

***GOVERNMENT, AN INTRODUCTION
FROM A BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVE***

STUDENT TEXTBOOK

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FOREWORD

This free on-line textbook is itself compiled from various free on-line resources:

Bible passages were found at the website <http://www.blueletterbible.org> .

Quotes from the Westminster Standards and the Belgic Confession were found at the website <http://reformed.org/documents/index.html> .

Excerpts from Dr. John Calvin's *Institutes* were found at:
<http://www.reformed.org/books/institutes/books/book4/bk4ch20.html>

Excerpts from George Gillespie's *WHOLESOME SEVERITY RECONCILED WITH CHRISTIAN LIBERTY* were found at the website:
http://www.covenanter.org/GGillespie/wholesome_severity.html

Excerpts from George Gillespie's "Forbidden Alliances Concerning Associations and Confederacies with Idolaters, Infidels, Heretics, or Any Other Known Enemies of Truth and Godliness" were found at the website:
<http://www.apuritansmind.com/GeorgeGillespie/GeorgeGillespieForbiddenAlliances.htm>

Some other useful information was found at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Government> .

We encourage students to visit these and other websites to further explore the wealth of information available on the internet relating to government studies.

INTRODUCTION

This textbook is an introductory study of government. It is intended to be a primer in government approached from a Biblical perspective. By a Biblical perspective, I mean that the Bible serves as the foundation, and the body of knowledge built on top is in accordance with that foundation.

This textbook primarily utilizes the writings of various reformed theologians, as well as certain reformed confessions, to lay out what scripture teaches concerning government. It then considers the issue of how we can extend our knowledge of civics beyond what scripture directly teaches, but using scripture as a foundation. And then it employs that methodology to treat various topics, like attributes, forms, and functions of government.

We will not focus on any particular nation's government in this textbook, reserving that function for another textbook. In this way, we provide a universal introduction in government studies.

CHAPTER 1 : THE BIBLICAL MODEL OF GOVERNMENT SUMMARIZED IN THE REFORMED CONFESSIONS

A government is the body that has the authority to make and the power to enforce laws within an organization or group. In its broadest sense, "to govern" means to administer or supervise, whether over an area of land, a set group of people, or a collection of assets. The word *government* is derived from the Greek κυβερνήτης (*kubernites*), which means "steersman", "governor", "pilot" or "rudder".

For our purposes in this textbook we focus on civil government, in contrast to ecclesiastical government, family government, etc. *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition* defines 'civil' in this way, as it concerns *civil government*:

1. Of, relating to, or befitting a citizen or citizens: *civil duties*.
2. Of or relating to citizens and their interrelations with one another or with the state: *civil society; the civil branches of government*.
3. Of ordinary citizens or ordinary community life as distinguished from the military or the ecclesiastical: *civil authorities*.

[Middle English, from Latin *civilis*, from *civis*, *citizen*. See **civic**.]

As noted above, the term 'civic' is closely related to the term 'civil'. Its definition in *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition* is as follows:

Of, relating to, or belonging to a city, a citizen, or citizenship; municipal or civil.

[Latin *civicus*, from *civis*, *citizen*. See *kei-¹* in Indo-European Roots.]

So civil government is that body which makes and enforces laws relating to the citizenry of a political entity, distinct from the ecclesiastical government which oversees the church. Another term sometimes used for 'civil government' is 'civil magistrate'.

The reformed confessions of the Protestant Reformation, like the Belgic Confession and the Westminster Standards, accurately summarize the scriptural doctrine concerning civil government. The Belgic Confession states:

* * *

Article 36: The Civil Government

We believe that because of the depravity of the human race our good God has ordained kings, princes, and civil officers. He wants the world to be governed by laws and policies

so that human lawlessness may be restrained and that everything may be conducted in good order among human beings.

For that purpose he has placed the sword in the hands of the government, to punish evil people and protect the good.

And being called in this manner to contribute to the advancement of a society that is pleasing to God, the civil rulers have the task, subject to God's law, of removing every obstacle to the preaching of the gospel and to every aspect of divine worship.

They should do this while completely refraining from every tendency toward exercising absolute authority, and while functioning in the sphere entrusted to them, with the means belonging to them.

And the government's task is not limited to caring for and watching over the public domain but extends also to upholding the sacred ministry, with a view to removing and destroying all idolatry and false worship of the Antichrist; to promoting the kingdom of Jesus Christ; and to furthering the preaching of the gospel everywhere; to the end that God may be honored and served by everyone, as he requires in his Word.

Moreover everyone, regardless of status, condition, or rank, must be subject to the government, and pay taxes, and hold its representatives in honor and respect, and obey them in all things that are not in conflict with God's Word, praying for them that the Lord may be willing to lead them in all their ways and that we may live a peaceful and quiet life in all piety and decency.

And on this matter we denounce the Anabaptists, other anarchists, and in general all those who want to reject the authorities and civil officers and to subvert justice by introducing common ownership of goods and corrupting the moral order that God has established among human beings.

* * *

And the Westminster Confession of Faith states:

* * *

CHAPTER XXIII. ***Of the Civil Magistrate.***

I. God, the Supreme Lord and King of all the world, hath ordained civil magistrates to be under him over the people, for his own glory and the public good; and to this end, hath armed them with the power of the sword, for the defense and encouragement of them that are good, and for the punishment of evil-doers.

II. It is lawful for Christians to accept and execute the office of a magistrate when called thereunto; in the managing whereof, as they ought especially to maintain piety, justice, and peace, according to the wholesome laws of each commonwealth, so, for that end, they may lawfully, now under the New Testament, wage war upon just and necessary occasions.

III. The civil magistrate may not assume to himself the administration of the Word and sacraments, or the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven: yet he hath authority, and it is his duty, to take order, that unity and peace be preserved in the Church, that the truth of God be kept pure and entire; that all blasphemies and heresies be suppressed; all corruptions and abuses in worship and discipline prevented or reformed; and all the ordinances of God duly settled, administered, and observed. For the better effecting whereof, he hath power to call synods, to be present at them, and to provide that whatsoever is transacted in them be according to the mind of God.

IV. It is the duty of the people to pray for magistrates, to honor their persons, to pay them tribute and other dues, to obey their lawful commands, and to be subject to their authority, for conscience' sake. Infidelity, or difference in religion, doth not make void the magistrate's just and legal authority, nor free the people from their obedience to him: from which ecclesiastical persons are not exempted; much less hath the Pope any power or jurisdiction over them in their dominions, or over any of their people; and least of all to deprive them of their dominions or lives, if he shall judge them to be heretics, or upon any other pretense whatsoever.

* * *

As pointed out above, it is the duty of the magistrate to punish evil doers, which means transgressions of the moral law as summarized in the Ten Commandments. As Roman 13:3-4 states, "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 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 doeth evil. " So the laws the magistrate makes and enforces should be applications of the Ten Commandments, relevant to the current circumstances of the state. Here is how the Westminster Confession describes that law:

* * *

I. God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it; and endued him with power and ability to keep it.

II. This law, after his Fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness; and, as such, was delivered by God upon mount Sinai in ten commandments, and written in two tables; the first four commandments containing our duty toward God, and the other six our duty to man.

III. Besides this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel, as a Church under age, ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits; and partly holding forth divers instructions of moral duties. All which ceremonial laws are now abrogated under the New Testament.

IV. To them also, as a body politic, he gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the state of that people, not obliging any other, now, further than the general equity thereof may require.

V. The moral law doth forever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof; and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator who gave it. Neither doth Christ in the gospel any way dissolve, but much strengthen, this obligation.

VI. Although true believers be not under the law as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified or condemned; yet is it of great use to them, as well as to others; in that, as a rule of life, informing them of the will of God and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly; discovering also the sinful pollutions of their nature, hearts, and lives; so as, examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin; together with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and the perfection of his obedience. It is likewise of use to the regenerate, to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin, and the threatenings of it serve to show what even their sins deserve, and what afflictions in this life they may expect for them, although freed from the curse thereof threatened in the law. The promises of it, in like manner, show them God's approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof; although not as due to them by the law as a covenant of works: so as a man's doing good, and refraining from evil, because the law encourageth to the one, and deterreth from the other, is no evidence of his being under the law, and not under grace.

VII. Neither are the forementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the gospel, but do sweetly comply with it: the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully, which the will of God, revealed in the law, requireth to be done.

* * *

We have thus sketched the divine model for civil government and the moral law which government should enforce. We shall consider this divine model in more detail in the coming chapters. It is a beautiful standard, and one to which every civil government should aspire. God has ordained civil government, and He is the one to whom we should turn to learn how it should be organized and administered.

CHAPTER 2 : EXCERPTS FROM DR. JOHN CALVIN'S *INSTITUTES*

Institutes 20. OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT.

(How civil and spiritual government are related, 1-3)

1. *Differences between spiritual and civil government*

Having shown above that there is a twofold government in man, and having fully considered the one which, placed in the soul or inward man, relates to eternal life, we are here called to say something of the other, which pertains only to civil institutions and the external regulation of manners. For although this subject seems from its nature to be unconnected with the spiritual doctrine of faith, which I have undertaken to treat, it will appear, as we proceed, that I have properly connected them, nay, that I am under the necessity of doing so, especially while, on the one hand, frantic and barbarous men are furiously endeavoring to overturn the order established by God, and, on the other, the flatterers of princess extolling their power without measure, hesitate not to oppose it to the government of God. Unless we meet both extremes, the purity of the faith will perish. We may add, that it in no small degree concerns us to know how kindly God has here consulted for the human race, that pious zeal may the more strongly urge us to testify our gratitude.

And first, before entering on the subject itself, it is necessary to attend to the distinction which we formerly laid down, (Book 3 Chap. 19 sec. 16; et supra, Chap. 10;) lest, as often happens to many, we imprudently confound these two things, the nature of which is altogether different. For some, on hearing that liberty is promised in the gospel, a liberty which acknowledges no king and no magistrate among men, but looks to Christ alone, think that they can receive no benefit from their liberty so long as they see any power placed over them. Accordingly, they think that nothing will be safe until the whole world is changed into a new form, when there will be neither courts, nor laws nor magistrates, nor anything of the kind to interfere, as they suppose, with their liberty. But he who knows to distinguish between the body and the soul, between the present fleeting life and that which is future and eternal, will have no difficulty in understanding that the spiritual kingdom of Christ and civil government are things very widely separated. Seeing, therefore, it is a Jewish vanity to seek and include the kingdom of Christ under the elements of this world, let us, considering, as Scripture clearly teaches, that the blessings which we derive from Christ are spiritual, remember to confine the liberty which is promised and offered to us in him within its proper limits. For why is it that the very same apostle which bids us "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not again entangled with the yoke of bondage," (Gal. 5: 1,) in another passage forbids slaves to be solicitous about their state, (1 Cor. 7: 21,) unless it be that spiritual liberty is perfectly compatible with civil servitude? In this sense the following passages are to be understood: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female," (Gal. 3: 28.) Again: "There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all and in all," (Col. 3: 11.) It is thus intimated that it matters not what your condition is among

men, nor under what laws you live, since in them the kingdom of Christ does not at all consist.

2. The two "governments" are not antithetical

Still the distinction does not go so far as to justify us in supposing that the whole scheme of civil government is matter of pollution, with which Christian men have nothing to do. Fanatics, indeed delighting in unbridled license, insist and vociferate that after we are dead by Christ to the elements of this world, and being translated into the kingdom of God sit among the celestial, it is unworthy of us, and far beneath our dignity to be occupied with those profane and impure cares which relate to matters alien from a Christian man. To what ends they say, are laws without courts and tribunals? But what has a Christian man to do with courts? Nay, if it is unlawful to kill, what have we to do with laws and courts? But as we lately taught that that kind of government is distinct from the spiritual and internal kingdom of Christ, so we ought to know that they are not adverse to each other. The former, in some measure, begins the heavenly kingdom in us, even now upon earth, and in this mortal and evanescent life commences immortal and incorruptible blessedness, while to the latter it is assigned, so long as we live among men, to foster and maintain the external worship of God, to defend sound doctrine and the condition of the Church, to adapt our conduct to human society, to form our manners to civil justice, to conciliate us to each other, to cherish common peace and tranquillity. All these I confess to be superfluous, if the kingdom of God, as it now exists within us, extinguishes the present life. But if it is the will of God that while we aspire to true piety we are pilgrims upon the earth, and if such pilgrimage stands in need of such aids, those who take them away from man rob him of his humanity. As to their allegation, that there ought to be such perfection in the Church of God that her guidance should suffice for law, they stupidly imagine her to be such as she never can be found in the community of men. For while the insolence of the wicked is so great, and their iniquity so stubborn, that it can scarcely be curbed by any severity of laws, what do we expect would be done by those whom force can scarcely repress from doing ill, were they to see perfect impunity for their wickedness?

(Necessity and divine sanction of civil government, 3-7)

3. The chief tasks and burdens of civil government

But we shall have a fitter opportunity of speaking of the use of civil government. All we wish to be understood at present is, that it is perfect barbarism to think of exterminating it, its use among men being not less than that of bread and water, light and air, while its dignity is much more excellent. Its object is not merely, like those things, to enable men to breathe, eat, drink, and be warmed, (though it certainly includes all these, while it enables them to live together;) this, I say, is not its only object, but it is that no idolatry, no blasphemy against the name of God, no calumnies against his truth, nor other offences to religion, break out and be disseminated among the people; that the public quiet be not disturbed, that every man's property be kept secure, that men may carry on innocent commerce with each other, that honesty and modesty be cultivated; in short, that a public form of religion may exist among Christians, and humanity among men.

Let no one be surprised that I now attribute the task of constituting religion aright to human polity, though I seem above to have placed it beyond the will of man, since I no more than formerly allow men at pleasure to enact laws concerning religion and the worship of God, when I approve of civil order which is directed to this end, viz., to prevent the true religion, which is contained in the law of God, from being with impunity openly violated and polluted by public blasphemy.

But the reader, by the help of a perspicuous arrangement, will better understand what view is to be taken of the whole order of civil government, if we treat of each of its parts separately. Now these are three: The Magistrate, who is president and guardian of the laws; the Laws, according to which he governs; and the People, who are governed by the laws, and obey the magistrate. Let us consider then, first, What is the function of the magistrate? Is it a lawful calling approved by God? What is the nature of his duty? What the extent of his power? Secondly, What are the laws by which Christian polity is to be regulated?. And, lastly, What is the use of laws as regards the people? And, What obedience is due to the magistrate?

4. The magistracy is ordained by God

With regard to the function of magistrates, the Lord has not only declared that he approves and is pleased with it, but, moreover has strongly recommended it to us by the very honourable titles which he has conferred upon it. To mention a few. When those who bear the office of magistrate are called gods, let no one suppose that there is little weight in that appellation. It is thereby intimated that they have a commission from God, that they are invested with divine authority and, in fact, represent the person of God, as whose substitutes they in a manner act. This is not a quibble of mine, but is the interpretation of Christ. "If Scriptures" says He, "called them gods to whom the word of God came." What is this but that the business was committed to them by God to serve him in their office, and (as Moses and Jehoshaphat said to the judges whom they were appointing over each of the cities of Judah) to exercise judgement, not for man, but for God? To the same effect Wisdom affirms, by the mouth of Solomon, "By me kings reigns and princes decree Justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth," (Prov. 8: 15, 16.) For it is just as if it had been said, that it is not owing to human perverseness that supreme power on earth is lodged in kings and other governors, but by Divine Providence, and the holy decree of Him to whom it has seemed good so to govern the affairs of men, since he is present, and also presides in enacting laws and exercising judicial equity. This Paul also plainly teaches when he enumerates offices of rule among the gifts of God, which, distributed variously, according to the measure of grace, ought to be employed by the servants of Christ for the edification of the Church, (Rom. 12: 8.) In that place, however, he is properly speaking of the senate of grave men who were appointed in the primitive Church to take charge of public discipline. This office, in the Epistle to the Corinthians he calls "kuberneseis", governments, (1 Cor. 12: 28.) Still, as we see that civil power has the same end in view, there can be no doubt that he is recommending every kind of just government.

He speaks much more clearly when he comes to a proper discussion of the subject. For he says that "there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God;" that rulers are the ministers of God, "not a terror to good works, but to the evil," (Rom. 13: 1,

3.) To this we may add the examples of saints, some of whom held the offices of kings, as David, Josiah, and Hezekiah; others of governors, as Joseph and Daniel; others of civil magistrates among a free people, as Moses, Joshua and the Judges. Their functions were expressly approved by the Lord. Wherefore no man can doubt that civil authority is in the sight of God, not only sacred and lawful, but the most sacred and by far the most honourable, of all stations in mortal life.

5. Against the "Christian" denial or rejection of magistracy

Those who are desirous to introduce anarchy object that, though anciently kings and judges presided over a rude people, yet that, in the present day that servile mode of governing does not at all accord with the perfection which Christ brought with his gospel. Herein they betray not only their ignorance, but their devilish pride, arrogating to themselves a perfection of which not even a hundredth part is seen in them. But be they what they may, the refutation is easy. For when David says, "Be wise now therefore O you kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth," "kiss the son, lest he be angry" (Psalm 2: 10, 12,) he does not order them to lay aside their authority and return to private life, but to make the power with which they are invested subject to Christ, that he may rule over all. In like manner, when Isaiah predicts of the Church, "Kings shall be thy nursing-fathers, and their queens and nursing-mothers," (Isaiah 49: 23,) he does not bid them abdicate their authority; he rather gives them the honourable appellation of patrons of the pious worshipers of God; for the prophecy refers to the advent of Christ. I intentionally omit very many passages which occur throughout Scripture, and especially in the Psalms, in which the due authority of all rulers is asserted. The most celebrated passage of all is that in which Paul admonishing Timothy, that prayers are to be offered up in the public assembly for kings, subjoins the reason, "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty," (1 Tim. 2: 2.) In these words, he recommends the condition of the Church to their protection and guardianship.

6. Magistrates should be faithful as God's deputies

This consideration ought to be constantly present to the minds of magistrates since it is fitted to furnish a strong stimulus to the discharge of duty, and also afford singular consolation, smoothing the difficulties of their office, which are certainly numerous and weighty. What zeal for integrity, prudence, meekness, continence, and innocence ought to sway those who know that they have been appointed ministers of the divine justice! How will they dare to admit iniquity to their tribunal, when they are told that it is the throne of the living God? How will they venture to pronounce an unjust sentence with that mouth which they understand to be an ordained organ of divine truth? With what conscience will they subscribe impious decrees with that hand which they know has been appointed to write the acts of God? In a word, if they remember that they are the vicegerents of God, it behoves them to watch with all care, diligences and industry, that they may in themselves exhibit a kind of image of the Divine Providence, guardianship, goodness, benevolence, and justice. And let them constantly keep the additional thought in view, that if a curse is pronounced on him that "does the work of the Lord deceitfully" a much heavier curse must lie on him who deals deceitfully in a righteous calling. Therefore,

when Moses and Jehoshaphat would urge their judges to the discharge of duty, they had nothing by which they could more powerfully stimulate their minds than the consideration to which we have already referred, - "Take heed what ye do: for ye judge not for man, but for the Lord, who is with you in the judgement. Wherefore now let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed and do it: for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons nor taking of gifts," (2 Chron. 19: 6, 7, compared with Deut. 1: 16, &c.) And in another passage it is said, "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods," (Psalm 82: 1; Isaiah 3: 14,) that they may be animated to duty when they hear that they are the ambassadors of God, to whom they must one day render an account of the province committed to them. This admonition ought justly to have the greatest effect upon them; for if they sin in any respect, not only is injury done to the men whom they wickedly torment, but they also insult God himself, whose sacred tribunals they pollute. On the other hand, they have an admirable source of comfort when they reflect that they are not engaged in profane occupations, unbefitting a servant of God, but in a most sacred office, inasmuch as they are the ambassadors of God.

7. The coercive character of magistracy does not hinder its recognition

In regard to those who are not debarred by all these passages of Scripture from presuming to inveigh against this sacred ministry, as if it were a thing abhorrent from religion and Christian piety, what else do they than assail God himself, who cannot but be insulted when his servants are disgraced? These men not only speak evil of dignities, but would not even have God to reign over them, (1 Sam. 8:7.) For if this was truly said of the people of Israel, when they declined the authority of Samuel, how can it be less truly said in the present day of those who allow themselves to break loose against all the authority established by God? But it seems that when our Lord said to his disciples, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that does serve," (Luke 22: 25, 26;) he by these words prohibited all Christians from becoming kings or governors. Dexterous expounders! A dispute had arisen among the disciples as to which of them should be greatest. To suppress this vain ambition, our Lord taught them that their ministry was not like the power of earthly sovereigns, among whom one greatly surpasses another. What, I ask, is there in this comparison disparaging to royal dignity? nay, what does it prove at all unless that the royal office is not the apostolic ministry? Besides though among magisterial offices themselves there are different forms, there is no difference in this respect, that they are all to be received by us as ordinances of God. For Paul includes all together when he says that "there is no power but of God," and that which was by no means the most pleasing of all, was honoured with the highest testimonial, I mean the power of one. This as carrying with it the public servitude of all, (except the one to whose despotic will all is subject,) was anciently disrelished by heroic and more excellent matures. But Scripture, to obviate these unjust judgements, affirms expressly that it is by divine wisdom that "kings reign," (cf. Prov. 8:15) and gives special command "to honour the king," (Prov. 24:21; 1 Peter 2:17.)

(Forms of government, and duties of magistrates. Issues of war and taxation, 8-13)

8. The diversity of forms of government

And certainly it were a very idle occupation for private men to discuss what would be the best form of polity in the place where they live, seeing these deliberations cannot have any influence in determining any public matter. Then the thing itself could not be defined absolutely without rashness, since the nature of the discussion depends on circumstances. And if you compare the different states with each other, without regard to circumstances, it is not easy to determine which of these has the advantage in point of utility; so equal are the terms on which they meet. Monarchy is prone to tyranny. In an aristocracy, again, the tendency is not less to the faction of a few, while in popular ascendancy there is the strongest tendency to sedition. When these three forms of government, of which philosophers treat, are considered in themselves, I, for my part, am far from denying that the form which greatly surpasses the others is aristocracy, either pure or modified by popular government, not indeed in itself, but because it very rarely happens that kings so rule themselves as never to dissent from what is just and right, or are possessed of so much acuteness and prudence as always to see correctly. Owing, therefore, to the vices or defects of men, it is safer and more tolerable when several bear rule, that they may thus mutually assist, instruct, and admonish each other, and should any one be disposed to go too far, the others are censors and masters to curb his excess. This has already been proved by experience, and confirmed also by the authority of the Lord himself, when he established an aristocracy bordering on popular government among the Israelites, keeping them under that as the best form, until he exhibited an image of the Messiah in David. And as I willingly admit that there is no kind of government happier than where liberty is framed with becoming moderation, and duly constituted so as to be durable, so I deem those very happy who are permitted to enjoy that form, and I admit that they do nothing at variance with their duty when they strenuously and constantly labour to preserve and maintain it. Nay, even magistrates ought to do their utmost to prevent the liberty, of which they have been appointed guardians from being impaired, far less violated. If in this they are sluggish or little careful, they are perfidious traitors to their office and their country.

But should those to whom the Lord has assigned one form of government, take it upon them anxiously to long for a change, the wish would not only be foolish and superfluous, but very pernicious. If you fix your eyes not on one state merely, but look around the world, or at least direct your view to regions widely separated from each other, you will perceive that divine Providence has not, without good cause, arranged that different countries should be governed by different forms of polity. For as only elements of unequal temperature adhere together so in different regions a similar inequality in the form of government is best. All this, however, is said unnecessarily to those to whom the will of God is a sufficient reason. For if it has pleased him to appoint kings over kingdoms and senates or burgomasters over free states, whatever be the form which he has appointed in the places in which we live, our duty is to obey and submit.

9. Concern for both Tables of the Law

The duty of magistrates, its nature, as described by the word of God, and the things in which it consists, I will here indicate in passing. That it extends to both tables of the law, did Scripture not teach, we might learn from profane writers, for no man has discoursed of the duty of magistrates, the enacting of laws, and the common weal, without beginning with religion and divine worship. Thus all have confessed that no polity can be successfully established unless piety be its first care, and that those laws are absurd which disregard the rights of God, and consult only for men. Seeing then that among philosophers religion holds the first place, and that the same thing has always been observed with the universal consent of nations, Christian princes and magistrates may be ashamed of their heartlessness if they make it not their care. We have already shown that this office is specially assigned them by God, and indeed it is right that they exert themselves in asserting and defending the honour of Him whose vicegerents they are, and by whose favour they rule.

Hence in Scripture holy kings are especially praised for restoring the worship of God when corrupted or overthrown, or for taking care that religion flourished under them in purity and safety. On the other hand, the sacred history sets down anarchy among the vices, when it states that there was no king in Israel, and, therefore, every one did as he pleased, (Judges 21: 25.)

This rebukes the folly of those who would neglect the care of divine things, and devote themselves merely to the administration of justice among men; as if God had appointed rulers in his own name to decide earthly controversies, and omitted what was of far greater moment, his own pure worship as prescribed by his law. Such views are adopted by turbulent men, who, in their eagerness to make all kinds of innovations with impunity, would fain get rid of all the vindicators of violated piety.

In regard to the second table of the law, Jeremiah addresses rulers, "Thus saith the Lord, Execute ye judgement and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood," (Jer. 22: 3.) To the same effect is the exhortation in the Psalm, "Defend the poor and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy; rid them out of the hand of the wicked," (Psalm 82: 3, 4.) Moses also declared to the princes whom he had substituted for himself, "Hear the causes between your brethren, and judge righteously between every man and his brother, and the stranger that is with him. Ye shall not respect persons in judgement; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great: ye shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgement is God's," (Deut. 1: 16.) I say nothing as to such passages as these, "He shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt;" "neither shall he multiply wives to himself; neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold;" "he shall write him a copy of this law in a book;" "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;" "that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren," (Deut. 17: 16-20.) In here explaining the duties of magistrates, my exposition is intended not so much for the instruction of magistrates themselves, as to teach others why there are magistrates, and to what end they have been appointed by God. We say, therefore, that they are the ordained guardians and vindicators of public innocence, modesty, honour, and tranquillity, so that it should be their only study to provide for the common peace and safety. Of these things David declares that he will set an example when he shall have ascended the throne. "A froward heart shall depart from

me: I will not know a wicked person. Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that has an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me," (Psalm 101: 4-6.)

But as rulers cannot do this unless they protect the good against the injuries of the bad, and give aid and protection to the oppressed, they are armed with power to curb manifest evildoers and criminals, by whose misconduct the public tranquillity is disturbed or harassed. For we have full experience of the truth of Solon's saying, that all public matters depend on reward and punishment; that where these are wanting, the whole discipline of states totters and falls to pieces. For in the minds of many the love of equity and justice grows cold, if due honour be not paid to virtue, and the licentiousness of the wicked cannot be restrained, without strict discipline and the infliction of punishment. The two things are comprehended by the prophet when he enjoins kings and other rulers to execute "judgement and righteousness," (Jer. 21: 12; 22: 3.) It is righteousness (justice) to take charge at the innocent, to defend and avenge them, and set them free: it is judgement to withstand the audacity of the wicked, to repress their violence and punish their faults.

10. The magistrates' exercise of force is compatible with piety

But here a difficulty and, as it seems, a perplexing question arises. If all Christians are forbidden to kill, and the prophet predicts concerning the holy mountain of the Lords that is, the Church, "They shall not hurt or destroy," how can magistrates be at once pious and yet shedders at blood?

But if we understand that the magistrate, in inflicting punishment, acts not of himself, but executes the very judgements of God, we shall be disencumbered of every doubt. The law of the Lord forbids to kill but, that murder may not go unpunished, the Lawgiver himself puts the sword into the hands of his ministers, that they may employ it against all murderers. It belongs not to the pious to afflict and hurt, but to avenge the afflictions of the pious, at the command of God, is neither to afflict nor hurt. I wish it could always be present to our mind, that nothing is done here by the rashness of man, but all in obedience to the authority of God. When it is the guide, we never stray from the right path, unless, indeed, divine justice is to be placed under restraint, and not allowed to take punishment on crimes. But if we dare not give the law to it, why should we bring a charge against its ministers? "He beareth not the sword in vain," says Paul, "for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath on him that does evil," (Rom. 13: 4.) Wherefore, if princes and other rulers know that nothing will be more acceptable to God than their obedience, let them give themselves to this service if they are desirous, to approve their piety, justice, and integrity to God.

This, was the feeling of Moses when, recognising himself as destined to deliver his people by the power of the Lord, he laid violent hands on the Egyptian, and afterwards took vengeance on the people for sacrilege, by slaying three thousand of them in one day. This was the feeling of David also, when, towards the end of his life, he ordered his son Solomon to put Joab and Shimei to death. Hence, also, in an enumeration of the virtues of a king, one is to cut off the wicked from the earth, and banish all workers of iniquity from

the city of God. To the same effect is the praise which is bestowed on Solomon, "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness."

How is it that the meek and gentle temper of Moses becomes so exasperated, that, besmeared and reeking with the blood of his brethren, he runs through the camp making new slaughter? How is it that David, who, during his whole life, showed so much mildness, almost at his last breath leaves with his son the bloody testament, not to allow the grey hairs of Joab and Shimei to go to the grave in peace? Both, by their sternness, sanctified the hands which they would have polluted by showing mercy, inasmuch as they executed the vengeance committed to them by God. Solomon says, "It is an abomination to kings to commit wickedness; for the throne is established by righteousness." Again, "A king that sitteth in the throne of judgement, scattereth away all evil with his eyes." Again, "A wise king scattereth the wicked, and bringeth the wheel over them." Again, "Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer. Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness." Again "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord." Again, "An evil man seeketh only rebellion, therefore an evil messenger shall be sent against him." Again, "He that saith unto the wicked, Thou art righteous; him shall the people curse, nations shall abhor him."

Now, if it is true justice in them to pursue the guilty and impious with drawn sword, to sheath the sword, and keep their hands pure from blood, while nefarious men wade through murder and slaughter, so far from redounding to the praise of their goodness and justice, would be to incur the guilt of the greatest impiety; provided, always, they eschew reckless and cruel asperity, and that tribunal which may be justly termed a rock on which the accused must founder. For I am not one of those who would either favour an unseasonable severity, or think that any tribunal could be accounted just that is not presided over by mercy, that best and surest counsellor of kings, and, as Solomon declares, "upholder of the throne," (Prov. 20: 28.) This, as was truly said by one of old, should be the primary endowment of princes.

The magistrate must guard against both extremes; he must neither, by excessive severity, rather wound than cure, nor by a superstitious affectation of clemency, fall into the most cruel inhumanity, by giving way to soft and dissolute indulgence to the destruction of many. It was well said by one under the empire of Nerva, It is indeed a bad thing to live under a prince with whom nothing is lawful, but a much worse to live under one with whom all things are lawful.

11. *On the right of the government to wage war*

As it is sometimes necessary for kings and states to take up arms in order to execute public vengeance, the reason assigned furnishes us with the means of estimating how far the wars which are thus undertaken are lawful. For if power has been given them to maintain the tranquillity of their subjects, repress the seditious movements of the turbulent, assist those who are violently oppressed, and animadvert on crimes, can they rise it more opportunely than in repressing the fury of him who disturbs both the ease of individuals and the common tranquillity of all; who excites seditious tumult, and perpetrates acts of violent oppression and gross wrongs? If it becomes them to be the

guardians and maintainers of the laws, they must repress the attempts of all alike by whose criminal conduct the discipline of the laws is impaired. Nay, if they justly punish those robbers whose injuries have been inflicted only on a few, will they allow the whole country to be robbed and devastated with impunity? Since it makes no difference whether it is by a king or by the lowest of the people that a hostile and devastating inroad is made into a district over which they have no authority, all alike are to be regarded and punished as robbers. Natural equity and duty, therefore, demand that princes be armed not only to repress private crimes by judicial inflictions, but to defend the subjects committed to their guardianship whenever they are hostilely assailed. Such even the Holy Spirit, in many passages of Scripture, declares to be lawful.

12. Restraint and humanity in war

But if it is objected that in the New Testament there is no passage or example teaching that war is lawful for Christians, I answer, first, that the reason for carrying on war, which anciently existed, still exists in the present day, and that, on the other hand, there is no ground for debarring magistrates from the defence of those under them; And, secondly, that in the Apostolical writings we are not to look for a distinct exposition of those matters, their object being not to form a civil polity but to establish the spiritual kingdom of Christ; lastly, that there also it is indicated, in passing, that our Saviour, by his advent, made no change in this respect. For (to use the words of Augustine) "if Christian discipline condemned all wars, when the soldiers asked counsel as to the way of salvation, they would have been told to cast away their arms, and withdraw altogether from military service. Whereas it was said, (Luke 3: 14,) Concuss no one, do injury to no one, be contented with your pay. Those who he orders to be contented with their pay he certainly does not forbid to serve," (August. Ep. 5 ad Marcell.)

But all magistrates must here be particularly cautious not to give way, in the slightest degree, to their passions. Or rather, whether punishments are to be inflicted, they must not be borne headlong by anger, nor hurried away by hatred, nor burn with implacable severity; they must, as Augustine says, (De Civil. Dei, Lib. 5 cap. 24,) "even pity a common nature in him in whom they punish an individual fault;" or whether they have to take up arms against an enemy, that is, an armed robber, they must not readily catch at the opportunity, nay, they must not take it when offered, unless compelled by the strongest necessity. For if we are to do far more than that heathen demanded who wished war to appear as desired peace, assuredly all other means must be tried before having recourse to arms. In fine, in both cases, they must not allow themselves to be carried away by any private feeling, but be guided solely by regard for the public. Acting otherwise, they wickedly abuse their power which was given them, not for their own advantage, but for the good and service of others.

On this right of war depends the right of garrisons, leagues, and other civil munitions. By garrisons, I mean those which are stationed in states for defence of the frontiers; by leagues, the alliances which are made by neighbouring princess on the ground that if any disturbance arise within their territories, they will mutually assist each other, and combine their forces to repel the common enemies of the human race; under civil munitions I include every thing pertaining to the military art.

13. *Concerning the right of the government to levy tribute*

Lastly, we think it proper to add, that taxes and imposts are the legitimate revenues of princes, which they are chiefly to employ in sustaining the public burdens of their office. These however, they may use for the maintenance of their domestic state, which is in a manner combined with the dignity of the authority which they exercise. Thus we see that David, Hezekiah, Josiah, Jehoshaphat, and other holy kings, Joseph also and Daniel, in proportion to the office which they sustained, without offending piety, expended liberally of the public funds; and we read in Ezekiel, that a very large extent of territory was assigned to kings, (Ezek. 48: 21.) In that passage, indeed, he is depicting the spiritual kingdom of Christ, but still he borrows his representation from lawful dominion among men.

Princes, however, must remember, in their turn, that their revenues are not so much private chests as treasuries of the whole people, (this Paul testifies, Rom. 13: 6,) which they cannot, without manifest injustice, squander or dilapidate; or rather, that they are almost the blood of the people, which it were the harshest inhumanity not to spare. They should also consider that their levies and contributions, and other kinds of taxes, are merely subsidies of the public necessity, and that it is tyrannical rapacity to harass the poor people with them without cause.

These things do not stimulate princes to profusion and luxurious expenditure, (there is certainly no need to inflame the passions, when they are already, of their own accord, inflamed more than enough,) but seeing it is of the greatest consequence that, whatever they venture to do, they should do with a pure conscience, it is necessary to teach them how far they can lawfully go, lest, by impious confidence, they incur the divine displeasure. Nor is this doctrine superfluous to private individuals, that they may not rashly and petulantly stigmatise the expenditure of princes, though it should exceed the ordinary limits.

(Public law and judicial procedures, as related to Christian duty, 14-21)

14. *Old Testament law and the law of nations*

In states, the thing next in importance to the magistrates is laws, the strongest sinews of government, or, as Cicero calls them after Plato, the soul, without which, the office of the magistrate cannot exist; just as, on the other hand, laws have no vigour without the magistrate. Hence nothing could be said more truly than that the law is a dumb magistrate, the magistrate a living law.

As I have undertaken to describe the laws by which Christian polity is to be governed, there is no reason to expect from me a long discussion on the best kind of laws. The subject is of vast extent, and belongs not to this place. I will only briefly observe, in passing, what the laws are which may be piously used with reference to God, and duly administered among men.

This I would rather have passed in silence, were I not aware that many dangerous errors are here committed. For there are some who deny that any commonwealth is rightly framed which neglects the law of Moses, and is ruled by the common law of nations. How perilous and seditious these views are, let others see: for me it is enough to demonstrate that they are stupid and false.

We must attend to the well-known division which distributes the whole law of God, as promulgated by Moses, into the moral, the ceremonial, and the judicial law, and we must attend to each of these parts, in order to understand how far they do, or do not, pertain to us. Meanwhile, let no one be moved by the thought that the judicial and ceremonial laws relate to morals. For the ancients who adopted this division, though they were not unaware that the two latter classes had to do with morals, did not give them the name of moral, because they might be changed and abrogated without affecting morals. They give this name specially to the first class, without which, true holiness of life and an immutable rule of conduct cannot exist.

15. Moral, ceremonial, and judicial law distinguished

The moral law, then, (to begin with it,) being contained under two heads, the one of which simply enjoins us to worship God with pure faith and piety, the other to embrace men with sincere affection, is the true and eternal rule of righteousness prescribed to the men of all nations and of all times, who would frame their life agreeably to the will of God. For his eternal and immutable will is, that we are all to worship him, and mutually love one another.

The ceremonial law of the Jews was a tutelage by which the Lord was pleased to exercise, as it were, the childhood of that people, until the fullness of the time should come when he was fully to manifest his wisdom to the world, and exhibit the reality of those things which were then adumbrated by figures, (Gal. 3: 24; 4: 4.)

The judicial law, given them as a kind of polity, delivered certain forms of equity and justice, by which they might live together innocently and quietly.

And as that exercise in ceremonies properly pertained to the doctrine of piety, inasmuch as it kept the Jewish Church in the worship and religion of God, yet was still distinguishable from piety itself, so the judicial form, though it looked only to the best method of preserving that charity which is enjoined by the eternal law of God, was still something distinct from the precept of love itself. Therefore, as ceremonies might be abrogated without at all interfering with piety, so also, when these judicial arrangements are removed, the duties and precepts of charity can still remain perpetual.

But if it is true that each nation has been left at liberty to enact the laws which it judges to be beneficial, still these are always to be tested by the rule of charity, so that while they vary in form, they must proceed on the same principle. Those barbarous and savage laws, for instance, which conferred honour on thieves, allowed the promiscuous intercourse of the sexes, and other things even fouler and more absurd, I do not think entitled to be considered as laws, since they are not only altogether abhorrent to justice, but to humanity and civilised life.

16. Unity and diversity of laws

What I have said will become plain if we attend, as we ought, to two things connected with all laws, viz., the enactment of the law, and the equity on which the enactment is founded and rests. Equity, as it is natural, cannot but be the same in all, and therefore ought to be proposed by all laws, according to the nature of the thing enacted. As

constitutions have some circumstances on which they partly depend, there is nothing to prevent their diversity, provided they all alike aim at equity as their end.

Now, as it is evident that the law of God which we call moral, is nothing else than the testimony of natural law, and of that conscience which God has engraven on the minds of men, the whole of this equity of which we now speak is prescribed in it. Hence it alone ought to be the aim, the rule, and the end of all laws.

Wherever laws are formed after this rule, directed to this aim, and restricted to this end, there is no reason why they should be disapproved by us, however much they may differ from the Jewish law, or from each other, (August. de Civil. Dei, Lib. 19 c. 17.)

The law of God forbids to steal. The punishment appointed for theft in the civil polity of the Jews may be seen in Exodus 22. Very ancient laws of other nations punished theft by exacting the double of what was stolen, while subsequent laws made a distinction between theft manifest and not manifest. Other laws went the length of punishing with exile, or with branding, while others made the punishment capital. Among the Jews, the punishment of the false witness was to "do unto him as he had thought to have done with his brothers" (Deut. 19: 19.) In some countries, the punishment is infamy, in others, hanging; in others, crucifixion. All laws alike avenge murder with blood, but the kinds of death are different. In some countries, adultery was punished more severely, in others more leniently. Yet we see that amid this diversity they all tend to the same end. For they all with one mouth declare against those crimes which are condemned by the eternal law at God, viz., murder, theft, adultery, and false witness; though they agree not as to the mode of punishment. This is not necessary, nor even expedient. There may be a country which, if murder were not visited with fearful punishments, would instantly become a prey to robbery and slaughter. There may be an age requiring that the severity of punishments should be increased. If the state is in a troubled condition, those things from which disturbances usually arise must be corrected by new edicts. In time of war, civilisation would disappear amid the noise of arms, were not men overawed by an unwonted severity of punishment. In sterility, in pestilence, were not stricter discipline employed, all things would grow worse. One nation might be more prone to a particular vice, were it not most severely repressed. How malignant were it, and invidious of the public good, to be offended at this diversity, which is admirably adapted to retain the observance of the divine law.

The allegation, that insult is offered to the law of God enacted by Moses, where it is abrogated and other new laws are preferred to it, is most absurd. Others are not preferred when they are more approved, not absolutely, but from regard to time and place, and the condition of the people, or when those things are abrogated which were never enacted for us. The Lord did not deliver it by the hand of Moses to be promulgated in all countries, and to be everywhere enforced; but having taken the Jewish nation under his special care, patronage, and guardianship, he was pleased to be specially its legislator, and as became a wise legislator, he had special regard to it in enacting laws.

17. Christians may use the law courts, but without hatred and revenge

It now remains to see, as was proposed in the last place, what use the common society of Christians derive from laws, judicial proceedings, and magistrates. With this is connected another question, viz., What deference ought private individuals to pay to magistrates,

and how far ought obedience to proceed? To very many it seems that among Christians the office of magistrate is superfluous, because they cannot piously implore his aid, inasmuch as they are forbidden to take revenge, cite before a judge, or go to law. But when Paul, on the contrary, clearly declares that he is the minister of God to us for good, (Rom. 13: 4,) we thereby understand that he was so ordained of God, that, being defended by his hand and aid against the dishonesty and injustice of wicked men, we may live quiet and secure. But if he would have been appointed over us in vain, unless we were to use his aid, it is plain that it cannot be wrong to appeal to it and implore it. Here, indeed, I have to do with two classes of men. For there are very many who boil with such a rage for litigation, that they never can be quiet with themselves unless they are fighting with others. Law-suits they prosecute with the bitterness of deadly hatred, and with an insane eagerness to hurt and revenge, and they persist in them with implacable obstinacy, even to the ruin of their adversary. Meanwhile, that they may be thought to do nothing but what is legal, they use this pretext of judicial proceedings as a defence of their perverse conduct. But if it is lawful for brother to litigate with brother, it does not follow that it is lawful to hate him, and obstinately pursue him with a furious desire to do him harm.

18. The Christian's motives in litigation

Let such persons then understand that judicial proceedings are lawful to him who makes a right use of them; and the right use, both for the pursuer and for the defender, is for the latter to sist himself on the day appointed, and, without bitterness, urge what he can in his defence, but only with the desire of justly maintaining his right; and for the pursuer, when undeservedly attacked in his life or fortunes, to throw himself upon the protection of the magistrate, state his complaint, and demand what is just and good; while, far from any wish to hurt or take vengeance - far from bitterness and hatred - far from the Armour of strife, he is rather disposed to yield and suffer somewhat than to cherish hostile feelings towards his opponent. On the contrary when minds are filled with malevolence, corrupted by envy, burning with anger, breathing revenge, or, in fine, so inflamed by the heat of the contest, that they, in some measure, lay aside charity, the whole pleading, even of the justest cause, cannot but be impious. For it ought to be an axiom among all Christians, that no plea, however equitable, can be rightly conducted by any one who does not feel as kindly towards his opponent as if the matter in dispute were amicably transacted and arranged. Some one, perhaps, may here break in and say, that such moderation in judicial proceedings is so far from being seen, that an instance of it would be a kind of prodigy. I confess that in these times it is rare to meet with an example of an honest litigant; but the thing itself, untainted by the accession of evil, ceases not to be good and pure. When we hear that the assistance of the magistrate is a sacred gift from God, we ought the more carefully to beware of polluting it by our fault.

19. Against the rejection of the judicial process

Let those who distinctly condemn all judicial discussion know, that they repudiate the holy ordinance of God, and one of those gifts which to the pure are pure (Titus 1:15), unless, indeed, they would charge Paul with a crime, because he repelled the calumnies

of his accusers, exposing their craft and wickedness (Acts 24:12f), and, at the tribunal, claimed for himself the privilege of a Roman citizen (Acts 16:37; 22:1,25), appealing, when necessary, from the governor to Caesar's judgement-seat (Acts 25:10-11).

There is nothing contrary to this in the prohibition, which binds all Christians to refrain from revenge, a feeling which we drive far away from all Christian tribunals (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 5:39; Deut. 32:35; Rom. 12:19). For whether the action be of a civil nature, he only takes the right course who, with innocuous simplicity, commits his cause to the judge as the public protector, without any thought of returning evil for evil (Rom. 12:17), (which is, the feeling of revenge;) or whether the action is of a graver nature, directed against a capital offence, the accuser required is not one who comes into court, carried away by some feeling of revenge or resentment from some private injury, but one whose only object is to prevent the attempts of some bad man to injure the commonweal. But if you take away the vindictive mind, you offend in no respect against that command which forbids Christians to indulge revenge.

But they are not only forbidden to thirst for revenge, they are also enjoined to wait for the hand of the Lord, who promises that he will be the avenger of the oppressed and afflicted. But those who call upon the magistrate to give assistance to themselves or others, anticipate the vengeance of the heavenly Judge. By no means, for we are to consider that the vengeance of the magistrate is the vengeance not of man, but of God, which, as Paul says, he exercises by the ministry of man for our good, (Rom. 13: 4.)

20. The Christian endures insults, but with amity and equity defends the public interest

No more are we at variance with the words of Christ, who forbids us to resist evil, and adds, "Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also" (Matth. 5: 39, 40.) He would have the minds of his followers to be so abhorrent to everything like retaliation, that they would sooner allow the injury to be doubled than desire to repay it. From this patience we do not dissuade them. For verily Christians were to be a class of men born to endure affronts and injuries, and be exposed to the iniquity, imposture, and derision of abandoned men, and not only so, but were to be tolerant of all these evils; that is, so composed in the whole frame of their minds, that, on receiving one offence, they were to prepare themselves for another, promising themselves nothing during the whole of life but the endurance of a perpetual cross. Meanwhile, they must do good to those who injure them, and pray for those who curse them, and (this is their only victory) strive to overcome evil with good, (Rom. 12: 20, 21.) Thus affected, they will not seek eye for eye, and tooth for tooth, (as the Pharisees taught their disciples to long for vengeance,) but (as we are instructed by Christ) they will allow their body to be mutilated, and their goods to be maliciously taken from them, prepared to remit and spontaneously pardon those injuries the moment they have been inflicted.

This equity and moderation, however, will not prevent them, with entire friendship for their enemies, from using the aid of the magistrate for the preservation of their goods, or, from zeal for the public interest, to call for the punishment of the wicked and pestilential man, whom they know nothing will reform but death. All these precepts are truly expounded by Augustine, as tending to prepare the just and pious man patiently to sustain the malice of those whom he desires to become good, that he may thus increase the

number of the good, not add himself to the number of the bad by imitating their wickedness. Moreover, it pertains more to the preparation of the heart which is within, than to the work which is done openly, that patience and good-will may be retained within the secret of the heart, and that may be done openly which we see may do good to those to whom we ought to wish well, (August. Ep. 5: ad Marcell.)

21. Paul condemns a litigious spirit, but not all litigation

The usual objection, that law-suits are universally condemned by Paul, (1 Cor. 6: 6,) is false. It may easily be understood from his words, that a rage for litigation prevailed in the church of Corinth to such a degree, that they exposed the gospel of Christ, and the whole religion which they professed, to the calumnies and cavils of the ungodly. Paul rebukes them, first for traducing the gospel to unbelievers by the intemperance of their dissensions; and, secondly, for so striving with each other while they were brethren. For so far were they from bearing injury from another, that they greedily coveted each other's effects, and voluntarily provoked and injured them. He inveighs, therefore, against that madness for litigation, and not absolutely against all kinds of disputes.

He declares it to be altogether a vice or infirmity, that they do not submit to the loss of their effects, rather than strive, even to contention, in preserving them; in other words, seeing they were so easily moved by every kind of loss, and on every occasion, however slight, ran off to the forum and to law-suits, he says, that in this way they showed that they were of too irritable a temper, and not prepared for patience. Christians should always feel disposed rather to give up part of their right than to go into court, out of which they can scarcely come without a troubled mind, a mind inflamed with hatred of their brother. But when one sees that his property, the want of which he would grievously feel, he is able, without any loss of charity, to defend, if he should do so, he offends in no respect against that passage of Paul. In short, as we said at first, every man's best adviser is charity. Every thing in which we engage without charity, and all the disputes which carry us beyond it, are unquestionably unjust and impious.

(Obedience, with reverence, due even unjust rulers, 22-29)

22. Deference

The first duty of subjects towards their rulers, is to entertain the most honourable views of their office, recognising it as a delegated jurisdiction from God, and on that account receiving and reverencing them as the ministers and ambassadors of God. For you will find some who show themselves very obedient to magistrates, and would be unwilling that there should be no magistrates to obey, because they know this is expedient for the public good, and yet the opinion which those persons have of magistrates is that they are a kind of necessary evils. But Peter requires something more of us when he says, "Honour the king," (1 Pet. 2: 17;) and Solomon, when he says, "My son, fear thou the Lord and the king," (Prov. 24: 21.) For, under the term honour, the former includes a sincere and candid esteem, and the latter, by joining the king with God, shows that he is invested with a kind of sacred veneration and dignity. We have also the remarkable injunction of Paul, "Be subject not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake," (Rom. 13: 5.) By this he means, that subjects, in submitting to princes and governors, are not to

be influenced merely by fear, (just as those submit to an armed enemy who see vengeance ready to be executed if they resist,) but because the obedience which they yield is rendered to God himself, inasmuch as their power is from God. I speak not of the men as if the mask of dignity could cloak folly, or cowardice, or cruelty, or wicked and flagitious manners, and thus acquire for vice the praise of virtue; but I say that the station itself is deserving of honour and reverence, and that those who rule should, in respect of their office, be held by us in esteem and veneration.

23. Obedience

From this, a second consequence is, that we must with ready minds prove our obedience to them, whether in complying with edicts, or in paying tribute, or in undertaking public offices and burdens which relate to the common defence, or in executing any other orders. "Let every soul", says Paul, "be subject unto the higher powers." "Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God," (Rom. 13: 1, 2.) Writing to Titus, he says, "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work," (Tit. 3: 1.) Peter also says, "Submit yourselves to every human creature," (or rather, as I understand it, "ordinance of man,") "for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well," (1 Pet. 2: 13.) Moreover, to testify that they do not feign subjection, but are sincerely and cordially subject, Paul adds, that they are to commend the safety and prosperity of those under whom they live to God. "I exhort, therefore," says he, "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," (1 Tim. 2: 1, 2.)

Let no man here deceive himself, since we cannot resist the magistrate without resisting God. For, although an unarmed magistrate may seem to be despised with impunity, yet God is armed, and will signally avenge this contempt.

Under this obedience, I comprehend the restraint which private men ought to impose on themselves in public, not interfering with public business, or rashly encroaching on the province of the magistrate, or attempting any thing at all of a public nature. If it is proper that any thing in a public ordinance should be corrected, let them not act tumultuously, or put their hands to a work where they ought to feel that their hands are tied, but let them leave it to the cognisance of the magistrate, whose hand alone here is free. My meaning is, let them not dare to do it without being ordered. For when the command of the magistrate is given, they too are invested with public authority. For as, according to the common saying, the eyes and ears of the prince are his counsellors, so one may not improperly say that those who, by his command, have the charge of managing affairs, are his hands.

24. Obedience is also due the unjust magistrate

But as we have hitherto described the magistrate who truly is what he is called, viz., the father of his country, and (as the Poet speaks) the pastor of the people, the guardian of

peace, the president of justice, the vindicator of innocence, he is justly to be deemed a madman who disapproves of such authority.

And since in almost all ages we see that some princes, careless about all their duties on which they ought to have been intent, live, without solicitude, in luxurious sloth, others, bent on their own interests venally prostitute all rights, privileges, judgements, and enactments; others pillage poor people of their money, and afterwards squander it in insane largesses; others act as mere robbers, pillaging houses, violating matrons and slaying the innocent; many cannot be persuaded to recognise such persons for princes, whose command, as far as lawful, they are bound to obey.

For while in this unworthy conduct, and among atrocities so alien, not only from the duty of the magistrate, but also of the man, they behold no appearance of the image of God, which ought to be conspicuous in the magistrates while they see not a vestige of that minister of God, who was appointed to be a praise to the good and a terror to the bad, they cannot recognise the ruler whose dignity and authority Scripture recommends to us. And, undoubtedly, the natural feeling of the human mind has always been not less to assail tyrants with hatred and execrations than to look up to just kings with love and veneration.

25. The wicked ruler a judgment of God

But if we have respect to the word of God, it will lead us farther, and make us subject not only to the authority of those princes who honestly and faithfully perform their duty toward us, but all princes, by whatever means they have so become, although there is nothing they less perform than the duty of princes. For though the Lord declares that ruler to maintain our safety is the highest gift of his beneficence, and prescribes to rulers themselves their proper sphere, he at the same time declares, that of whatever description they may be, they derive their power from none but him. Those, indeed, who rule for the public good, are true examples and specimens of big beneficence, while those who domineer unjustly and tyrannically are raised up by him to punish the people for their iniquity. Still all alike possess that sacred majesty with which he has invested lawful power.

I will not proceed further without subjoining some distinct passages to this effect. We need not labour to prove that an impious king is a mark of the Lord's anger, since I presume no one will deny it, and that this is not less true of a king than of a robber who plunders your goods, an adulterer who defiles your bed, and an assassin who aims at your life, since all such calamities are classed by Scripture among the curses of God.

But let us insist at greater length in proving what does not so easily fall in with the views of men, that even an individual of the worst character, one most unworthy of all honour, if invested with public authority, receives that illustrious divine power which the Lord has by his word devolved on the ministers of his justice and judgment, and that, accordingly, in so far as public obedience is concerned, he is to be held in the same honour and reverence as the best of kings.

26. Obedience to bad kings required in Scripture

And, first, I would have the reader carefully to attend to that Divine Providence which, not without cause, is so often set before us in Scripture, and that special act of distributing kingdoms, and setting up as kings whomsoever he pleases. In Daniel it is said, "He changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings," (Dan. 2: 21, 37.) Again, "That the living may know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will," (Dan. 4: 17, 20.) Similar sentiments occur throughout Scripture, but they abound particularly in the prophetic books. What kind of king Nebuchadnezzar, he who stormed Jerusalem, was, is well known. He was an active invader and devastator of other countries. Yet the Lord declares in Ezekiel that he had given him the land of Egypt as his hire for the devastation which he had committed. Daniel also said to him, "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven has given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven has he given into thine hand, and has made thee ruler over them all," (Dan. 2: 37, 38.) Again, he says to his son Belshazzar, "The most high God gave Nebuchadnezzar thy father a kingdom, and majesty, and glory, and honour: and for the majesty that he gave him, all people, nations, and languages, trembled and feared before him," (Dan. 5: 18, 19.) When we hear that the king was appointed by God, let us, at the same time, call to mind those heavenly edicts as to honouring and fearing the king, and we shall have no doubt that we are to view the most iniquitous tyrant as occupying the place with which the Lord has honoured him. When Samuel declared to the people of Israel what they would suffer from their kings, he said, "This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectioneries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants," (1 Sam. 8: 11-17.) Certainly these things could not be done legally by kings, whom the law trained most admirably to all kinds of restraint; but it was called justice in regard to the people, because they were bound to obey, and could not lawfully resist: as if Samuel had said, To such a degree will kings indulge in tyranny, which it will not be for you to restrain. The only thing remaining for you will be to receive their commands, and be obedient to their words.

27. The case of Nebuchadnezzar in Jeremiah ch. 27 ...

28. General testimonies of Scripture on the sanctity of the royal person

It is vain to object, that that command was specially given to the Israelites. For we must attend to the ground on which the Lord places it - "I have given the kingdom to Nebuchadnezzar; therefore serve him and live." (Jer. 27). Let us doubt not that on

whomsoever the kingdom has been conferred, him we are bound to serve. Whenever God raises any one to royal honour, he declares it to be his pleasure that he should reign. To this effect we have general declarations in Scripture. Solomon says - "For the transgression of a land, many are the princes thereof," (Prov. 28: 2.) Job says "He looseth the bond of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle," (Job 12: 18.) This being confessed, nothing remains for us but to serve and live.

There is in Jeremiah another command in which the Lord thus orders his people - "Seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof shall ye have peace," (Jer. 29: 7.) Here the Israelites, plundered of all their property, torn from their homes, driven into exile, thrown into miserable bondage, are ordered to pray for the prosperity of the victor, not as we are elsewhere ordered to pray for our persecutors, but that his kingdom may be preserved in safety and tranquillity, that they too may live prosperously under him. Thus David, when already king elect by the ordination of God, and anointed with his holy oil, though ceaselessly and unjustly assailed by Saul, holds the life of one who was seeking his life to be sacred, because the Lord had invested him with royal honour. "The Lord forbid that I should do this thing unto my master, the Lord's anointed, to stretch forth mine hand against him seeing he is the anointed of the Lord." "Mine eye spared thee; and I said, I will not put forth mine hand against my lord; for he is the Lord's anointed," (1 Sam. 24: 6, 11.) Again, - "Who can stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed, and be guiltless?" "As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him, or his day shall come to die, or he shall descend into battle, and perish. The Lord forbid that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed," (1 Sam. 26: 9-11.)

29. It is not the part of subjects but of God to vindicate the right

This feeling of reverence, and even of piety, we owe to the utmost to all our rulers, be their characters what they may. This I repeat the softener, that we may learn not to consider the individuals themselves, but hold it to be enough that by the will of the Lord they sustain a character on which he has impressed and engraven inviolable majesty. But rulers, you will say, owe mutual duties to those under them. This I have already confessed. But if from this you conclude that obedience is to be returned to none but just governors, you reason absurdly. Husbands are bound by mutual duties to their wives, and parents to their children. Should husbands and parents neglect their duty; should the latter be harsh and severe to the children whom they are enjoined not to provoke to anger (Eph. 6:4), and by their severity harass them beyond measure; should the former treat with the greatest contumely the wives whom they are enjoined to love (Eph. 5:25) and to spare as the weaker vessels (I Peter 3:7); would children be less bound in duty to their parents, and wives to their husbands? They are made subject to the froward and undutiful. Nay, since the duty of all is not to look behind them, that is, not to inquire into the duties of one another but to submit each to his own duty, this ought especially to be exemplified in the case of those who are placed under the power of others. Wherefore, if we are cruelly tormented by a savage, if we are rapaciously pillaged by an avaricious or luxurious, if we are neglected by a sluggish, if, in short, we are persecuted for righteousness' sake by an impious and sacrilegious prince, let us first call up the remembrance of our faults, which doubtless the Lord is chastising by such scourges. In

this way humility will curb our impatience. And let us reflect that it belongs not to us to cure these evils, that all that remains for us is to implore the help of the Lord, in whose hands are the hearts of kings, and inclinations of kingdoms (Prov. 21:1). "God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods." (Ps. 82:1). Before his face shall fall and be crushed all kings and judges of the earth, who have not kissed his anointed, who have enacted unjust laws to oppress the poor in judgement, and do violence to the cause of the humble, to make widows a prey, and plunder the fatherless (Isa. 10:1-2).

(Constitutional magistrates, however, ought to check the tyranny of kings; obedience to God comes first, 30-31)

30. When God intervenes, it is sometimes by unwitting agents

Herein is the goodness, power, and providence of God wondrously displayed. At one time he raises up manifest avengers from among his own servants and gives them his command to punish accursed tyranny and deliver his people from calamity when they are unjustly oppressed; at another time he employs, for this purpose, the fury of men who have other thoughts and other aims. Thus he rescued his people Israel from the tyranny of Pharaoh by Moses; from the violence of Chusa, king of Syria, by Othniel; and from other bondage by other kings or judges. Thus he tamed the pride of Tyre by the Egyptians; the insolence of the Egyptians by the Assyrians; the ferocity of the Assyrians by the Chaldeans; the confidence of Babylon by the Medes and Persians, - Cyrus having previously subdued the Medes, while the ingratitude of the kings of Judah and Israel, and their impious contumacy after all his kindness, he subdued and punished, - at one time by the Assyrians, at another by the Babylonians. All these things however were not done in the same way.

The former class of deliverers being brought forward by the lawful call of God to perform such deeds, when they took up arms against kings, did not at all violate that majesty with which kings are invested by divine appointment, but armed from heaven, they, by a greater power, curbed a less, just as kings may lawfully punish their own satraps. The latter class, though they were directed by the hand of God, as seemed to him good, and did his work without knowing it, had nought but evil in their thoughts.

31. Constitutional defenders of the people's freedom

But whatever may be thought of the acts of the men themselves, the Lord by their means equally executed his own work, when he broke the bloody sceptres of insolent kings, and overthrew their intolerable dominations. Let princes hear and be afraid; but let us at the same time guard most carefully against spurning or violating the venerable and majestic authority of rulers, an authority which God has sanctioned by the surest edicts, although those invested with it should be most unworthy of it, and, as far as in them lies, pollute it by their iniquity. Although the Lord takes vengeance on unbridled domination, let us not therefore suppose that that vengeance is committed to us, to whom no command has been given but to obey and suffer.

I speak only of private men. For when popular magistrates have been appointed to curb the tyranny of kings, (as the Ephori, who were opposed to kings among the Spartans, or

Tribunes of the people to consuls among the Romans, or Demarchs to the senate among the Athenians; and, perhaps, there is something similar to this in the power exercised in each kingdom by the three orders, when they hold their primary diets.) So far am I from forbidding these officially to check the undue license of kings, that if they connive at kings when they tyrannise and insult over the humbler of the people, I affirm that their dissimulation is not free from nefarious perfidy, because they fraudulently betray the liberty of the people, while knowing that, by the ordinance of God, they are its appointed guardians.

32. Obedience to man must not become disobedience to God

But in that obedience which we hold to be due to the commands of rulers, we must always make the exception, nay, must be particularly careful that it is not incompatible with obedience to Him to whose will the wishes of all kings should be subject, to whose decrees their commands must yield, to whose majesty their sceptres must bow. And, indeed, how preposterous were it, in pleasing men, to incur the offence of Him for whose sake you obey men! The Lord, therefore, is King of kings. When he opens his sacred mouth, he alone is to be heard, instead of all and above all. We are subject to the men who rule over us, but subject only in the Lord. If they command any thing against Him, let us not pay the least regard to it, nor be moved by all the dignity which they possess as magistrates - a dignity to which, no injury is done when it is subordinated to the special and truly supreme power of God. On this ground Daniel denies that he had sinned in any respect against the king when he refused to obey his impious decree, (Dan. 6: 22,) because the king had exceeded his limits, and not only been injurious to men, but, by raising his horn against God, had virtually abrogated his own power. On the other hand, the Israelites are condemned for having too readily obeyed the impious edict of the king. For, when Jeroboam made the golden calf, they forsook the temple of God, and, in submissiveness to him, revolted to new superstitions, (1 Kings 12: 28.) With the same facility posterity had bowed before the decrees of their kings. For this they are severely upbraided by the Prophet, (Hosea 5: 11.) So far is the praise of modesty from being due to that pretence by which flattering courtiers cloak themselves, and deceive the simple, when they deny the lawfulness of declining any thing imposed by their kings, as if the Lord had resigned his own rights to mortals by appointing them to rule over their fellows or as if earthly power were diminished when it is subjected to its author, before whom even the principalities of heaven tremble as suppliants. I know the imminent peril to which subjects expose themselves by this firmness, kings being most indignant when they are condemned. As Solomon says, "The wrath of a king is as messengers of death," (Prov. 16: 14.) But since Peter, one of heaven's heralds, has published the edict, "We ought to obey God rather than men," (Acts 5: 29,) let us console ourselves with the thought, that we are rendering the obedience which the Lord requires when we endure anything rather than turn aside from piety. And that our courage may not fail, Paul stimulates us by the additional considerations (1 Cor. 7: 23,) that we were redeemed by Christ at the great price which our redemption cost him, in order that we might not yield a slavish obedience to the depraved wishes of men, far less do homage to their impiety.

CHAPTER 3 : EXCERPTS FROM GEORGE GILLESPIE'S *WHOLESOME SEVERITY RECONCILED WITH CHRISTIAN LIBERTY*

...THE TRUE RESOLUTION of a present Controversy concerning Liberty of Conscience.

Concerning this Question there are three opinions; two extremes, and one in the middle. So it is resolved not only by D. *Voetius*, in his late Disputations *De Libertate conscientia*, but long before by *Calvin*, in his Refutation of the errors of *Servetus*, where he disputeth this very question, Whether Christian Judges may lawfully punish Heretics.

The first opinion is that of the Papists, who hold it to be not only no sin, but good service to God, to extirpate by fire and sword, all that are adversaries to, or opposers of the Church and Catholic Religion. Upon this ground *Gregorius de Valentia* [*In 2^{am} 2^æ disp. 1. quæst. 11. punct. 3.*] tells us there were 180 of the *Albigenses* burnt under Pope *Innocentius* the third; and in the Council of *Constance* were burnt *John Hus* and *Hierome of Prague*.

Suarez de triplice virtute, Tract. 1. disp. 23. sect. 2. layeth down these Assertions. (1.) That all Heretics who after sufficient instruction and admonition, still persist in their error, are to be without mercy put to death. (2.) That all impenitent Heretics, though they profess to be Catholics, being convict of heresy, are to be put to death. (3.) That relapsing Heretics; though penitent, are to be put to death without mercy. (4.) That it is most probably, that Heresiarchs, Dogmatists, or the authors of an heresy, though truly penitent, yet are not to be received to favour, but delivered to the civil sword. (5.) That a heretic who hath not relapsed, if before sentence past against him, he convert of his own accord, he is not to be punished with death, but with some smaller punishment, such as perpetual imprisonment, or the like. *Ibid, Tract. 3. disp. 12. sect. 12.* he saith, that Schismatics may be punished with almost all the punishments of Heretics.

Azor. Institut. moral. Tom. 1. lib. 8. cap. 14. Utriq verò, tum relapsi, tum alii, quando pertinaces sunt, vivi igne exuruntur: si verò pertinaces non sint, prius strangulari solent, & postea comburi. See the like, *Becam, Summa part 3. Tract. 1. quæst 6. & 9. Turrian, in 2^{am} 2^æ disp. 56. dub. 1.* Some of them also maintain the compelling of Infidels to be baptized, as *Scotus in lib. 4. Sent, disp 4. quæst. 9.* and they who follow him.

The second opinion doth fall short, as far as the former doth exceed: that is, that the Magistrate ought not to inflict any punishment, nor put forth any coercive power upon Heretics or Sectaries, but on the contrary grant them liberty and toleration. This was the opinion of the *Donatists*, against which *Augustine* hath written both much and well, in divers places: though himself was once in the same error, till he did take the matter into his second and better thoughts, as is evident by his *Retractations, lib. 2. cap. 2. & epist. 48.* In the same error are the *Socinians* and *Arminians*. See *Peltii Harmonia, Artic. 21. Nic. Bodecher. Sociniano. Remonstrantismus. cap. 25.* See also *Grotii Apologeticus, cap. 6. page 130. Theoph. Nicolaid, Refut. Tractat. de Ecclesia, cap. 4. p. 33.* The very same is maintained in some Books printed amongst ourselves in this year of confusion: viz. *The bloody Tenent: Liberty of Conscience: The Compassionate Samaritan: John the Baptist:* and by Mr. *Goodwin* ... in his *Innocencies Triumph, page 8.* In which places he

denieth that the Magistrate and particularly that the two Houses of Parliament may impose any thing pertaining to the service and worship of God *under mulcts or penalties*. So *M.S. to A.S. page 53-55, &c.* disputeth against the coercive power of the Magistrate to suppress Heresies and Sects. This power the Presbyterians do ascribe to the Magistrate, as I shall shew by and by: Therefore I still aver, that Mr. *Goodwin* in denying and opposing this power, doth herein (as in divers other particulars) ascribe much less to the Magistrate than the Presbyterians do: which overthroweth that insinuation of the five Apologists, *page 19*.

The third opinion is, that the Magistrate may and ought to exercise his coercive power, in suppressing and punishing Heretics and Sectaries, less or more, according as the nature and degree of the error, schism, obstinacy, and danger of seducing others, doth require. This as it was the judgment of the orthodox Ancients, (*vide Optati opera, edit, Albaspin. pag. 204, 215.*) so it is followed by our soundest Protestant Writers; most largely by *Beza* against *Bellius* and *Monfortius*, in a peculiar Treatise *De Hareticis à Magistratu puniendis*. And though *Gerhard, Brochmand* [*de magistr. polit. cap. 2. quæst. 3. dub 2.*] and other *Lutheran* Writers, make a controversy where they need not, alleging that the *Calvinists* (so nicknamed) hold as the Papists do, that all Heretics without distinction are to be put to death: The truth is, they themselves say as much as either *Calvin* or *Beza*, or any other whom they take for adversaries in this Question, that is, that Heretics are to be punished by mulcts, imprisonments, banishments, and if they be gross idolaters or blasphemers, and seducers of others, then to be put to death. What is it else that *Calvin* teacheth, when he distinguisheth three kinds of errors: some to be tolerated with a spirit of meekness, and such as ought not to separate betwixt brethren: others not to be tolerated, but to be suppressed with a certain degree of severity: a third sort so abominable and pestiferous, that they are to be cut off by the highest punishments?

And lest it be thought that this is but the opinion of some few, that the magistrate ought thus by a strong hand, and by civil punishments suppress Heretics and Sectaries: let it be observed what is held forth and professed concerning this business, by the Reformed Churches in their public Confessions of Faith. In the latter Confession of *Helvitia, cap. 30.* it is said that the magistrate ought to *root out lies and all superstition, with all impiety and idolatry*. And after; *Let him suppress stubborn Heretics*: In the *French* Confession, *art. 39. Therefore he hath also delivered the sword into the hands of the Magistrates, to wit, that offences may be repressed, not only those which are committed against the second Table, but also against the first*. In the *Belgic* Confession, *art. 36. Therefore hath he armed the Magistrate with the sword for punishing them that do evil, and for defending such as do well. Moreover it is their duty not only to be careful and watchful for the preservation of the civil government, but also to defend the holy Ministry, and to abolish and overthrow all Idolatry, and counterfeit worship of God*. *Beza de haret, à magistr. puniend*, tells us in the beginning, that the Ministers of *Helvitia* had declared themselves to be of the same judgment, in a book published of that Argument. And toward the end he citeth the *Saxon* Confession, *Luther, Melancthon, Brentius, Bucerus, Wolfgangus Capito, and Bullinger*. The Synod of *Dort, Ses. 138*, in their sentence against the Remonstrants doth not only interdict them of all their Ecclesiastical and Academical functions, but also beseech the States General by the secular power further to suppress and restrain them.

The Arguments whereby this third or middle opinion is confirmed (that we may not build upon human authority) are these.

First, the law, *Deut.* 13.6-9, concerning the stoning and killing of him, who shall secretly entice people, saying, *Let us go after other gods*. If it be said, that this law did bind the Jews only, and is not moral nor perpetual: I answer, *Jacobus Acontius*, though he be of another opinion concerning this question than I am, yet he candidly and freely confesseth, that he seeth nothing in that law, which doth not belong to the New Testament, as well as the Old; for saith he, the reason and ground of the law, the use and end of it, is moral and perpetual, *verse 11. All Israel shall hear and fear, and shall do no more any such wickedness, as this is among you*. But yet, saith *Acontius*, this law doth not concern Heretics, who believe and teach errors concerning the true God or his worship; but only Apostates who fall away to other gods: In this I shall not much contend with him; only thus far, if Apostates are to be stoned and killed according to that law, then surely seducing Heretics are also to receive their measure and proportion of punishment; The moral equity of the law requireth thus much at least, that if we compare Heresy and Apostacy together, look how much less the evil of sin is in Heresy, so much and no more is to be remitted of the evil of punishment, especially the danger of contagion and seducement, being as much or rather more in Heresy than in Apostacy; yea, that which is called Heresy being oftentimes a real following after other gods. But the Law, *Deut.* 13, for punishing with death, as well whole Cities as particular persons, for falling away to other gods, is not the only law for punishing even capitally gross sins against the first Table. See *Exod.* 22.20, *He that sacrificeth unto any god, save unto the Lord only, he shall be utterly destroyed*. *Exod.* 31.14, *Every one that defileth the Sabbath shall surely be put to death*. *Levit.* 24.16, *And he that blasphemeth the Name of the Lord, he shall surely be put to death*. *Deut.* 17.2-5, *If there be found among you within any of thy gates, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that hath wrought wickedness in the sight of the Lord thy God, in transgressing his Covenant, and hath gone and served other gods and worshipped them, &c. Thou shalt bring forth that man or that woman unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones till they die*.

It will be asked, But how doth it appear that these or any other Judicial Laws of *Moses* do at all appertain to us, as rules to guide us in like cases? I shall wish him who scrupleth this, to read *Piscator* his *Appendix* to his *Observations* upon the 21-23 Chapters of *Exodus*, where he excellently disputeth this question, Whether the Christian Magistrate be bound to observe the Judicial laws of *Moses*, as well as the Jewish Magistrate was. He answereth by the common distinction, he is obliged to those things in the Judicial law which are unchangeable, & common to all Nations: but not to those things which are mutable, or proper to the Jewish Republic. But then he explaineth this distinction, that by things mutable, and proper to the Jews, he understandeth the emancipation of an Hebrew servant or handmaid in the seventh year, a man's marrying his brother's wife an raising up seed to his brother, the forgiving of debts at the Jubilee, marrying with one of the same Tribe, and if there be any other like to these; also Ceremonial trespasses, as touching a dead body, &c. But things immutable, and common to all Nations are the laws concerning Moral trespasses, Sins against the Moral law, as murder, adultery, theft, enticing away from God, blasphemy, striking of Parents. Now that the Christian Magistrate is bound to observe these Judicial laws of *Moses* which appoint the punishments of sins against the Moral law, he proveth by these reasons.

1. If it were not so, then it is free and arbitrary to the Magistrate to appoint what punishments himself pleaseth. But this is not arbitrary to him, for *he is the Minister of God, Rom. 13.4.* and *the judgment is the Lord's, Deut. 1.7; 2 Chron. 19.6.* And if the Magistrate be *Keeper of both Tables*, he must keep them in such manner as God hath delivered them to him.

2. Christ's words, *Matt. 5.17, Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets, I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill*, are comprehensive of the Judicial law, it being a part of the law of *Moses*; Now he could not fulfill the Judicial law, except either by his practice, or by teaching others still to observe it; [but it was] not by his own practice, for he would not condemn the Adulteress, *John 8.11*, nor divide the Inheritance, *Luke 12.13,14*. Therefore it must be by his doctrine for our observing it.

3. If Christ in his Sermon, *Matt. 5*, would teach that the Moral law belongeth to us Christians, insomuch as he vindicateth it from the false glosses of the Scribes & Pharisees; then he meant to hold forth the Judicial law concerning Moral trespasses as belonging to us also: for he vindicateth and interpreteth the Judicial law, as well as the Moral, *Matt. 5.38, An eye for an eye, &c.*

4. If God would have the Moral law transmitted from the Jewish people to the Christian people; then he would also have the Judicial law transmitted from the Jewish Magistrate to the Christian Magistrate: There being the same reason of immutability in the punishments, which is in the offences; Idolatry and Adultery displeaseth God now as much as then; and Theft displeaseth God now no more than before.

5. *Whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, Rom. 15.4*, and what shall the Christian Magistrate learn from those Judicial laws, but the will of God to be his rule in like cases? The Ceremonial law was written for our learning, that we might know the fulfilling of all those Types, but the Judicial law was not Typical.

6. *Do all to the glory of God, 1 Cor. 10.31; Matt. 5.16*. How shall Christian Magistrates glorify God more than by observing God's own laws, as most just, and such as they cannot make better?

7. *Whatsoever is not of faith is sin, Rom. 14.23*. Now when the Christian Magistrate punisheth sins against the Moral law, if he do this in faith and in assurance of pleasing God, he must have his assurance from the Word of God, for faith can build upon no other foundation: it is the Word which must assure the Conscience, God has commanded such a thing, therefore it is my duty to do it, God hath not forbidden such a thing, therefore I am free to do it. But the will of God concerning Civil justice and punishments is no where so fully and clearly revealed as in the Judicial law of *Moses*. This therefore must be the surest prop and stay to the conscience of the Christian Magistrate.

These are not my reasons (if it be not a word or two added by way of explaining and strengthening) but the substance of *Piscator's* reasons: Unto which I add, (1.) Though we have clear and full scriptures in the New Testament for abolishing the Ceremonial law, yet we nowhere read in all the new Testament of the abolishing of the Judicial law, so far as it did concern the punishing of sins against the Moral law, of which Heresy and seducing of souls is one, and a great one. Once God did reveal his will for punishing those sins by such and such punishments. He who will hold that the Christian Magistrate is not bound to inflict such punishments for such sins, is bound to prove that those former

laws of God are abolished, and to shew some scripture for it. (2.) That Judicial law for having two or three witnesses in judgment, *Deut.* 19.15; *Heb.* 10.28, is transferred even with an obligation to us Christians, and it concerneth all judgments, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil, *Matt.* 18.16; *2 Cor.* 13.1, and some other particulars might be instanced in which are pressed and enforced from the Judicial law, by some who yet mind not the obligation of it. To conclude therefore this point, though other judicial or forensical laws concerning the punishments of sins against the Moral law, may, yea, must be allowed of in Christian Republics and Kingdoms; Provided always, they be not contrary or contradictory to God's own Judicial laws: yet I fear not to hold with *Junius, de Politia Mosis* cap. 6, that he who was punishable by death under that Judicial law, is punishable by death still; and he who was not punished by death then, is not to be punished by death now; And so much for the first argument from the Law of God.

A second argument we have from divers laudable examples in the Old Testament; *Moses* drew the sword against Idolaters, *Exod.* 32.27; the children of Israel resolved to go out to war against the *Reubenites* and *Gadites*, when they understood that they were building another Altar, *Josh.* 22.12; *Elijah* commanded to slay the Priests of *Baal*, *1 Kings* 18.40; In *Asa's* time there was a Covenant for putting to death such as would not seek the Lord God of their Fathers, *2 Chron.* 15.13; *Jehu* slew the Priests of *Ahab*, and the worshippers of *Baal*, *2 Kings* 10.11,24. First, searching and making sure that there were none of the servants of the Lord among them, *verse 23.* *Josiah* sacrificed the Priests of *Samaria* upon their own altars, *2 Kings* 23.20; *Nebuchadnezzar*, though an Heathen, being convinced that there was no god like the God of Israel, made a Decree, that whosoever speaketh blasphemy, or uttereth any error against God, *shall be cut in pieces, and their houses made a dunghill*, *Dan.* 3.29. As for those whose errors and corruptions in religion were not so great, there was some (though not the highest) severity used against them: *Moses* was so angry with the people that were seduced into Idolatry, that he burnt the Calf which they had worshipped, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, *and made the Children of Israel to drink of it*, *Exod.* 32.20. Thereby teaching them (as *Hierome* and others give the reason) to abhor that Idolatry, while their Idol did pass from them among their own excrements. *Asa* did remove his mother *Maachah* from being *Queen*, because of an Idol which she had made in a grove, *1 Kings* 15.13. *Josiah* caused all that were present in *Jerusalem* and *Benjamin* to stand to the Covenant, *2 Chron.* 34.32, which could not be without either threatening or inflicting punishment upon the transgressors; there being many at that time disaffected to the Reformation.

O but saith *M.S.* to *A.S.* pages 51,52. Idolatry and Idolaters were the adequate object of that coercive power in matters of religion, whereof we read in the Old Testament. Nor do we read that ever the Jewish Kings or Magistrates attempted any thing against Sectaries or Schismatics. I answer, (1.) The object of that coercive power of *Josiah*, *2 Chron.* 34.32, was generally the matter of the Covenant, that is, the taking away not only of Idolatry, but of *all abominations, and a walking after the Lord, and keeping of his Testimonies, and Statutes, and Commandments*, verses 31,33. *Nehemiah* did drive away the son of *Eliashib* the High Priest, not for Idolatry, but for marrying the daughter of *Sanballat*, and thereby defiling the Covenant of the Priesthood, *Nehem.* 13.28,29. *Ezra* made the Chief Priests, the Levites, and all Israel to enter into a Covenant and to swear, that they would put away the strange wives, and that it should be done according to the Law, *Ezra* 10.3,5, and whosoever would not come to Jerusalem for this thing, was not

only himself excommunicated from the Church, but all his goods forfeited, *verse 8*. *Artaxerxes* decreed punishment for all who should oppose the Law of God, and the building of the Temple: wherein he is so far approved, as that *Ezra* blesseth God for it, *Ezra 7.26,27*, *Whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the King, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether it be unto death, or unto banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or imprisonment, &c.* which doth not concern Idolatry only, but generally the laws of God, *verse 25*, *Set Magistrates and Judges which may judge all the people, all such as know the laws of thy God*. He who wrote *Liberty of Conscience*, *p. 27,28*, is so far confounded with this laudable Decree of *Artaxerxes*, that he can say no more to it, but that it was the commandment of God, not an invention of men which *Artaxerxes* did thus impose, which is as much as we desire. But (2.) Sects and Schisms are to be punished as well, though not as much as Heresy and Idolatry. There are degrees of faults, and accordingly degrees of punishments. *Augustine* wrote an Epistle to *Bonifacius* [*Tom. 2. Ep. 50.*] upon this occasion, to shew that the *Donatists* had nothing to do with the *Arrians*, and so were not to be punished with such rigour and severity; yet he adviseth that moderate mulcts and punishments may be laid upon them, & that their Bishops or Ministers may be banished. In his 127 Epistle, he intercedeth most earnestly with the proconsul of *Africk*, that he might not put to death the *Donatists*, but repress them some other ways. We have also a scripture example for punishing Sectaries who are not Heretics. It is agreed among interpreters, there were in *Judah* two sorts of high places, some on which God was worshiped, others on which idols were worshipped, & it is most manifest from *2 Chron. 33.17*, and from the reconciling of *2 Chron. 15.17*, with *chapter 14.3,5*, the one sort was the high places of Idolatry, the other, the high places of will-worship; yet the Priests of the latter, as well as of the former, were punished by *Josiah*, as *Tostatus* proveth from *2 Kings 23*, and the text itself is clear, for he put to death the Priests of *Samaria*, who had sacrificed in the high places of Idolatry, *verse 20*, but as for those who sacrificed in the high places of will-worship, because they sacrificed to the Lord only (as the word is, *2 Chron. 33.17.*) therefore *Josiah* did not put them to death, only he caused them to go out of all the Cities of *Judah*, and to cease from the Priests office, so that they durst not come up to the Altar of the Lord at Jerusalem, only they were permitted to eat of the unleavened bread among their brethren, *verses 8,9*, which is parallel to that law, *Ezek. 44.10-14*, a prophecy concerning the Christian Temple, and the times of the New Testament, which reacheth a blow to another silly & short-sighted evasion, used both in the *Bloudy Tenent*, and in *M.S. to A.S.* that all this coercive power exercised in the Old Testament was typical, & therefore not imitable now in the New Testament. Whereunto I further reply, [1.] The reason of all that coercive severity was moral and perpetual, as was shewed before from *Deut. 13.11*. [2.] Next, why did they not prove that it was typical? shall we take their fancy for a certainty? They have neither Scripture nor Interpreters for it. [3.] They confound the Judicial laws of *Moses* with the Ceremonial, making the Judicatories and Justice typical no less than the Ceremonies. [4.] They do utterly overthrow the investiture of Christian Princes and Magistrates with any power at all in matters of Religion, from the Old Testament. So that one may not argue thus: The godly Kings of *Judah* did remove the monuments of Idolatry and Superstition, therefore so should the Christian Magistrate do. The most arrant malignant may answer in the words of Mr. *Williams*, *chap. 109*, that the Civil power or State of Israel, so far as it attended upon the spiritual, was merely figurative: Or in the words of *M.S. page 51*.

There are two reasons very considerable why the Kings of Judah might be invested by God with a larger power in matters of religion, than Kings or Magistrates under the Gospel have any ground or warrant to claim from them. First, they were types of Christ (but by the way, how doth he prove that Asa, Jehu, and Josiah were types of Christ?) which no King under heaven at this day is. Secondly, not the people only, but the very land over which they ruled were typical. [5.] The punishment of persons was a part of their reformation, as well as the destruction of monuments, and why must we follow their example in the one, more than the other? If we smart under both their diseases, we must apply both their remedies, or neither.

The (3.) third argument is drawn from the New Testament. The magistrate *beareth not the sword in vain, for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath on him that doth evil, Rom. 13.4.* But I assume; Heretics and Sectaries do evil, yea much evil, especially when they draw many others after them in their pernicious ways. It was the observation of one of the greatest Politicians of this Kingdom, *That heresies and schisms are of all others the greatest scandals: yea more than corruptions of manners.* One of his reasons is, because *every sect of them hath a diverse posture or cringe by themselves, which cannot but move derision in worldlings, and depraved politics, who are apt to contemn holy things. [See Bacons Essays, pages 11,12.]* I know it will be answered, If any Sectary make a breach of peace, or disturb the State, then indeed the magistrate ought to redress it by a coercive power. So *John the Baptist, page 57.* So Mr. Williams, chapter 52, answereth, *Rom. 13.4,* is not meant of *evil* against the Christian estate, but of *evil* against the Civil State. *M.S. page 53,54,* tells us that he is not for the toleration of Sects and Schisms, except *only upon this supposition, that the professors or maintainers of them be otherwise peaceable in the State, and every ways subject to the laws and lawful power of the civil Magistrate.* I answer, the experience of former times may make us so wise as to foresee that heresy and schism tendeth to the breach of the civil peace, and to a rupture in the State as well as in the Church. What commotions did the *Arrians* make in all the Eastern parts? the *Macedonians* in *Greece*? the *Donatists* in *Africke*? How did the *Anabaptists* raise and foment the bloody war of the *Boores* in *Germany*, wherein were killed above 100,000 men?

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.

How fanatical was *Julian's* design to bring the Christians to nought, by granting liberty of conscience to all the heretics and sectaries that were among them? But suppose the Commonwealth to run no hazard by the toleration of Heresies and Schisms, I answer further, [1.] The Text, *Rom. 13.4,* speaketh generally, and we must not distinguish where the Scripture doth not distinguish. [2.] Those that are in authority are to take such courses and so to rule, that we may not only *lead a quite and peaceable life,* but further that it be *in all godliness and honesty, 1 Tim. 2.2.* The magistrate is *keeper of both Tables,* and is to punish the violation of the first Table, as well as of the second. [3.] *Will any man, saith Augustine, [Epistle 50] who is in his right wit, say to Kings, Do not care by whom the Church of God in your Kingdom be maintained or opposed: it doth not concern you in your Kingdom, who will be religious, who sacrilegious: to whom notwithstanding it cannot be said, It doth not concern you in your Kingdom, who be chaste, who whorish, &c. Is the souls keeping faith and truth to God a lighter matter, than that of a woman to a man?* He confesseth in the same Epistle, that he and some other *African* Divines were

sometime of that opinion, that the Emperour should not at all punish the *Donatists* for their heresy or error, but such of them only as should be found to commit any riot or breach of peace, especially the furious and violent *Circumcellions*. But afterward he confesseth that the Emperour had a good reason to repress their pernicious error, as their furious violence.

A (4.) fourth Argument is drawn from the names which the Scripture giveth to Heretics and Sectaries, holding forth the extreme danger of tolerating and letting them alone. [See Calvin's *Refutation of the Errors of Michael Servetus*.] They are called *ravening wolves*, *Matt. 7.15*; and *grievous wolves not sparing the flock*, *Acts 20.29*; *thieves and robbers*, *John 10.8*; *Their word eateth as a canker*, *2 Tim. 2.17*, and is as a *little leaven leavening the whole lump*, *Gal. 5.9*. They are *troublers of Israel*, *Acts 15.24*, *Gal. 5.12*. Shall the troublers of the State be punished, and the troublers of Israel go free? Shall Physicians cut off the member that hath a Gangrene in it, because it endangereth the whole body, and shall the great State physicians suffer the Gangrene to spread in the Church? Shall mens bodies, goods, and purses, be so far cared for, that thieves and robbers must not be suffered, but justice done upon them; and shall those have immunity who steal away souls from Christ, and rob us of the pearl of truth? Nay shall the poor sheep be so much looked to, that the wolf must not be spared; and shall we suffer the soul-destroying wolves to enter, yea abide peaceably among the dear-bought flock of Jesus Christ?

Other Arguments might be added, but let them suffice at this present. I come next to answer all the material objections which I have either read or heard (to my best remembrance) alleged against this coercive power of the Magistrate in matters of Religion.

First, the Parable of the Tares is objected: Christ will not have the tares to be plucked up, but to grow together with the wheat until the harvest, *Matt. 13.29,30*. In this argument Mr. *Williams* in his *Bloody Tenent* putteth a great deal of confidence. But I am as confident to discover the strength of it to be less than nothing. For first he taketh the tares to be meant neither of hypocrites in the Church, whether discovered or undiscovered; nor yet of those who are scandalous offenders in their life and conversation, but only of Antichristian Idolaters and false worshippers: which is a most false interpretation. Christ himself expoundeth it generally, *verse 38*, *The good seed are the children of the Kingdom: but the tares are the children of the wicked one*. And *verse 41*, the tares are expounded to be *all that offend, and which do iniquity*. This being the clear meaning, it will follow undeniably, that if the Magistrate must spare those who are meant by tares in the Parable, then he must spare and let alone all scandalous offenders, murderers, adulterers, drunkards, thieves, &c. when any such are discovered in the visible Church. But this cannot be the meaning of the tares in the Parable, saith Mr. *Williams*, *chapter 24*, that wicked livers, opposite to the children of God, should be understood. For then, saith he, when Christ saith, *Let the tares alone*, he should contradict other ordinances for the punishment of evil doers by the Magistrate. But this is a base begging of the question, for he well knew that those against whom he disputes hold that his exposition of the Parable contradicteth the ordinance of God for punishing Idolaters and Heretics, the question being whether this be not an ordinance as well as the punishment of scandalous livers. Besides, if the tares be Antichristian Idolaters, and they must not be plucked up, but suffered to grow till the harvest, as he expoundeth, this contradicteth other Scriptures,

which say that the sword must be drawn against Antichristian idolaters, and they thereby cut off, *Revel.* 13.10, and 17.16.

But I proceed to a second answer. If by tares I should suppose only to be meant Idolaters, Heretics, and false worshippers (which is a gloss contrary to the text, as I have demonstrated) yet their argument will not conclude the forbearing or sparing of such, except only in such cases, and so far as the true worshippers of God cannot be certainly and infallibly diagnosed from the false worshippers, as the wheat from the tares: as *Jehu* would not destroy the worshippers of *Baal*, till he was sure that none of the servants of The Lord were among them, *2 Kings* 10.23. The reason why the tares are not to be plucked up, is, *lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them, verse 29*. Now when a man is sure that he plucks up nothing but tares, or rather thorns, without the least danger to the wheat, how doth the Parable strike against his so doing? If *M.S.* will not believe me, let him believe himself, *page 50, For my part, saith he, when the Civil Magistrate shall be far enough out of this danger of fighting against God, I have nothing to say against his fighting with superstition, heresy, schism, &c.*

Thirdly, what if I shape yet another answer to the argument out of Mr. *Williams* own words? *chapter 27, I acknowledge, saith he, this command, "Let them alone," was expressly spoken to the messengers or ministers of the Gospel, who have not civil power or authority in their hand, and therefore not to the civil Magistrate, King or Governor.* Now therefore what a blockish argument is it, to reason from this Parable against the coercive power of the magistrate in matters of religion? If there must be a forbearance of any severity, we must forbear Church censures and excommunication, a way of rooting out the tares, which Mr. *Williams* himself justifieth much as we do.

Fourthly, and if the utter extirpation and plucking up of Heretics by capital punishments, should be understood to be forbidden in the parable, (as it is not) yet the stopping of their mouths, the dissipating and suppressing of them, some other coercive way, is not forbidden, as *Chrysostome* noteth upon the place, whom *Euthymius* and *Theophylactus* do follow in this, allowing of coercive, though not capital punishments.

Fifthly, *Calvin, Beza,* and our best Interpreters, take the scope and intent of that parable, not to be against the immoderate severity of Magistrates, but against the immoderate zeal of those who imagine to have the Church rid of all scandalous and wicked persons, as wheat without tares, corn without chaff, a flock of sheep without goats, which hath been the fancy of the *Novatians, Donatists,* and *Anabaptists*. The parable therefore intimates unto us (as *Bucerus* upon the place expoundeth it) that when the Magistrate hath done all his duty in exercising his coercive power, yet to the world's end there will be in the Church a mixture of good and bad. So that it is the universal and perfect purging of the Church, which is put off to the last judgment, not the punishment of particular persons. Neither do the servants in the parable ask whether they should pluck up this or that visible tare, but whether they should go and make the whole field rid of them; which field is the general visible Church sowed with the seed of the Gospel; and so much for that argument.

Objection 2. Another negative argument is this. Such a coercive power in matters of religion, maketh men hypocrites and seven times more the children of hell. Christ's Ordinances put upon a whole City, or a Nation, may more *civilize* and *moralize*, but never *christianize* them; saith Mr. *Williams, chapter 82.* I answer, this argument doth utterly

condemn *Josiah's* Reformation as sinful, for he caused all *Judah* to stand to the Covenant, as we heard before from *2 Chron. 34.32*, yet *Judah* became thereby more hypocritical. *Treacherous Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the Lord*, speaking of those very days of *Josiah*, *Jer. 3.6,10*.

2. This argument maketh also against the punishment of adulteries, murders, thefts, robberies, &c. for unless filthy lust, hatred, and covetousness in the heart be mortified, and men convert freely and sincerely, the reducing of them to a moral conversation maketh them hypocrites, and nearer hell than before.

3. There are two sorts of Christ's Ordinances: some for the *communion of Saints*: others, for the *conversion of sinners*: It is far from our thoughts to admit, much less to compel, a whole City, or Nation promiscuously, to the use of the former. But yet converting or reducing ordinances may and ought to put upon all whom they concern. The means must be used and mens hearts left to God.

Objection 3. This Doctrine of the Magistrate's coercive power, maketh many to stumble at the Presbyterian Reformation, as a bloody Reformation, as a building of *Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity, Micah 3.10*. *Answer* (1.) We have not so learned Christ, we abominate the Popish and Prelatical tyranny. We know that *the servants of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient: In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth, 2 Tim. 2.24,25*, yet he who said so, could also say, *I would they were even cut off which trouble you, Gal. 5.12*. It is my soul's desire that the secular coercive power may be put forth upon those only who can by no other means be reclaimed, & who can be no longer spared without a visible rupture in the Church, and the manifest danger of seducing and misleading many souls. A Presbytery is not so ill a neighbour, that no man who hath the least differing opinion may live beside it.

But (2.) this objection doth as much strike against the *New England* government, as against the government of the neighbouring reformed Churches. For in *New England* there hath been severity enough (to say no worse) used against Heretics and Schismatics. And here I must appeal [to] the consciences of those who now plead so much for liberty of conscience and toleration in this Kingdom, were they able to root out the Presbyterians and their way, & could find civil authority inclinable to put forth the coercive power against it, whether in that case would they not say, that the Magistrate may repress it by strong hand, if it cannot be otherwise repressed.¹ It is not without cause that I put this Query to them; for *M.S. page 50*, (a passage before cited) doth allow of the Magistrate's fighting against a doctrine or way which is indeed superstition, heresy, or schism, and only pretendeth to be from God, when it is indeed from men. Also that pamphlet called *As you were, p. 3*, tells us that it was neither *Gamaliel's* meaning nor Mr. *Goodwin's* meaning, that every way pretending to be from God must be let alone, but that only we are to refrain & let alone, till we are certain that we are out of danger of fighting against God, while we endeavour to overthrow it. Now I assume, there are some who plead for liberty of conscience, who profess that they are certain and fully assured, upon demonstrative proofs, that the Presbyterial way is not from God, nor according to the mind of Jesus Christ (which is hinted to us both in the pamphlet last cited *p. 5,6*, & in ...*page 25*.) Therefore according to their principles they must allow of the putting forth of the civil coercive power against the Presbyterial way. And if so, what a grand

imposture is this? what a deceiving of the world? what a mocking of the Parliament and of the Kingdom? to plead generally for liberty of conscience, when they intend only liberty to themselves, not to others that are opposite to them. Which appeareth yet further by *the compassionate Samaritane*, page 10, he saith that no man is to be punished or discountenanced by authority for his opinion, *unless it be dangerous to the State*, page 23,24, he discourseth against the opinion of Presbyterians as most dangerous to the State. Therefore he would have the Presbyterians discountenanced and punished by authority, and intendeth liberty only to the *Separatists, Anabaptists*, and the like.

...

But now after all this debate upon the question in hand, and after all these arguments for the affirmative and for the negative, some will happily desire and expect some further modification and explanation of the matter in certain positive conclusions or distinguishing assertions. For whose satisfaction I say,

FIRST, there are five sorts of toleration proceeding from five different principles. (1.) Of *indifferency*. (2.) Of *policy*. (3.) Of *pretended conscience* and *equity*. (4.) Of *necessity*. (5.) Of *charity*.

The *first* is when the Magistrate is a Nullifidian, Neutralist, and Adiaphorist, esteeming as *Gallio* did, *questions of the law* and of the Ordinances of Christ, to be *of words & names*, or things *which he careth not for*, Acts 18.14,15.

The *second* is when the Magistrate tolerateth heretics and sectaries for his own profit, or some such interest of policy, such as maketh he Pope to tolerate the Jews in *Italy*, yea in *Rome* itself, where they have their synagogues, circumcision and liturgies, because his profit by them is greater than by the very Courtizans; yea, besides their certain tribute, he doth sometimes impose on them a subsidy of ten thousand crowns extraordinary for some service of the State, as *Europæ speculum*, pages 221,222, hath represented to us. And whether the States of the united Provinces do not grant tolerations upon the like interests of their own profit, I leave it to the judgment of their own consciences.

The *third* is the toleration pleaded for here, by Mr. *Williams*, *the compassionate Samaritane*, &c. as if justice, equity, duty, and conscience should make the Magistrate forbear all coercive power in matters of religion. All these three I utterly condemn, and the former arguments do strongly militate against them.

The *fourth* kind of toleration, arising from necessity which hath no law, may well be mourned for as an affliction, it cannot be condemned as the Magistrate's fault. Even a *David* may have cause to complain that the sons of *Zeruiah* are too strong for him. In such cases as these, our Divines have given a relief to the conscience of the Christian Magistrate, purging him of the guilt of this kind of toleration; provided always, that he hath endeavoured so far as he can to extirpate heresies, and to establish the true religion only. Which hath nothing to do with that principle now defended, that the Magistrate though he may never so easily, yet he ought not nor cannot without sin exercise a coercive power in matters of religion.²

The *fifth* and *last* is that kind of toleration whereby the Magistrate when it is in the power of his hand to punish and extirpate, yet having to do with such of whom there is good hope either of reducing them by convincing their judgments, or of uniting them to the Church by a safe accommodation of differences, he granteth them a *Supersedeas*; or

though there be no such grounds of hope concerning them, yet while he might crush them with the foot of power, in Christian pity and moderation, he forbearth so far as may not be destructive to the peace and right government of the Church, using his coercive power with such mixture of mercy as createth no mischief to the rest of the Church.³ I speak not only of bearing with those who are weak in the faith, *Rom.* 15.1, but of sparing even those who have perverted the faith, so far as the word of God and rules of Christian moderation would have severity tempered with mercy: that is (as hath been said) so far as is not destructive to the Church's peace, nor shaketh the foundations of the established form of Church government, and no further: these last two kinds of toleration are allowed; the first three are wholly condemned.

My SECOND distinction is concerning the punishments inflicted by the Magistrate upon Heretics.⁴ They are either *exterminative*, or *medicinal*. Such as blaspheme God or Jesus Christ, or who fall away themselves and seduce others to Idolatry, ought to be utterly cut off according to the law of God. But as for other Heretics, they are to be chastened with medicinal punishments as mulcts, imprisonments, banishment, by which through God's blessing they may be humbled, ashamed, and reduced. Not that I think the proper end of civil and coercive punishments to be the conversion and salvation of the Delinquent, (which is the end of Church censures & of Excommunication itself) but that the right method of proceeding doth require that the Magistrate inflict the smaller punishments first, that there may be place for the offenders bringing forth of fruits worthy of repentance, and he may be at least reduced to external order and obedience, being persuaded by the terror of civil power, which may and doth (when blessed of God) prove a preparation to free obedience, as the needle is to the thread, or the law to the Gospel, servile fear to filial fear: and that the Magistrate step not up to the highest justice till other punishments have proved ineffectual: which made *Constantine* punish the Heretics of his time not with death, but with banishment, as is manifest by the Proem of the Council of *Nice*. In such cases it may be said to the Heretic of the Magistrate, *He is the Minister of God to thee for good*, more good I am sure, than if the golden reins of civil justice should be loosed, and he suffered to do what he list. Therefore, *Augustine* likeneth this coercive punishing of Heretics to *Sarah* her dealing roughly with *Hagar*, for her good and humiliation. [*Ep.* 50. See also *Beza, de Hæret. à Magistr. puniend.*] I conclude, connivance and indulgence to Heretics is a *cruel mercy*: correction is a *merciful severity*, and a *wholesome medicine*, as well to themselves as to the Church.

THIRDLY, we must distinguish betwixt the coercive power of the Magistrate in matters of religion, and the abuse of that power; when we justify the power, we justify not the abuse of it; and when we condemn the abuse, we must not therefore condemn the power. *Acontius Stratag. Stat. book 3, page 147*, buildeth much upon this notion, let a man imagine that his lot is fallen in those times when the truth is persecuted by authority, when the Magistrate justifieth the wicked and condemneth the godly, (which hath been the more ordinary condition of the Church) and then let him accordingly shape his resolution of the question concerning the Magistrates punishing of Heretics. Will not a man think (saith he) it had been better that Heretics had not been punished, than that upon pretence of coercive power against Heretics, the edge of the Civil sword be turned towards the Preachers and Professors of the truth? But notwithstanding of all this, truth must be truth, and justice must be justice, abuse it who will. Parliaments and Synods have been many times enemies to the truth, and have abused their power in matters of religion:

must we therefore deny the power of Parliaments and Synods? or must we cast off any ordinance of God because of the abuse of it? If the thing were indifferent, the abuse might take away the use: not so, when the thing is necessary. I add (which is well observed by *Calvin*) when *Jeremiah* was accused and arraigned as worthy to die, his defence is not this, *You ought not to vindicate religion with the sword, nor put any man to death for the cause of conscience*, but this is it, *Know ye for a certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: for of a truth the Lord hath sent me unto you to speak all these words in your ears. Jer. 26.15.* Neither did ever the Apostles (though often persecuted) plead the unlawfulness of persecuting men for heresy, but they pleaded the goodness of their cause, and that they were no Heretics.

FOURTHLY, I distinguish betwixt bare opinions or speculations, and scandalous or pernicious practices,⁵ as Mr. *Burton* doth in his *Vindication of the Independent Churches*, page 70. *You must distinguish*, saith he, *betwixt mens consciences and their practices. The conscience simply considered in itself is for God the Lord of the conscience alone to judge, as before. But for a man's practices (of which alone man can take cognizance) if they be against any of God's commandments of the first or second Table; that appertains to the civil Magistrate to punish, who is for this cause called Custos utriusque Tabulæ, the keeper of both Tables: for this he citeth Rom. 13.3,4, and addeth: So as we see here what is the object of civil power, to wit, actions good or bad, not bare opinions, not thoughts, not conscience, but actions.* And this is his answer to the Interrogatory concerning the lawful coercive power of civil Magistrates in suppressing heresies. In which he handsomely yieldeth the point, for who doth advise the Parliament to punish men for their thoughts, or bare opinions, or for conscience simply considered in itself? It is for preaching, printing, spreading of dangerous opinions, for schismatical, pernicious, and scandalous practices, for drawing factions among the people contrary to the Covenant, for resisting the reformation of religion, for lying and railing against the Covenant, the Parliament, the assembly of Divines, or against the reformed Churches.

FIFTHLY, we must distinguish the persons who are in the Error, whether *Heresiarchs* and *ring-leaders*, or whether *followers* only, and such as do *acti agere*; whether *schismatizing*, or *schismatized*; whether more *weak*, or more *willful*; whether *seducers*, or *seduced*; whether *pious*, or *profane*, or *Pharisaical*; whether peaceable, moderate, calm, docile, or turbulent, factious, fierce, railing, obstinate, incorrigible.⁶ So that when the thing is brought from the *Thesis* to the *Hypothesis*, there is very much to be trusted to the prudence, circumspection, and observation of those who are in authority, to set apart those for punishment who resist Reformation, as *Jannes* and *Jambres* did resist *Moses*, 2 *Tim.* 3.8, and are said to trouble the Churches, *Acts* 15.24; *Gal.* 1.7; & 5.12, and to trouble them more or less, as they are more or less troublers of Israel. Let not the Magistrate fear to say to every *Achan*, *Why hast thou troubled us? the Lord shall trouble thee this day, Josh. 7.25.* Other seduced ones the Magistrate is to command *sub pœna* [under penalty], and cause them stand to the Covenant of God, as *Josiah* did, if they cannot be persuaded to do it willingly. If the Magistrate miscarry in a misapplication of his coercive power, let him answer to God and his conscience for his error. It is not in my thoughts either to plead for or allow of the persecuting of pious and peaceable men.

SIXTHLY, as the *reformation* and *preservation* of religion differ much from the *propagation* of religion: so the coercive power put forth in the suppressing of Heresy or Schism, is a thing of another nature than the compelling of Infidels by the sword to receive the Gospel. Let the *Pope*, and the *Spaniard*, and *Mahomet* propagate religion by the sword; that is not it I plead for. None of the Gentiles was of old compelled to be circumcised, but being circumcised he might be compelled to keep the Law of *Moses*. Also if strangers of the Gentiles were sojourning or trading in the land of Israel, they might be compelled to abstain from the public and scandalous breaking of the moral Law, *Nehem.* 13.16,21; *Exod.* 20.10, which things did belong to the *preservation*, but the *propagation* of religion.

SEVENTHLY, to establish by a law the toleration, liberty, and immunity of such a Sect or Way, so as all that will may join in it, is a thing of most dangerous consequence. But to permit such or so many persons of a Sect to enjoy the liberty of their own consciences and practices, with such limitations as shall be found necessary, is a *tolerable Toleration*, I mean a thing though not to be wished, yet to be allowed. The *Romans* in their Heathenish way did put a difference⁷ betwixt these two: when they abolished the *Bacchanalian* festivity and discharged it, they granted no toleration to such as pleased still to observe it: only they were content that some few upon leave first obtained from the Senate, and upon certain conditions, might be permitted to continue their own practice, as to their part.

EIGHTHLY, there is also a great difference betwixt *Toleration* and *Accommodation*. By *accommodation* I understand an agreement of dissenters with the rest of the Church in practical conclusions, so that if any difference be, it is in their *principles*, not in their *practices*, and so not obvious, apparent and scandalous to people. I had rather go two miles in an *Accommodation*, (yea as many as the word of God will suffer me) than one mile in a *Toleration*. For in that way there is no schism, no rent in Israel, but *the Lord one, and his name one*. In this way there is *Temple against Temple*, and *Altar against Altar*, *Manasseh against Ephraim*, and *Ephraim against Manasseh*, and they both against *Judah*: a misery from which the Lord deliver us. I do not deny, but if a safe and happy *Accommodation* be impossible, such a *Toleration* as I have formerly spoken of, is not to be disallowed. But the *Accommodation* is a more excellent way, and that which is to be rather embraced, yea endeavoured for and followed after, according to the Apostle's rule, *Phil.* 3.15,16, (which *Isidorus Pelusiota* did long since observe to be the best and happiest way of putting an end to divisions and dissensions in the Church) *Let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.*

If it be said, *Quorsum hæc?* what do I conclude from all this? It is to leave this confirmed and sealed truth in the bosom of the High Court of Parliament, and of all inferiour Magistrates according to their place and interest, under them, That it is their duty, *without respect of persons, to endeavour the extirpation of Heresy and Schism, and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound doctrine, and the power of godliness, lest they partake in other mens sins, and thereby be in danger to receive of their plagues; and that the Lord may be one and his name one in the three kingdoms: And to endeavour the discovery of all such as have been or shall be evil instruments, by hindering the*

reformation of Religion, or making any faction or parties amongst the people, contrary to the solemn League and Covenant, that they may be brought to public trial, and receive condign punishment, &c. Which as they had great reason to swear and covenant, so now they have greater reason to perform accordingly; and as it is in itself a duty, and we tied to it by *the oath of God, and his vows that are upon us*, as straitly as ever the sacrifice to the horns of the altar. So we are to take special notice of the unhappy consequents which follow upon our slackness, slowness, and slothfulness, in fulfilling that sacred Oath, *viz.* The hindering of uniformity, the continuing and increasing of a rupture both in Church and State, the retarding of Reformation, the spreading and multiplying of Heresies and Sects, while every one doth what is right in his own eyes; the great scandal given both to enemies and friends: to enemies, who are made to think worse of our Covenant, because we do not perform it: *The Review of the Covenant*, printed at *Oxford*, upbraideth us with this: that Heresy and Schism was never more suffered, and less suppressed in *London*, than since we sware to endeavour the extirpation of the same: To friends also, who are mightily stumbled by our promising so much, and performing so little in this kind: which the *Wallachian* Classis in their late Letter to the Reverend Assembly of Divines at *Westminster* (printed before *Apollonius* his Book) doth sadly and seriously lay to our consciences.

A Parænetick.

Before I end, I have a word of exhortation for the five Apologists, and such others as shall (I trust) agree with the Churches of both Kingdoms, not only in one Confession of Faith, but in one Directory of Worship. Methinks I hear them calling to me to say on. *Et tu me fili?* said *Cæsar*. And must you also brethren, give a wound to the body of Christ? Do not, O do not involve yourselves in the plea of Toleration with the Separatists and Anabaptists. Do not partake in their *Separation*, lest you partake in their *suppression*. Let us hear no more Paræneticks for Toleration, or liberty of Conscience: but as many as you will for a *just and merciful Accommodation*: a thing mentioned by that Author, *page 3*, but not sought after. If you be the Sons of peace, you shall be characterized by this *Shibboleth*, you will call for Accommodation, not for Toleration; for one way, not for two. Let there be no strife between us and you, *for we be brethren*: and is not the *Canaanite* and the *Perizzite* yet in the land? [Gen. 13.7,8.] O let it not be told in *Gath*, nor published in the streets of *Ashkelon*. Let it not be said, that there can be no unity in the Church without Prelacy. Brethren I charge you *by the Roes and by the Hinds of the field, that ye awake not nor stir up Jesus Christ till he please* [Cant. 2.7.]; for his rest is sweet and glorious with his well-beloved. It shall be no grief of heart to you afterward, that you have pleased others as well as yourselves, and have stretched your principles for an Accommodation in Church government, as well as in Worship, and that for the Church's peace and edification; and that the ears of our common enemies may tingle, when it shall be said, *The Churches of Christ in England have rest, and are edified, and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the joy of the Holy Ghost are multiplied.* [Acts 9.31.] Alas how shall our divisions and contentions hinder the preaching and learning of Christ, and the edifying one another in love! *Is Christ divided?* saith the Apostle. There is but one Christ, yea the head and the body makes one Christ, so that you cannot divide the body without

dividing Christ. Is there so much as a seam in Christ's garment? Is it not woven throughout from the top to the bottom? Will you have one half of Israel follow *Tibni*, and another half to follow *Omri*? O brethren, we shall be one in heaven, let us pack up our differences in this place of our pilgrimage, the best way we can. Nay, we will not despair of unity in this world. Hath not God promised to give us *one heart and one way*? [Jer. 32.39; Ezek. 11.19.] and that *Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim, but they shall flee upon the shoulders of the Philistines toward the East, they shall spoil them of the East together*? [Isa. 11.13,14.] Hath not the Mediator (whom the Father heareth always) prayed that all his may be one? [John 17.21.] Brethren, it is not impossible, pray for it, endeavour it, press hard toward the mark of Accommodation. How much better is it that you be one with the other Reformed Churches, though somewhat straitened and bound up, than to be divided though at full liberty and elbow-room? *Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith, than a house full of sacrifices with strife*. [Prov. 17.1.] Doth not the Solemn League and Covenant bind you sincerely, really, and constantly to endeavour the nearest (mark *nearest*) uniformity and conjunction in religion: and that you shall not suffer yourselves directly or indirectly to be withdrawn from this blessed union and conjunction. I know there is a spirit of jealousy [*suspicion*] walking up and down. O beware of groundless fears and apprehensions. *Judge not, lest you be judged*. [Matt. 7.1.] *Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment*. [John 7.24.] Many false rumours and surmises there have been concerning the Presbyterian principles, practices, designs, *Expertus lequor*. I am persuaded if there were but a right understanding one of another's intentions, the Accommodation I speak of would not be difficult. Brethren, if you will not hearken to wholesome counsel, you shall be the more inexcusable. I have in my eye that law of God, *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him*. [Lev. 19.17.] *Faithful are the wounds of a friend*, [Prov. 27.6.] *Therefore love the truth and peace*. [Zech. 8.19.] Yea, *seek peace and pursue it*. [1 Pet. 3.11.]

Consider what I say. The Lord guide your feet in the way of peace. And O that God would put it in your hearts to cry down *Toleration*, and to cry up *Accommodation!*

Amen, Amen.

CHAPTER 4 : EXCERPTS FROM GEORGE GILLESPIE'S “FORBIDDEN ALLIANCES”

While I have occasion to speak of human covenants, it shall not be unprofitable to speak somewhat to that question so much debated, as well among divines as among politicians and lawyers, whether a confederacy and association with wicked men, or such as are of another religion, be lawful, yea or no. For answer whereunto shortly, let us distinguish, (1) civil covenants; (2) ecclesiastical, sacred or religious covenants; (3) mixed covenants, partly civil, partly religious.[1] The last two, being made with wicked men, and such as differ in religion from us, I hold to be unlawful, and so do the best writers.[2]

When the Israelites are forbidden a covenant with the Canaanites, special mention is made of their gods, altars, images, Ex. 23:32; 34:13-14; Judges 2:2, that no such superstitious, unlawful worship might be tolerated. As for civil covenants, if they be for commerce or peace, which were called [Gk.] *spondai*, they are allowed, according to the scriptures, Gen. 14:13; 31:44; 1 Kings 5:12; Jer. 29:7; Rom. 12:18. Such covenants the Venetians have with the Turks, because of vicinity; such covenants also Christian emperors of old had sometimes with the pagans. It was the breach of a civil covenant of peace with the Turks that God punished so exemplarily in Uladyslaus, king of Hungary.

But if the civil covenant be such a covenant as the Greeks called [Gk.] *summoxia*, to join in military expeditions together, of this is the greatest debate and controversy among writers.[3] For my part, I hold it unlawful, with diverse good writers; and I conceive that, Ex. 34, God forbids not only religious covenants with the Canaanites, but even civil covenants, verse 12, and conjugal covenants, verse 16; which is also Junius' opinion, in his analysis upon that place.

The reason for the unlawfulness of such confederacies are brought: 1. From the law, Ex. 23:32; 34:12,15; Deut. 7:2. Yea, God makes this a principal stipulation and condition, upon their part, while he is making a covenant with them, Ex. 34:10,12; Judg. 2:1-2. And lest it should be thought that this is meant only of those seven nations enumerated [in] Deut. 7, the same law is interpreted of four other nations, 1 Kings 11:1-2; so that it is to be understood generally against confederacies with idolators and those of a false religion. And the reason of the law is moral and perpetual, viz., the danger of ensnaring the people of God. Therefore they were forbidden to covenant either with their gods or with themselves; for a conjunction of counsels and familiar conversations (which are consequents of a covenant) draws in the end to a fellowship in religion.

2. From disallowed and condemned examples; as Asa's covenant with Benhadad, 2 Chron. 16:1-10, and Ahaz's covenant with the kings of Assyria, 2 Kings 16:7,10; 2 Chron. 28:16-23. And should it be objected, "These are but examples of covenants with idolatrous heathens, there is not the like reason to condemn confederacies and associations with wicked men of the same religion," I answer, (1) It holds *a fortiori* [with stronger reason] against confederacies with such of the seed of Jacob as had made defection from true religion; for Grotius (*de Jure Belli et Pacis* [Concerning the Law of War and Peace], lib. 2, cap. 15, num. 9) notes, God would have such to be more abominated than heathens, and to be destroyed from among their people, Deut. 13:13. (2) We have in other scriptures examples which meet with that case also; for Jehoshaphat's confederacy with Ahab, 2 Chron. 18:3, with 2Chron. 19:2, and after with Ahaziah, 2

Chron. 20:35, are condemned, which made Jehoshaphat (although once relapsing into that sin) yet afterwards mend his fault, for he would not again join with Ahaziah when he sought that association the second time, 1 Kings 22:49. So Amaziah, having associated himself in an expedition with the Israelites, when God was not with them, did, upon the prophet's admonition, disjoin himself from them, and take his hazard of their anger, 2 Chron. 25:7-10. Lavater upon the place, applying that example, notes this as one of the causes why Christian wars with the Turks had so ill success. Why, says he, consider what soldiers were employed: this is the fruit of associations with the wicked.

3. These confederacies proceed from an evil heart of unbelief; as is manifest by the reasons which are brought against Ahaz's league with Benhadad, 2 Chron. 16:7-9, and by that which is said against the confederacy with the king of Assyria, Isa. 8:12-13; for as Calvin upon the place notes, the unbelievers among the people, considering their own inability for managing so great a war, thought it necessary to have a confederacy with the Assyrians; but this was from faithless fears, from want of faith to stay and rest upon God as all-sufficient.

4. If we must avoid fellowship and conversation with the sons of Belial (except where natural bonds or the necessity of calling ties us), Ps. 6:8; Prov. 9:6; 24:1; 2 Cor. 6:14-15; and if we should account God's enemies our enemies, then how can we join with them, and look upon them as friends?

Now as to the arguments which used to be brought for the contrary opinion, first it is objected that Abraham had a confederacy with Aner, Eshchol, and Mamre, Gen. 14:13; Abraham with Abimelech, Gen. 21:27, 32; and Isaac with Abimelech, Gen. 26; Jacob with Laban, Gen. 31:44; Solomon with Hiram, 1 Kings 5:12. *Answer.* (1) It cannot be proved that those confederates of Abraham, Isaac and Solomon were either idolators or wicked. Laban, indeed, was an idolator, but there are good interpreters who conceive that Abraham's three confederates feared God, and that Abimelech also feared God, because he speaks reverently of God, ascribes to God the blessing and prosperity of these patriarchs. It is presumed, also, that Hiram was a pious man, because of his epistle to Solomon, 2 Chron. 2:11. However, (2) those confederacies were civil, either for commerce or for peace and mutual security, that they should not wrong one another, as that with Laban, Gen. 31:52; and with Abimelech, Gen. 26:28-29, which kind of confederacy is not controverted.

It is objected, also, that the Maccabees had a covenant with the Romans and Lacedæmonians, 1 Mac. 8; 12:1-2. *Answer.* (1) That covenant is disallowed by many good writers, yet it is observed from the story that they had not the better but the worse success, nor the less but the more trouble following it. (2) The story itself, 1 Mac. 1:11, tells us that the first motion of a confederacy with the heathen in those times proceeded from the children of Belial in Israel.

Lastly, it may be objected that persons discontented, and of broken fortunes, were gathered to David, and that he received them, and became a captain unto them, 1 Sam. 22:2. *Answer.* (1) Some think (and it is probable) they were such as were oppressed and wronged by Saul's tyranny, and were therefore in debt and discontented, and that David, in receiving them, was a type of Christ, who is a refuge for the afflicted, and touched with the feeling of their infirmities. (2) Whoever they were, David took care that no profane nor wicked person might be in his company, Ps. 101; yea, Ps. 34:11 (which was penned

at the time when he departed from Achish and became captain of those four hundred men), he says to them, "Come, ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord." (3) I shall bring a better argument from David's example against joining such associates in war as are known to be malignant and wicked: Ps. 118:7, "The Lord taketh my part with them that help me, therefore I shall see my desire upon them that hate me;" Ps. 54:4, "The Lord is with them that uphold my soul." Upon this last place, both Calvin and Gesnerus observe that, although David's helpers were few and weak, yet God being in them and with them, his confidence was that they should prove stronger than all the wicked. He intimates also, that if he had not known that God was with his helpers, leading and inspiring them, he had looked for no help by them 2 Chron. 15:7-8. That David's helpers in the war were looked upon as sincere, cordial, and stirred up of God, may farther appear from 1Chron. 12, where David joins with himself, *fidus homines qui idem cum sentirent* (says Lavater on the place): "faithful men of his own mind." He adds that they were such as hated Saul's impiety and injustice, and loved David's virtue. Vict. Strigelius calls them *fideles amicos*: "faithful friends." The text itself tells us that diverse of them joined themselves to David while he was yet in distress, and shut up in Ziklag, ver. 1 (which was an argument of sincerity); also, that some of Benjamin (Saul's own tribe) adjoined themselves to David, and the Spirit came upon Amasai, who by a special divine instinct spoke to assure David of their sincerity, ver. 2, 16, 18. They also who joined themselves with David after Saul's death, ver. 23, were not of a double heart, but of a "perfect heart," ver. 33, 38; and they all agreed that the first great business to be undertaken should be religion, the bringing back of the ark, 1 Chron. 13:3-4.

This point of the unlawfulness of confederacies with men of a false religion is strangely misapplied by Lutherans against confederacies with us, whom they call Calvinists. So argues Tarnovius, *Trac. de Fderib*. But we may make a very good use of it; for as we ought to pray and endeavour that all who are Christ's may be made one in him, so we ought to pray against, and by all means avoid fellowship, familiarity, marriages, and military confederacies with known wicked persons, and such as are of a false or heretical religion. I shall branch forth this matter in five particulars, which God forbade to his people in reference to the Canaanites and other heathens, which also (partly by parity of reason, partly by concluding more strongly) will militate against confederacies and conjunctions with such as, under the profession of the Christian religion, do either maintain heresies and dangerous errors, or live a profane and wicked life.

1. God forbade all religious covenants with such, and would not have his people to tolerate the gods, images, altars, or groves of idolaters, Ex. 23:32; 34:12-13; Deut 7:2-5; Judg. 2:2. And although the letter of the law mentions this in reference to the Canaanites, yet the best reforming kings of Judah applied and executed this law in taking away the groves and high places abused by the Jews in their superstition. And what marvel? If such things were not to be tolerated in the Canaanites, much less in the Jews. Theodosius[3] is commended for his suppressing and punishing heretics.
2. God forbade familiar conversation with these heathens, that they should not dwell together with his people, nay, not in the land with them, Ex. 23:33, lest one of them, being familiar with an Israelite, might call him to a feast, and make him eat of things sacrificed to idols, Ex. 34:15. Compare this with Judg. 1:21; Ps. 106:35. Now the apostle lays much more restraint upon us from conversing, eating, and drinking with a

scandalous Christian, 1 Cor. 5:11, than with a pagan or unbeliever, 1 Cor. 10:27. There is a conversing and companying with wicked persons which is our affliction, not our fault; that is, when we cannot be rid of them, do what we can, 1 Cor. 5:10 which is an argument against separating and departing from a true church, because of scandalous persons in it. The apostle gives this check to such: go where they will, they shall find scandalous persons all the world over. There is, again, a conversing and companying with wicked persons which natural and civil bonds, or near relations, or our calling, ties us unto, as between husband and wife, parent and child, pastor and people, magistrate and those of his charge. But wittingly and willingly to converse and have fellowship with heretical or profane persons, whether it be out of love to them and delight in them, or for our own interest or some worldly benefit, this is certainly sinful and inexcusable. If we take care of our bodily safety, by flying the company of such as have the plague; yea, if we take care of the safety of our beasts, and would not, to our knowledge, suffer a scabbed or rotten sheep to infect the rest; shall we not much more take care of our own and neighbors' souls, by avoiding (and warning others to avoid) the fellowship of the ungodly, whereby spiritual infection comes? Remember, it was but a kind visit of Jehoshaphat to Ahab which was the occasion of engaging him into a confederacy with that wicked man, 2 Chron. 18:2-3.

3. God forbade conjugal covenants or marrying with them, Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3. The rule is the same against matching with other wicked persons, whether idolaters or professing the same religion with us. We read not of idolatry, or any professed doctrinal differences in religion between the posterity of Seth and the posterity of Cain, yet this was the great thing that corrupted the old world, and brought on the flood, that the children of God joined themselves in marriage with the profane, Gen. 6:1-3. Jehoram married not an heathen, but the daughter of Ahab; but it is marked, he did evil as did the house of Ahab. And what is the reason given for this? "For the daughter of Ahab was his wife," 2 Kings 8:18; and, by and by, ver. 27, the like is marked of Ahaziah, the son of Jehoram, who "did evil in the sight of the Lord as did the house of Ahab; for he was the son-in-law of the house of Ahab." The apostle Peter supposes that Christians marry such as are "heirs together of the grace of life," 1 Pet. 3:7; see also Prov. 31:30.

4. God forbade his people to make with the Canaanites *foedus deditiois* [a treaty of surrender], or *subactionis* [of subjugation], or (as others speak) *pactum liberatorium* [a deliverer's agreement]; he would have his people show no mercy to those whom he had destined to destruction, Deut. 7:2. Herein Ahab sinned, by making a brotherly covenant of friendship with Benhadad when God had delivered him into his hand, 1 Kings 20:32-34. So, in all Christian commonwealths, the magistrate, God's vicegerent, ought to cut off all such evil doers as God's word appoints to be cut off. David's sparing of Joab and Shimei, being partly necessitated thereto, partly induced by political reasons (whereof he repented when he was dying, nor could his conscience be at ease till he left a charge upon Solomon for executing justice upon both Joab and Shimei, 1 Kings 2:5-9), are no good precedents or warrants to Christian magistrates to neglect the executing of justice. It is a better precedent which David resolves upon more deliberately, Ps. 101:8, "I will early destroy all the wicked of the land, that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord." Mark this all, of what degree or quality soever, without respect of persons, and that early, and without delay. Lastly, and even Joab himself was so far punished by David, that he was cast out of his place and command, 2 Sam. 19:13; 20:4.

5. The law is also to be applied against civil covenants, not of peace or of commerce, but of war; that is, a league offensive and defensive, wherein we associate ourselves with idolaters, infidels, heretics, or any other known enemies of truth or godliness, so as to have the same friends or enemies. A covenant of peace or commerce with such may happen to be unlawful in respect of some circumstances, as when peace is given to those rebels, murderers, incendiaries in the kingdom, who, by the law of God, ought to be destroyed by the hand of justice; or when commerce with idolaters is so abused, as to furnish them with the things that they are known to make use of in their idolatry. But as for [Gk.] *summaxia*, a confederacy engaging us into a war with such associates, it is absolutely, and in its own nature, unlawful; and I find it condemned by good writers of the popish party, of the Lutheran party, and of the orthodox party. Some of all these are before cited.

What holiness God required in the armies of Israel, see Deut. 23:9-14. We may well argue, as Isidorus Pelusiota does (lib. 3, epist. 14), if the law was so severe against such uncleannesses as were not voluntary, how much less would God suffer such as did voluntarily and wickedly defile themselves. It is marked as a part of Abimelech's sin, Judg. 9:4, that he "hired vain and light persons which followed him." God would have Amaziah to dismiss an hundred thousand men of Israel, being already with him in a body, and told him he should fall before the enemy if these went with him, because God was not with them, 2 Chron. 25:7, etc. If they had not yet been gathered into a body, it had been much to abstain from gathering them, upon the prophet's admonition; but this is much more, that he sends them away after they are in a body, and takes his hazard of all the hurt that so many outraged soldiers could do to him or his people; and indeed they did much hurt in going back, ver. 13. Yet God regarded Amaziah's obedience with a great victory.

In the last age, shortly after the begun reformation in Germany, this case of conscience, concerning the unlawfulness of such confederacies, was much looked at. The city of Strasbourg, anno 1629, made a defensive league with Zurich, Bern, and Basil.[4] *Qui et vicini erant, et dogmate magis conveniebant*, says Sleidan: "they were not only neighbors, but of the same faith and religion." Therefore they made a confederacy with them. About two years after, the Elector of Saxony refused to take into confederacy those Helvetians,[5] because although they were powerful, and might be very helpful to him, yet they differing in religion concerning the article of the Lord's supper, he said he durst not join with them as confederates, lest such sad things might befall him as the scripture testifies to have befallen those who, for their help or defence, took any assistance they could get. The rule was good in itself, although, in that particular case, misapplied.

The very heathens had a notion of the unlawfulness of confederacies with wicked men; for, as Vict. Strigelius, on 2 Chron. 25, notes out of Æschylus' tragedy entitled *Seven to Thebe*, Amphiaraus, a wise and virtuous man, was therefore swallowed up in the earth, with seven men and seven horses, because he had associated himself with Tydeus, Capaneus, and other impious commanders, marching to the siege of Thebe.

Lastly, take this reason for further confirmation: as we must do all to the glory of God, so we must not make wars to ourselves, but to the Lord; hence, "the book of the wars of the Lord," Num. 21:14, and "the battle is not ours, but the Lord's" [cf.] 1 Sam. 25:28; 2 Chron. 20:15. Now, how shall we employ them that hate the Lord to help the Lord? Or

how shall the enemies of his glory do for his glory? Shall rebels and traitors be taken to fight in the king's wars? Offer it to your governor, as it is said, Mal. 1:8, see if he would take this well.

As for the objections from scripture, they are before answered. There are many other exceptions of men's corrupt reasoning, which may yet be easily taken off, if we will receive scripture light. That very case of Jehoshaphat's confederacy with Ahab takes off many of them; for although (1) Jehoshaphat was a good man, and continued so after that association, not drawn away into idolatry, nor infected with Ahab's religion, but only assisting him in a civil business. (2) Ahab lived in the church of Israel, which was still a church, although greatly corrupted, and he was no professed hater of God (only he had professed to hate Micaiah, the man of God); yea, lately before this, he appeared very penitent; and some think Jehoshaphat now judged charitably of Ahab, because of that great humiliation and repentance of his, which God did accept so far as to reward it with a temporal sparing mercy, 1 Kings 21, at the end. Then follows immediately, chap. 22, Jehoshaphat's association with him; although Jehoshaphat was also joined in affinity with Ahab, Ahab's daughter being married to his son. (3) The enemy was the king of Assyria; and Jehoshaphat does not join with a wicked man against God's people, but against the infidel Assyrians; even as Amaziah was beginning to join with those of the ten tribes against the Edomites. (4) The cause seems to have been good, as Carthusian on 1 Kings 20:3, and Lavater upon 2Chron. 19:2 note;[6] for Ramoth Gilead was a city of refuge pertaining to the Levites in the tribe of Gad, and should have been restored by the king of Assyria to Ahab according to their covenant, 1 Kings 20:34. Daneus brings that same example of Ahab's going up against Ramoth Gilead to prove that it is just to make war against those who have broken covenant with us. (5) Jehoshaphat's manner of proceeding was pious in this respect, that he said to Ahab, "Inquire, I pray thee, of the word of the Lord today;" and again, "Is there not here a prophet of the Lord besides," he inquires *ultra* [*further*], and seeks all the light he could there have, in point of conscience, from prophets of the Lord; which makes it probable that those four hundred prophets did not profess, or were not known to Jehoshaphat, to be prophets of Baal, but were looked upon as prophets of the Lord, as Cajetan thinks; therefore they answer also in the name of the Lord, "the Lord shall deliver it." It is not likely that Jehoshaphat would desire the prophets of Baal to be consulted, or that he would harken to them more than to the prophet of the Lord, Micaiah. Yet, in this he failed extremely, that he had too far engaged himself to Ahab before inquiring at the word of the Lord. However, it seems he was, by this inquiring, seeking a fair way to come off again. (6) Jehoshaphat's end was good. Martyr, on 1 Kings 22, thinks Jehoshaphat entered into this confederacy with Ahab for the peace and safety of his kingdom, and to prevent a new war between Judah and Israel, such as had been between Asa, his father, and Baasha, king of Israel; for which end also Carthusian, on 1Kings 22, thinks that Jehoshaphat took Ahab's daughter to his son.

Yet notwithstanding of all this the prophet Jehu says to him, 2 Chron. 19:2, "Shouldest thou help them that hate the Lord?" The Septuagint reads, "hated of the Lord," which comes all to one thing. And lest it should be thought a venial or light matter, he adds, "Therefore is wrath upon thee from before the Lord." So that from this example we learn, that let us keep ourselves unspotted from the false religion or errors of those with whom we associate. Let wicked men seem never so penitent, and our relations to them be never so near; let the common enemy be an infidel; let the manner of proceeding be never so

pious, and the end also good; yet all this cannot excuse nor justify confederacies and associations with wicked and ungodly men. And if God was so angry at Jehoshaphat when there were so many things concurring as might seem to excuse or extenuate his fault, it being also in him a sin of infirmity only, and not without a reluctance of conscience, and a conflict of the spirit against the flesh (which Pareus, upon 1 Kings 1:22, does well collect from his desire of inquiring at the word of the Lord, that he might have occasion to come off), how much more will God be angry with such as go on with a high hand in trespass, casting his word behind them, and hating to be reformed?

If it be further objected, that we are not able without such confederacies and help to prosecute a great war alone, this also the Holy Ghost has beforehand answered, in the example of Ahaz's confederacy with the king of Assyria; for he had a great war to manage, both against the Assyrians, and against the king of Israel, 2 Kings 16:7; also against the Edomites and Philistines, 2 Chron. 28:16-18. Yet, although he had so much to do, this could not excuse the confederacy with the Assyrian. He should have trusted to God, and not used unlawful means. God can save by few, as well as by many. Yea, sometimes God thinks not fit to save by many, Judg. 7. It shall not be the strength of battle to have unlawful confederates, but rather to want them, Ex. 23:22.

If it be said it is dangerous to provoke and incense many wicked men by casting them off, this is plainly answered from the example of Amaziah, and the hundred thousand men of Israel with him of which [we spoke] before. If, furthermore, objection be made, that we must be gentle and patient towards all, and in meekness instruct those that oppose themselves, 2 Tim. 2:24-25. *Answer.* (1) Yet he bids us turn away from the wicked, chap. 3:5. We ought in meekness to instruct even him that is excommunicate, 2 Thess. 3:15, yet we are there warned, ver. 14, to have no company with him. (2) The angel of the church at Ephesus is at once commended both for his patience, and that he could not bear them which were evil [Rev. 2:2].

I shall add five distinctions which will take off all other objections that I have yet met with.

1. Distinguish between a confederacy which is more discretive and discriminative, and a confederacy which is more unitive. And here is the reason why covenants of peace and commerce, even with infidels and wicked persons, are allowed, yet military associations with such disallowed. For the former keeps them and us still divided as two; the latter unites us and them as one, and embodies us together with them. For Thucydides defines [Gk.] *summaxia* to be such a covenant as makes us and our confederates to have the same friends and enemies;[7] and it is mentioned by writers as a further degree of union than [Gk.] *spondai*, or covenants of peace.

2. Distinguish between endeavor of duty, and the perfection of the things which answers that exception: "O, then, we must have an army all of saints (it should be said) without any known wicked person in it." Now, even as it is our duty to endeavor a purging of the church from wicked and scandalous persons, yet, when we have done all we can, the Lord's field shall not be perfectly purged from tares till the end of the world, Matt. 13. So when we have done all that ever we can to avoid wicked persons in an expedition, yet we cannot be rid of them all; but we must use our utmost endeavors that we may be able to say, "It is our affliction, not our fault."

3. Distinguish between some particular wicked persons here and there mixing themselves with us, and between a wicked faction and malignant party. The former should be avoided as much as possible, but much more a conjunction with a wicked faction. David would by no means meet and consult with the [Heb.] *kahal meregnim*, "the assembly of malignants." Neither did he only shun to meet and consult with "vain persons," who openly show and betray themselves, but even "with dissemblers," or (as the Chaldee) "with those that hide themselves, that they may do evil," Ps. 26:4-5. We can know better how to do with a whole field of tares, in which no wheat is, than we can do with tares growing here and there among the wheat.

4. Distinguish between such a fellowship with some wicked persons as is necessary (which is the case of those that are married, and of parents and children) or unavoidable, which is the case of those whose lot it is to cohabit in one town, or in one family, in a case of necessity, travelling, or sailing together distinguish, I say, between these and an elective or voluntary fellowship with wicked men, when love to them, or our own benefit, draws us thereunto. We neither loose natural bonds, nor require impossibilities, but that we keep ourselves pure, by not choosing or consenting to such fellowship.

5. Distinguish between infidels, heretics, wicked persons repenting, and those who go on in their trespass. Whatever men have been, yet as soon as the signs of repentance and new fruits appear in them, we are ready to receive them into favour and fellowship. Then, indeed, the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the cow and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall lie down together; meaning such as were wolves, leopards, bears, and now begin to change their nature. Not so with the obstinate, contumacious and impenitent, who still remain wolves, etc.

Let us now, (1) examine ourselves, whether there be so much tenderness of conscience in us as to close with those scripture truths, or whether we are still in a way of consulting with flesh and blood. (2) Be humbled for former miscarriages and failings in these particulars, and for not walking accurately according to these scripture rules. (3) Beware for the future; remember and apply these rules when we have to do with the practice of them.

And that I may drive home this nail to the head, I add (beside what was said before) these reasons and motives: First, it is a great judgment when God "mingleth a perverse spirit" in the midst of a people, Isa. 19:14. Shall we then make that a voluntary act of our own which the word mentions as a dreadful judgment? With this spiritual judgment is oftentimes a temporal judgment, as 2 Chron. 16:9; 20:37; 28:22; so Hos. 5:13; 7:8, compared with chap. 8:8-9, where their judgment sounds forth their sin as by an echo. The Chaldee paraphrase, in the place last cited, says, "The house of Israel is delivered into the hands of the people whom they loved."

Secondly, remember what followed upon God's people mingling themselves with the heathen, Ps. 106:35, "They were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works." Hos. 7:8: "Ephraim, he hath mixed himself among the people" that is, by making confederacies with the heathen (as Luther expounds the place), and by seeking their help and assistance, Hos. 5:13. But what follows? "Ephraim is a cake not turned," hot and overbaked in the nether [*lower*] side, but cold and raw in the upper side. This will prove the fruit of such confederacies and associations to make us zealous for some earthly or human thing, but remiss and cold in the things of Christ: to be too hot on our nether side,

and too raw on the upper side. Whereas not mingling ourselves with the wicked, we shall, through God's mercy, be like a cake turned; that heat and zeal which was before downward shall now be upward, heavenward, Godward.

Let it also be remembered how both Ahaz, 2 Kings 16:10, and Asa himself, 2 Chron. 16:10 (though a good man), were drawn into other great sins, upon occasion of these associations with the enemies of God and his people. This sin will certainly ensnare men in other sins. It is well said by Calvin, upon Ezek. 16:26, that as we are too prone of ourselves to wickedness, so when we enter into confederacies with wicked men we are but seeking new temptations, and, as it were, a bellows to blow up our corruptions. As wine, being mixed with water, loses of its spirits; and white, being mixed with black, loses much of its whiteness; so the people of God, if once mixed with wicked enemies, shall certainly lose of their purity and integrity.

Thirdly, as these unlawful confederacies draw us both into great judgments and great sins, so into great security and stupidity under these great plagues and sins, which will make the estate of such to be yet worse, Hos. 7:9. After Ephraim's mixing himself among the people, it is added, "Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not; yea, grey hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not." Although his confederates have distressed him, and not strengthened him, and although there may be observed in him diverse signs of a decaying dying condition, yet he knows it not, nor takes it to heart. The same thing is insisted upon, ver. 11, "Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart: they call to Egypt, they go up to Assyria." He is as void of understanding as a silly dove, whose nest being spoiled, and "her young ones taken from her" (which the Chaldee paraphrase adds for explication's cause), yet she still returns to those places where, and among those people by whom, she has been so spoiled: so Israel will still be meddling with those that have done him great hurt.

Fourthly, we find that such confederacy or association, either with idolaters or known impious persons, is seldom or never recorded in the book of God without a reproof, or some greater mark of God's displeasure put upon it. If it were like the polygamy of the patriarchs, often mentioned and not reproved, it were the less marvel to hear it so much debated. But now, when God hath so purposely set so many beacons upon those rocks and shelves, that we may be aware of them, O why shall we be so mad as still to run upon them? It was reproved in the time of the judges, Judg. 2:1-3. It was reproved in the time of the kings. Ahab's covenant with Benhadad; Asa's covenant with Benhadad; Ahaz's confederacy with the Assyrian; Jehoshaphat's association, first with Ahab, then with Amaziah; Amaziah's association with those hundred thousand men of Ephraim, when God was not with them all these are plainly disallowed and condemned. Moreover, that reproof, Jer. 2:18, "And now, what hast thou to do in the way of Egypt, to drink the waters of Sihor? Or what hast thou to do in the way of Assyria, to drink the waters of the river?" the Chaldee has thus: "What have ye to associate with Pharaoh king of Egypt? And what have ye to do to make a covenant with the Assyrian?" Again, after the captivity, Ezra 9, the Jews' mingling of themselves with the heathen is lamented.

Fifthly, the great and precious promises of God may encourage us so as we shall never say to the wicked, "a confederacy." For, upon condition of our avoiding all such confederacies and conjunctions, God promises never to break his covenant with us, Judg. 2:1-2, and to receive us as his sons and daughters, 2 Cor. 6:14, 16-18.

Sixthly, it is one of God's greatest mercies which he has covenanted and promised, "I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against me," Ezek. 20:38. Why should we then forsake our own mercy, and despise the counsel of God against our souls?

Seventhly, as it was Asa's experience, 2 Chron. 16:7-8, so it has been in our own. God has done his greatest works for us when we were most unmixed with such men.

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CHAPTER 5 : EXTENSION OF OUR KNOWLEDGE

Thus far we have reviewed deductions from the word of God concerning civil government. But God's word allows us to extend our knowledge of civil government beyond what can be deduced from scripture. His word provides the methodology for this extension of knowledge. At least two tools offered in scripture by which man may extend his knowledge in the social sciences (of which the study of government is a species) and the natural sciences are these: classification and induction.

Classification is the systematic arrangement into classes or groups of that which is observed. Man had early, divinely ordained experience in classification:

“And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought [them] unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that [was] the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field...” (Genesis 2:19-20)

And mankind since the time of Adam has rightly continued to name and classify that which they have observed. With respect to the study of government, much of that study involves classification. Classification is necessary to organize the different forms of government, functions of government, etc.

Induction is another important tool. By induction we mean inferring a generalized conclusion from particular instances. This contrasts with deduction, where conclusions about particulars can necessarily be inferred from general or universal premises. The Bible legitimizes induction (when rightly used) as a method of drawing conclusions, even as it legitimizes deduction as a method of drawing conclusions. One illustrative example in the Bible is this one: in Jesus' conversations with the Jews, He noted their use of induction in forecasting the weather. He said: “When it is evening, ye say, [It will be] fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, [It will be] foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O [ye] hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not [discern] the signs of the times?” (Matthew 16:2-3) Apparently the Jews had noticed, based upon observation, a pattern of sky appearance which allowed them to forecast the weather remarkably well. Christ did not admonish their use of inductive reasoning in this way. Rather, He acknowledged their ability to rightly reason in this way. He faulted them for not using their reasoning skills to discern that their Messiah was come and that they should follow Him.

So classification and induction as methods of extending human knowledge beyond what is directly taught in the Bible are well attested for in scripture, and are therefore legitimate tools that can be used in the study of government, as well as the other social and natural sciences. But as with any tools, we must be sure to use these tools properly, lest they be unsafe. Our conclusions and classification should always be consistent with and never contrary to the precepts of God's word.

In the remaining chapters of this textbook we shall present just some of the information concerning government which has been attained using these tools.

CHAPTER 6 : REASONS FOR GOVERNMENT

There are a wide range of views about the rationale for government. Five major ones are briefly described below, though not all of them are mutually exclusive.

Some view government as merely rooted in greed and oppression. Many political philosophies that are opposed to the existence of a government (such as anarchism) emphasize their view of the historical roots of governments originating from the authority of warlords and petty despots who took, by force, certain patches of land as their own (and began exercising authority over the people living on that land). Thus, it is argued that governments exist to enforce the will of the strong and oppress the weak.

Some view government as rooted in the human need for order and tradition. The various forms of conservatism generally see the government as a positive force that brings order out of chaos and establishes laws to end the "war of all against all".

Natural rights are the basis for the view of government shared by most branches of liberalism (including libertarianism). In this view, human beings are born with certain *natural rights*, and governments are established strictly for the purpose of protecting those rights. What the *natural rights* actually are is a matter of dispute among humanistic liberals - both in the sense of a definition of "rights", and in the sense of listing which rights are natural. Indeed, each branch of liberalism has its own set of rights that it considers to be *natural*, and these rights are sometimes mutually exclusive with the rights supported by other liberals.

One of the most influential views of government in the past two hundred years has been the social contract theory. The social contract theory holds that governments are created by the people in order to provide for collective needs (such as safety from crime, poverty, illiteracy) that cannot be properly satisfied using purely individual means. Governments thus exist for the purpose of serving the needs and wishes of the people, and their relationship with the people is clearly stipulated in a "social contract" (a constitution and a set of laws) which both the government and the people must abide by. If a majority is unhappy, it may change the social contract. If a minority is unhappy, it may persuade the majority to change the contract, or it may opt out of it by emigration or secession.

All of the previously described views, while containing elements of truth, are essentially humanistic, and should be dismissed as erroneous and inadequate. They fail to identify the true establisher of human government: God. God ordained government, and He is the principal reason for its existence. As Romans 13:1 says, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." He has ordained it for His own glory and man's welfare. Therefore, government should be organized and administered so as to promote God's glory and man's true welfare. As Mark 12:29-31 says, "And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments [is], Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this [is] the first commandment. And the second [is] like, [namely] this,

Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.” In forming governments, man has implemented what God has ordained (even when men may be unaware that God ordained it). Human governments have been more or less good (or evil) to the extent they have been organized and run consistent with the principles of God’s word.

How we look at the rationale for government inevitably impacts how we look at the attributes, forms and functions of government, which we consider in the coming chapters.

CHAPTER 7 : ATTRIBUTES OF GOVERNMENT

Effective governments possess two attributes: authority and legitimacy.

Authority is the power to enforce laws, exact obedience, command, determine, or judge. Authority can be derived from naked force or terror, as was the case in Stalinist Russia. It can also be derived from a social contract between governed and government, as is the case in many western democracies. But, ideally, it is also derived from the consciences of the governed, recognizing the government as legitimate in governing, and themselves as duty bound to submit. So physical, spiritual, emotional, and financial self-interest can all be motives which propel the governed to obey a government.

Legitimacy is the state of being consistent with moral law and principles. Legitimacy is gained through the acquisition and application of power in accordance with moral standards or principles.

Humanistic political theories can make a convincing explanation of how governments can have authority, but they utterly fail to explain how governments can have legitimacy. Secular humanism is contrary to the concept of moral absolutes, upon which the idea of legitimacy depends. But Biblical Christianity can readily account for moral absolutes. According to Biblical Christianity, moral absolutes reflect the objective character of the perfectly good and holy God. This good and holy God has revealed principles in scripture by which even fallen mankind can know how to tell a legitimate government from an illegitimate government. Thus, Biblical Christianity can readily account for the concept of legitimacy of a government in a morally absolute sense.

CHAPTER 8 : FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

During the history of mankind, governments have taken sundry forms. In addition, there have been sundry ways of classifying these forms. Let's consider the various forms of government and the various systems of classification.

One system of classification is in relation to religion. Throughout most of human history nations have ostensibly been run based upon and in accordance with a professed official religion of the state. Such nations' governments may broadly be described as theocratic in orientation which have an official religion and an established church adhering to that official religion. Such theocratic states seek to promote the official religion and aid the established church, while discouraging other religions and other churches. Those who are outside the official religion and the established church of a theocratic nation are generally denied the political power and prerogatives of those within the official religion and the established church.

Scripture prescribes a theocratic form of government. Theocracy literally means rule by God. As Psalm 2:10-12 states: "Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish [from] the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little..." The nations are to behave in conformity with God's law, as it is revealed in the Bible. And only those who are willing to submit to God's word in their governance, as well as in their personal behavior, are morally qualified to rule.

Theocracies have themselves taken various shapes. There are at least two ways we can sub-classify theocracies: by religion and denomination and by relation of church and state. With respect to the former, there have been reformed Christian nations, Roman Catholic nations, Eastern Orthodox nations, Muslim nations, Hindu nations, Judaistic nations, etc. With respect to the latter, some theocratic nations have had the church over the state, some have had the state over the church, and some have had the state equal to the church but operating in different spheres.

A hierocracy is a government where God ostensibly rules a nation through clerical (i.e., the clergy) rulers. In other words, the church is over the state. Two historical examples of a hierocracy are the Papal States (now reduced to merely Vatican City) and the modern Islamic Republic of Iran. The former is ruled by the Pope, and the latter is ruled by an ayatollah. Another form of theocracy is Erastian. The term Erastian refers to Thomas Erastus, a German physician and theologian of the 16th century. In the present day, an Erastian is one who would see the church placed entirely under the control of the State. This was the form of government common among the Lutheran countries during the Protestant Reformation. Yet a third form of theocracy is one where both the Church and State of a nation are governed according to God's law, and each with its own sphere of authority, but neither over the other. This might be called the reformed form of theocracy, because it has been the historical political model of reformed Christianity as well as of ancient Israel. It was the political form found in Calvin's Geneva, Knox's Scotland, and Puritan New England.

Secularism is the primary alternative to theocracy. Secularism is the view that religious considerations should be excluded from civil affairs. In the last several centuries,

secularism has been the dominant and ascendant political philosophy with respect to the role of religion in politics. The United States was perhaps the first nation with a secularist government, for before its inception a nation without an official religion was virtually non-existent. The US federal constitution has forbidden a nationally established church, as well as religious test oaths for holding political office. In fact, through amendment, it has come to prohibit any civil discrimination based upon religion within the nation.

Communist nations, like the former Soviet Union and the communist People's Republic of China, also have taken a secularist form of government. But in contrast to the US model, where the state is purportedly neutral towards religion, the communist form of government is professedly hostile towards religion. The harmful consequences of communism became more apparent with every passing year in the twentieth century. Communism proved terribly abusive to most of the citizens in the communist nations, and it tended to hinder economic development. So it has been the US model of secularist government to which most nations have aspired, and which virtually all of the modern West embraced, while communism has been largely abandoned.

Although the trend towards secularism has been dominant in the past several centuries, in the last few decades there has been a counter-trend away from secularism and towards religiously-based government, even though in most cases the state religions espoused have been false religions (primarily Islamic), and not the true reformed Christian faith. This counter-trend is at least in part the consequence of a realization that no nation can be religiously neutral. Though American-style secularism purports to be religiously neutral, the reality on the ground contradicts this profession. Those nations which are not professedly reformed Christian will inevitably be anti-reformed Christian and anti-Ten Commandments. Legalized abortion, sodomy, idolatry, and Sabbath desecration, along with indoctrination in Darwinian evolution in the public schools, have been just some of the fruits associated with secularism. The counter-trend is also a reaction against the flagrant wickedness of the secularized West. We can expect in the coming years continued competition for dominance between theocracy and secularism.

Another system of classification is by political franchise. Political franchise, also known as suffrage, refers to who has the right to vote (and hence rule). Some of the major categories of government based on differences in political franchise include a democracy, an oligarchy, and an autocracy.

In a democracy most of the people in the nation get to vote, although the level of participation varies. In some nations only men get to vote, such as was the case even in most of the Western nations before the twentieth century. In some nations, only members of the established church get to vote. In some cases, only members of a certain ethnicity get to vote. Very few nations allow criminals to vote, and few allow children to vote. So even in democracies there are different levels of popular participation.

An oligarchy is a form of government where most or all political power effectively rests with a small segment of society (typically the most powerful, whether by wealth, family, military strength, ruthlessness, or political influence). The word oligarchy is from the Greek words for "few" (oligo) and "rule" (arkhos).

An autocracy is a form of government where unlimited political power is held by a single individual. The term *autocrat* is derived from the Greek word *autokratôr* (lit. "self-ruler", "ruler of one's self").

Another system of classification is by approach to regional autonomy. Generally, sovereignty is either located exclusively at the "center" of the state, or else some power is distributed away from the center. Among nations where some power is distributed away from the center, there are two sub-classes: federations and confederations. In a federation the component states are regarded as in some sense sovereign, in so far as certain powers are reserved to them that may not be exercised by the central government. However a federation is more than a mere loose alliance of independent states. The component states of a federation usually possess no powers in relation to foreign policy, and so enjoy no independent status under international law. A confederation is an association of sovereign states, usually created by treaty but often later adopting a common constitution. Confederations tend to be established for dealing with critical issues, such as defence, foreign affairs, foreign trade, and a common currency, with the central government being required to provide support for all members. A confederation, in modern political terms, is usually limited to a permanent union of sovereign states for common action in relation to other states. More power is distributed away from the center in a confederation than in a federation. Originally the United States of America was a confederation under its Articles of Confederation, but it rather quickly became a federation with the adoption of the US Constitution.

Another system of classification is by existence of a monarch or king. A monarch is a type of ruler or head of state. Monarchs almost always inherit their titles and are rulers for life (that is, they have no term limit). Historically most monarchs have been more or less absolute rulers, but there is great variety in monarchical power. In fact, modern monarchs are often figureheads with little power. However, there are others with substantial or absolute power. Most nations that do not have a hereditary monarchy call themselves a republic, and in its broadest sense the idea of a republic can include almost any form of government that is not a monarchy.

And a final system of classification we shall consider is by aggregation of nations. An empire is an aggregation of many ethnicities and nations under one central government. An example of an empire in human history is the ancient Roman Empire. In contrast to the imperial model, many nations have been more mono-ethnic and independent of other nations. Somewhat between these extremes is the commonwealth model. A commonwealth is a group of sovereign states associated by their own choice and linked with common objectives and interests. The British Commonwealth is a modern example. Very similar in concept to a commonwealth is an alliance of nations, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). But some nations choose a more isolationist approach to other nations. This was an approach that US President George Washington advocated, but it has not been an approach the US has pursued during most of its history.

Forms of government can be classified in other ways beside these basic ones. Such classification helps us to identify and understand the political alternatives.

CHAPTER 9 : FUNCTIONS OF GOVERNMENT

Governments perform three basic functions: they make rules, they enforce the rules, and they adjudicate according to the rules. The legislative function consists of the making of rules. The executive function consists of the enforcement of the rules. And the judicial function consists of adjudication according to the rules.

Multiple functions may be combined into a single institution. All three basic functions appear to have been lodged in the Sanhedrin of ancient Israel, during times when there was no king. Multiple functions can be placed in one political body without dangerously concentrating power, so long as power is defused within that body. For instance, certain parliamentary systems combine legislative and executive functions in one branch. Members of parliament typically select a prime minister and his cabinet from among its membership, similar to the way a Presbyterian synod selects a moderator. But when it comes to voting on issues, the prime minister (like a synod's moderator) has just one vote, like all the other members of the parliament.

The three basic functions of government may be distributed among separate branches, as in the system in place in the United States. This division of functions among separate branches is called separation of powers. It is intended to produce a system with more checks and balances. Other branches help ensure a branch does not act in a manner against the constitutional standards of the government. The existence of multiple branches is more necessary when power in a branch is concentrated in one person, the way power in the US executive branch is concentrated in the president.

The executive function typically requires the most laborers to implement the tasks assigned to it. Governments often concern themselves with regulating and administering many areas of human activity, such as trade, medicine, entertainment, internal security and order, external defense, etc. All of these functions can require significant numbers of personnel to operate.

The legislative function can be performed by a unicameral or bicameral legislature. The United States has a bicameral legislature (called its Congress), consisting of a House of Representatives and a Senate. But some nations have simply a unicameral legislature. A unicameral legislature consists of only a single chamber or assembly.

The judicial function is normally handled by judges, who consider cases brought before them. Judges are trained in the law of the land, so as to be able to adjudicate according to that law. Judges sit in courts with varying levels of jurisdiction. Cases normally begin in a district court, pitting a plaintiff against a defendant. If either the plaintiff or defendant is dissatisfied with the lower court's ruling, he can appeal the case up to a higher court, called an appellate court. The last court of an appeal in a state or nation is often called a supreme court.

The law of the land from which judges adjudicate cases *should* be the Ten Commandments and applications of the Ten Commandments appropriate to a nation's

circumstances. But in almost all nations in the world today this is not the case. The men who rule – in the judicial branch, as well as the executive and legislative branches of government – generally take oaths to uphold the law of the land. So it is important to understand the law of the land and to know whether it is in conformity to God’s word.

God allows each nation some discretion in the way it organizes the executive, legislative, and judicial functions, so long as it is done within general Biblical guidelines. We ought to pray that God would bless us with God-glorifying nations ruled by wise leaders who will govern in the fear of the Lord.