation of evil, penal, moral, and natural. Deprecating penal evils respects deliverance from the guilt of sin, and from all the wrath incurred

incurred by it, due to it, and consequent upon it, whether as to soul or body, as to time or eternity. Moral evil consists in the disconformity of the heart and practice to the image and law of God, in the pollution and dominion of sin, in what renders men unlike God, unfit for enjoying, incapable of serving him; and deprecation, in that view, has the removal of that evil, as its proper subject. Natural evil again, which may only be deprecated, in how far, to infinite wisdom and goodness seems best, takes in all the afflictions and disasters of life, all that's paining to the body, all that's perplexing to the mind, all that's distressing in a personal or relational regard, and, in one word, it takes in adversity in its whole breadth and length, under whatever colour, of whatever kind, to whatever degree, for whatever duration, and with whatever circumstances, common or peculiar, known or unknown, it may be attended.

*Prayers* may imply the more direct exercise of imploring or petitioning, which is so extensive, according to their circumstances whom it respects, that we cannot possibly condescend on all the particulars of it; All special and spiritual blessings: all purchas'd and promis'd good: all common and distinguishing favour: all outward and inward prosperity: all personal, stational, and relational mercies: grace here, glory hereafter, and every good thing. All these are comprehended in the subject of prayer, without excluding those for temporal benefits; petitions for benefits of a saving kind, seem, from the following context, to have been more especially in the apostle's eye, where we are told, as an argument for enforcing this exhortation, that God *will have all men, i.e.* men of all sorts, kings and those in authority not excepted, *to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, v. 4.* If we take up the matter in this point of light, then prayer is to be made more particularly for converting, renewing, persevering grace, for light and life, love and liberty, peace and pardon, access and acceptance, spiritual riches and righteousness, furniture for

work and warfare, strength and comfort, sealing and establishing influences, with whatever else may be wrapped up in the bosom of the gospel-salvation, as enjoyed or expected by the heirs of promise.

*Intercessions* may be applied, with equal justice, to deprecation or petition, that term signifying properly the interposition of one person for another. According to this view, Christians are called to make the interest of others their own, to interest themselves in it, to exercise a generous concern about it, and to deprecate evil, or implore good, with the sincerity and earnestness the particular case does, or may require. This view of the term is justified from the expletive argument used by *Paul*, to recommend the duty; *for*, says he, *there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*, v. 5. and therefore would he have said, 'tis indispenfibly binding upon all Christians, to make intercession for kings, and for all that are in authority.

*Giving of thanks*, as it stands in this passage, says, that Christians are not only to bear the burdens of others, but to feel with them in their joy and happiness, and to feel in such a manner and measure, as proper sentiments and expressions of holy gratitude shall have place. There is perhaps something more noble, sublime, and disinterested, in giving thanks for others when in prosperous circumstances, than in exercising a concern about them when in adversity. Adversity is some how naturally productive of pain, wherever it's observ'd; from what principle in the irregenerate we will not now say; whereas prosperity discovered in the lot of others, frequently in all, always in most, begets envy and discontent: but the Christian virtue here recommended, will, according to the vigour and exercise of it, be express'd in grateful returns to God, for what excellencies, natural, gracious, or acquired, have place in others, for what happiness is bestowed upon them, for what good is done by them; for what advantages they enjoy, for what usefulness they are capable of, and for every thing, that to such persons  
them-

themselves, is a proper ground of thanksgiving and praise.

These duties are not merely to be thought of, in their propriety, value, and excellence; nor only to be set about in way of purpose or promise; but, if the apostle's words have any meaning at all, they are to be actually perform'd, perform'd instantly, resolutely, and constantly: for the exhortation bears, that *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made*. As Paul was directing *Timothy* how to act in the discharge of his ministry, it will scarce be disputed, that public worship is particularly intended. The obligation upon every Christian, in his personal capacity, to make conscience of these gracious duties, by no means supercedes the necessity of Christians performing them as families, societies, or churches. So far from superceding that necessity, it insinuates, proves, and highly corroborates the important truth.

The apostle was no less in earnest himself, than he would have Christians to be in this matter: he did not express the obligation of these duties with the coolness of a philosopher; but with all the warmth, the pathos and address of the saint, as well as the dignity and mein of a public teacher: *I exhort therefore*, said he. In the preceding chapter he had touched on his favourite theme, the exceeding riches of grace toward his own soul; declar'd the distinguishing efficacy the death of Christ might have on the chief of sinners, and delivered a solemn charge to *Timothy*, enforced by the apostacy of *Hymeneus* and *Alexander* from the faith; and to these interesting facts he referred, as a poignant argument, by the particle *therefore*. Seeing in me, would he have said, there is an example of a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an injurious person, obtaining mercy: seeing the death of Christ lays a foundation of hope, respecting sinners, the chief of them not excepted, you need not despair of succeeding in behalf of others, whatever their characters, their circumstances or provocations; nor must you fail in the discharge of these duties, as you would not

run the risque of being subjected to the same censure with those, who through the neglect of them, have made shipwreck of the faith. Affected with such considerations, he not only told his son in the ministry, what was incumbent on him to practise and preach, but exhorted him to preach and practise accordingly. Exhortation carries something of the pathos in the very nature of it, and supposeth conclusive and persuasive arguments, couch'd or express'd, to obtain men's compliance with it. When therefore our apostle said, *I exhort*, it is emphatically expressive of his earnest and hearty concern to prevail, as well as his reference to the foregoing chapter, is of the arguments by which he meant to succeed.

Had *Paul* address this exhortation in particular, as he did the epistle in general, to *Timothy*, it might have been infered, that the duty was only of a temporary nature, and at most, extended to the age in which *Timothy* liv'd; but, as it is not, *I exhort thee*, which would have wore an exclusive air in it; but, *I exhort*; which is evidently an universal direction: 'tis abundantly plain he intended, that the commanding force of the exhortation should extend to all the members and office-bearers in the church of Christ, until the mystery of God shall be finished.

The subjects of this Christian concern, according to our reading of the text, are not persons of one or another denomination only, but of all denominations; for the apostle enjoins, that the duties under view be perform'd *for all men*. In whatever respects they may differ as to nation, language, kindred, government, principles, or practices, as men there is an undoubted relation, an indissolvable connection, that no distance, no circumstance can render void and null; for God *hath of one blood made all the nations of the earth*; and they having all sprung from one original, and descended from the same common parent, should, in performance of the duties here recommended, act toward each other as brethren, as dear brethren according to the flesh.

Whether, in this exhortation, the apostle means, that Christians should exercise such concern *for all men*, as our translation, with great propriety, bears; or that such concern should be exercised by all men, according to the critical remark offered before, there is no room for dispute, that kings and those in authority, are in a special manner, the subjects in whom the Christian concern, pointed out by our text, should center.

With regard to our late sovereign, of happy memory, *supplications, prayers, and intercessions*, are now no more to be made by us; if it is not for the divine blessing upon such plans of operation as were approved, or begun to be execute under his eye, though, in the infinite wisdom of God, his desire of seeing the speedy and happy issue of them was denied. Though we say, his justly and generally lamented death, supercedes the necessity of *supplications, prayers, and intercessions* for himself, it dissolves not the obligation upon us to give thanks to that God, *by whom kings reign, and princes decree justice*, for the numberless blessings, whereof, to his happy subjects, he was, in the hand of God, the chearful instrument. If no nation under heaven, has enjoyed equal peace, safety, freedom, and outward happiness, with the subjects of the *British* crown, for above thirty three years back, will it not follow, that of all others, *Britons* are obliged, indispenibly obliged, to the exercise of thanksgiving and praise.

A digression here, on the character of that illustrious and royal personage, whose memory must be dear to *Britons* in particular, and protestants in general, would be no less agreeable to me; than acceptable to you; but diffidence of my own ability for such an unequal task, lays me under the painful necessity of leaving you rather to imagine, than hear what I would, was I capable, gladly say. Without meaning, in the least, to exaggerate, if talents for the cabinet or the field, if love to his subjects, veneration for the laws, concern for the protestant interest, charity and compassion, justice and

impartiality, and, in one word, if an unwearied endeavour to diffuse or promote happiness and prosperity; in these, and such as these, constitute the truly royal and princely character, it may, from all I have had access to learn, be justly applied to our late dear and honourable sovereign.

Nor can I help observing the propriety of these lands appearing now in sable weeds; Do we mourn the loss of a friend, a benefactor, a guide, a protector, a father? In him, my brethren, we have lost one who stood and acted toward us in all these endearing relations; whence gratitude, affection, and even decency itself, conspire to justify such expressions of sorrow and distress.

I shall have done with this digression, when I have just put you in mind, that ingratitude to the God of gods, for the last peaceful and benign reign, may justly provoke him to blast our expectations, however promising, respecting the tranquillity and happiness of future years.

My text, as the proper clue to this discourse, would lead me next to point out the present subjects, in whom our *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks*, should particularly meet, our sovereign, namely, and those in authority; but previous to our doing so, the following corollaries from what you have heard, may not be unuseful.

If these things are so, then it follows, that christianity inspires with a truly public and generous spirit. Those whose concern is confined to themselves, or extends not beyond the limits of any particular order of men, or denomination of Christians, may put in what claim to the venerable character they please; but they show to demonstration, how small and how groundless their pretensions. Such pitiful souls were never formed upon the gospel of Christ, and such grovelling creatures deserve not so much as a name amongst his friends.

But from what was said, it is equally plain, that concern for others, which is not express'd by *supplications, prayers,*



*prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks*, whatever it may be in the eye of mortals, weighed in the balance of scripture, it is found wanting, it deserves not the name. Men may talk respectfully of others, and perform many useful services to them; as to princes, they may fight under their banners, sit at their council-boards, carry their orders into execution, and be scrupulously exact in every outward expression of loyalty and esteem, while living in the habitual neglect of the duties prescribed by our apostle, they are held, in the estimate of heaven, as chargeable with the most criminal contempt of the interest of others; whether princes or people.

In fine, From this doctrine it evidently appears, that such a disinterested regard to the happiness of others, claims a principal share in our public solemn worship. As a part of the church of Christ, we should make conscience of keeping the ends of his appointment, by our meeting together, full in view. If our apostle is allowed to have wrote this letter to *Timothy*, under the influence of inspiration, then *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks* for others, must be class'd amongst the ordinances of heaven; consequently must be performed by us with faithfulness and concern, as we would not be found chargeable with neglecting to observe any one of the *all things whatsoever he hath commanded us*. These duties, in our church capacity, are not to be performed as so many words of course, which has too much, and long been our reproach; but with a particular earnestness and fervour, according to the obligation, importance, and necessity of them.

## S E R M O N II.

**T**HOSE for whom the apostle would have Christians so particularly to interest themselves, are *kings; and all that are in authority.*

The exhortation having a respect to Christians in general, plainly insinuates, that without excluding their generous concern for others, elsewhere intrusted with the regal power, *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks,* are especially to be made, for the royal person who sways the scepter over themselves.

It was easy for the apostle to see, that Christians would, by their birth, stations, and places of residence, be scattered through the dominions of different potentates; and therefore, when he mentions the privilege of *leading a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty,* as one end they should have in view, by complying with the exhortation in our text; it needs no argument to prove, that the particular sovereign, under whose administration that end can only be reach'd, has a first claim to the exercise here recommended.

For foreign princes, the concern of Christians should be regulated, according as circumstances do or may direct. All of them have a title from this apostolical warrant, to the *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings* of Christians, in how far their spiritual and eternal good require: if unconverted, their conversion to God, thro' Jesus Christ, should be the burden of the exercise under view; and if the fruits of conversion are brought forth by them, then *giving of thanks* is the Christian's province and duty. If they are joined in a friendly alliance with the sovereign, under whom Christians *lead a quiet and peaceable life,* the exercise of this concern may, with greater safety, be extended to the temporal, as well as  
spiritual

spiritual interests of such princes. But if upon the opposite side, or merely neutral in the public controversy, the Christian's concern for their outward prosperity, must not be inconsistent with what is due to their own sovereign, and the community of which they make a part.

With these limitations, 'tis highly worthy the Christian character, and particularly expressive of the Christian temper, to extend the concern here recommended by our apostle, to kings in general, and all in authority under them.

Perhaps this view of the matter may differ, widely differ, from what even Christians themselves have been accustomed to think and practise; but if it has a foundation in the New Testament, as a part of the counsel of God, it should be honestly declared, and suitable compliance with it, universally obtained. If it is the will of God, that *all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*, how do Christians instruct their conformity to that will, if they have no concern for the salvation of others, whatever their station or character, whatever their connections or political system? Such an unbounded compassion, can, with no degree of justice, be constructed as any how subversive of the special interest in their concern, to which their immediate superiors have an indisputable right; nor is it in the least inconsistent with that interest, unless it could be alledged, that none of opposite nations and alliances from them, can have a place in the better world, where entire, universal, everlasting concord, harmony and friendship, invariably reign; which is so absurd in itself, and so contrary to the very genius of the gospel, that to the most superficial student of the scriptures, it must at first sight appear.

The influence of kings over their subjects, and of those in authority over the inferior tribes of men, at once accounts for the apostle's recommending them so explicitly to the concern of the churches of Christ; for

though no natural nor political parents, can transfer grace to others, their authority and example may have incredible influence on an external reformation, if not on men's seeking after the like precious grace with themselves. Hence an inspired politician assures us, that *when the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked bear rule, the people mourn,* Prov. xxix. 2. According to this view, when Christians exercise a proper concern for the reformation of kings, and those in authority, their concern, in effect, reaches to all, without distinction, whose principles and practices may be bettered by it.

With regard to ourselves; though as men, all nations; as Christians, the whole Christian world; and as protestants, every country and kingdom distinguished by that name, should lay upon our hearts, and have a share in our concern at the throne of grace; yet, my brethren, as *Britons*, join'd to those other relations, our *British* sovereign has a peculiar title to the concern express'd in this exhortation.

It is impossible to think of his juvenile years, his high station, his important office, the variety and weight of business laid upon him, the critical conjuncture of affairs at his accession to the throne, the temptations with which he must be surrounded, the common enemies of liberty and true religion, against whom he is our loyal guardian, and to think of the very acclamations of loyalty and pleasure, so universally heard amongst his loving subjects; it is impossible to think of these things, without discovering the propriety of *supplications, prayers, and intercessions* in his behalf. If expos'd to evils, not only in common with others, as men, but peculiar to the pinnacle of dignity and eminence, upon which, as an imperial monarch, he stands, can the necessity of deprecation bear the smallest dispute? And if he not only needs gifts and graces, with the exercise and improvement of them, as the man and the Christian; but as the king and the supreme magistrate;

are not *prayers* for him equally needful, and, by his subjects, a tribute proportionally due? *Intercessions*, therefore, in both these views, become the duty of the subjects, as they are, by apostolical authority, the right and privilege of the sovereign.

Nor is *thanksgiving*, upon this occasion, to be neglected, or performed without the warmest sentiments of love and gratitude to God. Many circumstances, my brethren, in this noticeable providence, conspire to enforce that duty, to excite that exercise, and to obtain an universal compliance with this part of our apostle's exhortation.

Can we reflect on the preservation of our late sovereign, until the years of his royal successor's majority were more than number'd? Can we think of the *British* throne being now fill'd with a native of our happy isle? Can we hear of such regards to true christianity appearing in him, as are not common to his years, far less to his exalted station? Can we understand his royal purpose to lay out himself, and make it the business of his life, to preserve our invaluable privileges, and transmit them entire to posterity? Can we learn from his own mouth, that in the discharge of the trust reposed in him, he resolves to depend on the advice and assistance, not of his council alone, but of *every honest man*? In a word, can we of this kingdom, be certainly informed of his undertaking, by oath, to secure us in the free exercise of the presbyterian religion, according to our constitutional laws? Can we advert to these things, without at once seeing cause, feeling and expressing sentiments of manifold gratitude to God our saviour, for all his benefits?

There is something, my brethren, in our very constitution itself, that on every unprejudiced mind, must have a constraining influence, toward the end of the exhortation being reach'd. Instead of an absolute monarch, whose will is the only law, and whose subjects are hereditary slaves, our august sovereign has the di-

distinguish'd glory of governing a free people, the least of whom is protected by the laws, in such a manner, that until condemned by his own peers, he cannot be put to death. The very possessions, as well as persons of *Britons*, are so defended, that the meanest subject cannot be forced, without a parliamentary authority, to part with his own property. And though the whole executive, and a principal share in the legislative power, is lodged in the *British* monarch, it is neither his prerogative to counteract established laws, nor solely to impose new statutes: nay, the sovereign's claims upon those over whom he sways the scepter, must be made, and can only be effected, by due course of law; and, what crowns our privileges as *British* subjects, the sovereign himself, in his officers of state, may be sued, and cast in his own courts. When such a happy constitution is compared with that of other nations, how dear to us should our sovereign be, who has accepted the regal office, upon conditions so safe for the subjects, as well as honourable for himself? And with what distinguished infamy does their ingratitude deserve to be branded, who make no conscience of the Christian duties of *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings* for him?

But while the *British* monarch is so restricted by law, as the loyal and obedient subject has nothing to fear, he is justly clothed with such power and authority, as; from every thinking person, must challenge veneration and respect. Besides the whole executive power of the laws, which includes the right of filling every chair in the different courts of judicature, his sole prerogative extends to the making of peace or war, sending or receiving ambassadors, entering into leagues and treaties with foreign states, convoking, adjourning, proroguing, and dissolving parliaments, chusing and nominating commanders, and other officers for the fleet or army, counsellors also, and officers of state, together with that of bestowing all honours of higher and lower nobility,

at what time, and upon what persons he pleaseth. These are some of the great lines of that extensive power, lodged by *Britain* in her king, which, as it is sufficient to secure the respect due to enthroned majesty, should stir up Christians to the faithful discharge of the duties prescribed by our apostle, that the sovereign may be under the direction and influence of heaven, in the exertion of it.

*All that are in authority*, have likewise, by the apostle's warrant, a claim upon Christians, for the concern to which our text has a respect. And as we imagine that civil authority is particularly intended, our present view shall be confined accordingly.

The king, as was said, is the fountain of all civil authority and honour, the prerogative of making laws excepted; and therefore, in exercising a due concern about him, Christians may be said to exercise a concern about *all in authority*.

The true interest of the subjects, however, depending so much on those in eminent places, as the phrase might be rendered, it may not be unuseful to put you in mind of some of these eminent places, or persons filling them, which have a scriptural demand on the Christian's concern before God.

And shall we proceed to this, without admiring and adoring the divine goodness, in the wisdom that has appeared in our king's council, the faithfulness in his ministry, the bravery in his army, the intrepidity in his navy, and the harmony amongst all his servants, for several years past? These qualities, my brethren, of those in authority, animated by the complication of them all, in their late royal master, have rendered *Britain* respectable amongst different nations abroad, as well as endeared the eminent persons themselves to their country-men at home. And has not our present sovereign, given reason for the further exercise of that gratitude to Jehovah our God, in the judicious measure of continuing these servants, in their respective offices, at least,

least, for several months to come? Who knows but this is the result of his asking, and getting wisdom from that God, *who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not?* Can you ever reflect on his retiring to his closet, if public fame may be trusted, when first informed of the crown devolving upon him, without imagining that you see the royal, the lovely youth, prostrate before the *king of kings*, and hear him, in the words of an illustrious eastern monarch, say, *Give therefore, O Lord my God, unto 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?* 1 Kings iii. 9. May the event demonstrate, that the same answer was given to him, from the hearer of prayer, which young *Solomon* received, *Behold, I have done according to thy words,* v. 12.

To return. The eminent persons whom Christians should remember with concern at the throne of grace, are those who are so, either in respect of extraction or office. The former include the whole peerage and grandees of the nation, with others whose circumstances in the world, set them on a level for influence and capacity of usefulness. These, though employed in no office of the state or the crown, have much in their power, toward promoting or suppressing the interests of true christianity; and therefore, that Christians may lead the quiet and peaceable life mentioned by the apostle, it is useful, it is necessary, that such persons be comprehended in their *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings.*

In this passage, however, 'tis more than probable, that those eminent in respect of office, are more chiefly pointed out. Being entrusted by their king or country, with the concerns of the nation, the manner in which that trust is discharged, may, nay, must infallibly affect the interest of individuals.

Those with whom the legislative power is lodged, claim our first regard; that public statutes may be always



ways public blessings; and, if in any thing, oppression is enacted, that it may, by their authority, be repealed.

The king's council is an eminent place, and all its members men in authority, that they may so consult and advise, in what comes before them, as shall most secure the honour of their sovereign, and the good of their country, should be the burden of the Christian's concern in their behalf.

The secretaries of state are in such eminent place, as makes them no less need the intercession of Christians, than it intitles them to it. The receiving and making all dispatches from or to foreign parts; the representing the subjects to the sovereign, and the sovereign to the subjects, as to addresses and answers; the preparing business for the council-board, and making proposals of public concern to them. These and such things, are their immediate province, and, on the right discharge of them, 'tis easy to see how much the common good must necessarily depend. Need I put you in mind of the singular benefits *Britain* and her colonies have reaped from that very quarter, since the commencement of the present war? The ministerial character has been highly honoured in the diligence, capacity, resolution, patriotism, and other diffusive virtues, so illustriously displayed in the conduct of one, equally trusted by his king, and admired by his country. Without meaning to derogate from the praise justly due to his noble and illustrious colleague, the ministry of a *Pit* will cut a resplendent figure in the *British* annals, long after we are gathered to our fathers.

The gentlemen of the sword may be considered as likewise in authority, or eminent places: those of them we mean, who command in the fleet or army, and are entrusted by the government, with the execution of the most important orders. The peculiar risque they run, and danger to which they are exposed, should recommend them, and their brave followers, to the special concern of the church of Christ.

Need we mention the eminent places of judges and magistrates through the land, as what instruct their right to the *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings* of Christians? To their interpretation of the laws, and interposition of authority, our peace and quiet, as men and Christians, are more immediately owing; and therefore, by a particular concern for them, our gratitude to God should be more immediately express'd.

The college of justice, in particular, has, to this kingdom, been generally, and with great truth, considered as the most substantial blessing; for the senators of it are not only a proper check upon all inferior and less qualified courts; but the manner of their procedure in judgment is so modelled, that the mean and obscure are equally encouraged to expect the fairest hearing, and justest deliverance, from that bench, with the noble and the great.

Taking that court complexly, in the characters and superior abilities of the judges, the extent of their privileges, the greatness of their power, the length of their attendance, the order, decorum, and solemnity of their forms, the number and erudition of their barristers, together with the weight and influence of their decisions, it will, in *Europe* itself, be equalled by few courts of judicature, scarce excelled by any. While, therefore, Christians should exercise a holy gratitude to God, for such an effectual security from the caprice and oppression of their fellow-subjects, they are indispensibly bound to make intercessions for such as have the honour to fill those eminent places, that the spirit of their station may be given them; and that in the faithful and judicious discharge of their office, they may, under God, be for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well.

The end, to themselves, that Christians may propose by such concern *for kings, and all that are in authority*, should next fall under our view; namely, *that we may*  
*lead*

*lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty.* The kingdom of Christ is a kingdom of peace, and the end of it is quietness for ever; godliness as Christians, and honesty as men, are equally the ambition and endeavour of all its subjects; every lawful mean, toward the enjoyment of such quietness and peace, so as to have freedom to exercise godliness and honesty, is incumbent on them; that prescribed in our text, is not only lawful, but laudable; nor only so, but vastly conducive to the end in view; wherefore, without excluding motives of the generous and disinterested kind, it is evidently the interest, as well as the duty of Christians, to make *supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks for all men in general, for kings and eminent persons in particular.*

If the making, the interpreting, and carrying into execution the laws, belong to them, does it not at once appear, how much is in their power, to render the Christian's life quiet and peaceable; to give him no temptation to ungodliness, by persecution; nor to dishonesty, by oppression? Whence the propriety of the mean recommended in our text, for reaching the end mentioned by the apostle, is so obvious, that he who runs may read.

But on this part of the subject we will not now enlarge. From what observations have been made, the following conclusions will appear to be natural and easy.

That when men lie under no temptation from the severity of laws, or rigour in those who carry them into execution, to the practice of ungodliness or dishonesty, their giving indulgence to the one or the other, must be a heinous aggravation of the crime. An aggravation of it, we say, because such a practice would be criminal in any, whatever situation; but if so, where godliness cannot be professed, unless at the peril of life and liberty; nor honesty cultivated, unless at the risque of poverty and want; what must be the crimson hue,

and what the scarlet dye of these offences, where no such temptations from the government, or our governours, fall in our way?

Temptations, did I say, from the government, or our governours, to the practice of ungodliness or dishonesty? The reverse, my brethren, of this, is the delightful truth; for, toward the suppression of wickedness and immorality of all kinds, we have many salutary laws; though it must be confess'd, to whose ignominy every one must see, that in the execution of them there has been a lasting, perhaps an universal defect. That reproach, however, bids fair to be soon wiped away, since, by a recent proclamation from the throne, the carrying of those laws into immediate execution, against all offenders without distinction, is expressly commanded; and commanded, as the executors of the law shall be answerable to their royal master.

In place, therefore, of our lying under any temptation to such ignoble and dissolute practices, the temptation is happily thrown, by our sovereign, into the opposite scale.

That under the present government, distinguished for mildness and forbearance, if men lead not a quiet and peaceable life, it must be accounted for from another cause; their own turbulent spirits, namely, with a stupid ingratitude for liberties and privileges, the acquiring whereof cost our fathers so much blood and treasure. And if the cause arises from themselves, it is their own faults, and they alone shall bear it, if timely reformation intervene not.

That our dear young king should have a constant and particular share in our concern before God. Tho' as to some the indispensable nature of this duty may have never occurred before, as it appears now to demonstration from our text, let none be so hardy, none so disobedient, as continue in the neglect, or practical contempt of it. Imagine it not enough to join in the public prayers for him, and those in authority; but

carry the petitions and supplications with you, in your family and personal approaches to God. With what confidence can you expect he will be made a blessing to you, if you are not, though expressly enjoined, at the pains to ask it? Shall he take the weight of the government upon his shoulders, and will you, in the exercise of prayer and supplication, bear no part with him? Would there, let the prayerless say, in the event of our great hopes becoming abortive, be the least propriety in your murmurings and complaints? Let the exhortation, my brethren, on all the accounts suggested, be cheerfully and immediately complied with. And may the Lord give us understanding in all things.

*F I N I S.*



very the petition and supplications with you, in your  
family and personal approaches to God. With what  
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checked, and immediately concluded with. And may  
the Lord give us understanding in all things.

F. V. A. S.





