

be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently : but if when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto ye were called ; because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an ensample that ye should follow in his steps ; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth ; who when he was reviled, reviled not again ; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed it to him that judgeth righteously °.” Think not to live and reign with Christ, if you will not follow him, and suffer with him. It is impudent presumption and not faith, to look to be like the saints in glory, while you are like the devil in malice and cruelty.

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## CHAPTER X.

*Cases resolved about forgiving Injuries and Debts, and about Self-defence, and seeking Right by Law or otherwise.*

THE Cases about forgiving, and revenging, are many, and some of them difficult : I shall resolve those of ordinary use in our practice, and pass by the rest.

*Quest.* 1. ‘ Is a man bound to forgive all injuries and damages that are done him ? If not, What injuries be they which every man is bound to forgive ?’

*Answ.* To both these questions I briefly answer, 1. We must distinguish between a crime or sin against God, and the common good ; and an injury or damage to ourselves. 2. And between public justice and private revenge. 3. And between those damages which fall upon myself only, and those that by me redound to others, (as wife or children, &c.) 4. And between the remitting of a punishment, and the remitting of reparations of my loss. 5. And between the various punishments to be remitted. He that will confound any of these shall sooner deceive himself and others, than resolve the doubts.

*Prop.* 1. It frequently falleth out, that it is not in our power to remit the penalty of a crime ; no, not the temporal penalty. For this is a wrong to God the universal Gover-

° 1 Pet. ii. 19—25.

nor, and God only can forgive it, and man no farther than God hath commissioned him. Murder, whoredom, drunkenness, swearing, &c., as they are sins against God, the magistrate is bound to punish, and private men to endeavour it by the magistrate. And if it may be said, that the sovereign ruler of a nation hath power to forgive such crimes, the meaning is no more than this; 1. That as to the species of these sins, if he do forgive the temporal punishment which in his office he should have inflicted, yet no human power can question him for it, because he hath none on earth above him; but yet God will question him, and shew him that he had no power to dispense with his laws, nor disoblige himself from his duty. 2. And that in some cases an individual crime may be forgiven by the magistrate as to the temporal punishment, even where the ends of the law and government require it; but this must not be ordinary.

*Prop. II.* It is not always in the power of the magistrate to remit the temporal punishment of heinous crimes, against the common good. Because it is ordinarily necessary to the common good that they be punished; and his power is for the common good, and not against it. The enemies of the public peace must by punishment be restrained.

*Prop. III.* Much less is it in the power of a private man, to remit a penalty to be inflicted by a magistrate. And what I say of magistrates, holdeth of parents, and other governors, 'cæteris paribus,' according to the proportion of their authority.

*Prop. IV.* I may by just means exact satisfaction for damages to myself, in my reputation or estate, when the ends of Christianity, even the honour of God, and the public good, and the benefit of men's souls require it; that is, when I only vindicate these by lawful means, as they are the talents which God hath committed to me for his service, and for which he will call me to account. It may fall out that the vindicating of a minister's or other Christian's name from a slander, may become very needful for the interest and honour of religion, and for the good of many souls. And if I have an estate which I resolve to use for God, and a thief or a deceiver take it from me, who will do no good with it but hurt, I may be bound to vindicate it; that I may be enabled to do good, and may give God a comfortable

account of my stewardship; besides the suppressing of thievery and deceit, as they are against the common good.

*Prop. v.* When my estate is not entirely my own, but wife or child or any other is a sharer in it, it is not wholly in my power to remit any debt or damage out of it, but I must have the consent of them that are joint-owners; unless I be entrusted for them.

*Prop. vi.* If I be primarily obliged to maintain wife and children, or any others with my estate, I am bound on their behalf to use all just means to vindicate it from any that shall injuriously invade it: otherwise I am guilty of their sufferings whom I should maintain; I may no more suffer a thief than a dog to go away with my children's meat.

*Prop. vii.* And as I must vindicate my estate for others to whom I am entrusted to administer it by God, so must I for myself also, so far as God would have me use it myself. For he that hath charged me to provide for my family, requireth also that I famish not myself; and he hath required me to love my neighbour but as myself; and therefore as I am bound to vindicate and help my neighbour if a thief or oppressor would rob him, (according to my place and power,) so must I do also for myself. In all these seven cases I am not obliged to forgive.

But on the other side, in all these cases following, I am bound to forgive and let go my right.

*Prop. i.* As the church may declare to penitent sinners, the remission of the eternal punishment, so may it remit the temporal punishment of excommunication, to the penitent: yea, this they are obliged by Christ to do, ministerially, as under him.

*Prop. ii.* When the repentance and satisfaction of the sinner is like to conduce more to the public good, and the honour of God, and other ends of government, than his punishment would do, a private man may not be obliged to prosecute him before the magistrate, and the magistrate hath power to forgive him as to the penalty which it belongeth to him to inflict. (Though this may not extend to the remitting of crimes ordinarily and frequently, nor to the remitting of some sort of heinous crimes at all; because this cannot attain the ends of government as aforesaid.)

*Prop. iii.* All personal wrongs, so far as they are merely

against myself, and disable me not from my duty to God and my neighbour, I may and must forgive: for my own interest is put more in my own power; and here it is that I am commanded to forgive. If you say that I am bound to preserve my own life and soul as much as another's; I answer, it is true, I am bound to preserve my own and another's ultimately for the service and glory of God; and God's interest in me I cannot remit or give away. As there is no obligation to duty but what is originally from God, so there is none but what is ultimately for God, even to please and glorify him.

*Object.* 'But if this be all, I shall forgive no wrongs: for there is none which doth not some way hinder me in my duty.' *Ans.* Yes, there may be many to your body, your estate and name, which yet may be no disablement or hindrance to you, except you make it so yourself: as if you receive a box on the ear, or be slandered or reviled where none heareth it but yourself, or such as will make no evil use of it, or if a little be diminished injuriously out of a superfluous estate, or so as to be employed as well as you would have done. 2. But I further answer this objection in the next propositions.

*Prop. iv.* If my patient suffering a personal injury, which somewhat hindereth me from my duty, be like to be as great a service to God, or to do more good, than by that duty I should do, I ought to pass by and forgive that injury: because then God's interest obligeth me not to vindicate my right.

*Prop. v.* If when I am injured, and thereby disabled from doing some good which I should else have done, I am not able by seeking reparation or the punishment of the person, to recover my capacity, and promote the service of God, I am bound to pass by and remit that injury. (I speak not of the criminal part, but the injury as such: for a man may be bound to bring a thief to punishment, on the account of God's honour, and the common good, (though else he might forgive the injury to himself).

*Prop. vi.* If it be probable that he that defraudeth me of my estate, will do more good with it than I should have done, I am not bound to vindicate it from him for my own interest: (though as he is criminal, and the crime is hurtful,

as an ill example, to the common good, so I may be bound to it). Nay, were it not for the said criminal respect, I am bound rather to let him take it, than to vindicate it by any such means as would break charity, and do more hurt than good.

*Prop. vii.* If I am absolutely trusted with the person or estate of another, I may so far forgive the wrongs done to that other, upon sufficient reasons, as well as against myself.

*Prop. viii.* A private man may not usurp the magistrate's power, or do any act which is proper to his office, nor yet may he break his laws, for the avenging of himself: he may use no other means than the law of God and his sovereign do allow him. Therefore he may not rail; or revile, or slander, or rob, or strike, or hurt any, (unless in case of defence, as afterward,) nor take any other prohibited course.

*Prop. ix.* No rigour or severity must be used to right myself, where gentler means may probably do it; but the most harmless way must first be tried.

*Prop. x.* In general, all wrongs, and debts, and damages, must be forgiven, when the hurt is like to be greater, which will come by our righting ourselves, than that which by forbearance we shall sustain: and all must be forgiven where God's law or man's forbiddeth us not to forgive. Therefore a man that will here know his duty, must conduct his actions by very great prudence, (which if he have not himself, he must make use of a guide or counsellor:) and he must be able to compare the evil which he suffereth with the evil which will in probability follow his vindication, and to discern which of them is the greater: or else he can never know how far and when he may and must forgive. And herein he must observe,

1. The hurt that cometh to a man's soul is greater than the hurt that befalleth the body: and therefore if my suing a man at law be like to hurt his soul by uncharitableness, or to hurt my own, or the souls of others by scandal or disturbances, I must rather suffer any mere bodily injuries, than use that means: but if yet greater hurt to souls would follow that bodily suffering of mine, the case is then altered the other way. So if by forgiving debts or wrongs, I be

like to do more good to the soul of him whom I forgive, or others, than the recovery of my own, or the righting of myself is like any way to equal, I am obliged to forgive that debt or wrong.

2. The good or hurt which cometh to a community or to many, is 'cæteris paribus' to be more regarded than that which cometh to myself or any one alone. Because many are of more worth than one; and because God's honour ('cæteris paribus') is more concerned in the good of many than of one. Therefore I must not seek my own right to the hurt of many, either of their souls or bodies, unless some greater good require it.

3. The good or hurt of public persons, magistrates, or pastors is ('cæteris paribus') of more regard than the good or hurt of single men: therefore 'cæteris paribus' I must not right myself to the dishonour or hurt of governors: (no, though I were none of their charge or subjects:) because the public good is more concerned in their honour or welfare than in mine. The same may be said of persons, by their gifts and interests more eminently serviceable to God and the common good than I am.

4. The good or hurt of a near relation, of a dear friend, of a worthy person, is more to be regarded by me, 'cæteris paribus,' than the good or hurt of a vile, unworthy person, or a stranger. And therefore the Israelites might not take usury of a poor brother, which yet they might do of an alien of another land! The laws of nature and friendship may more oblige me to one than to another, though they were supposed equal in themselves. Therefore I am not bound to remit a debt or wrong to a thief, or deceiver, or a vile person, when a nearer or worthier person would be equally damaged by his benefit. And thus far, (if without any partial self-love a man can justly estimate himself,) he may not only as he is nearest himself, but also for his real worth, prefer his own commodity before the commodity of a more unworthy and unserviceable person.

5. Another man's necessities are more regardable than our own superfluities; as his life is more regardable than our corporal delights. Therefore it is a great sin for any man to reduce another to extremity, and deprive him of necessities for his life, merely to vindicate his own right in super-

fluties, for the satisfaction of his concupiscence and sensual desires. If a poor man steal to save his own or his children's lives, and the rich man vindicate his own, merely to live in greater fulness or gallantry in the world, he sinneth both the sin of sensuality and uncharitableness : (but how far for the common good he is bound to prosecute the thief as criminal, is a case which depends on other circumstances). And this is the most common case, in which the forgiving of debts and damages is required in Scripture, viz. When the other is poor and we are rich, and his necessities require it as an act of charity : (and also the former case, when the hurt by our vindication is like to be greater than our benefit will countervail).

*Quest.* 11. 'What is the meaning of those words of Christ, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth : but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil ; but 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 : and whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him two : give to him that asketh thee ; and from him that would borrow of thee turn thou not away \* ?"'

*Ans.* The meaning of the text is this : as if he had said, "Because you have heard that magistrates are required to do justice exactly between man and man, and to take an eye for an eye, &c., therefore you may perhaps believe those teachers who would persuade you, that for any man to exact this satisfaction is no fault : but I tell you that duties of charity must be performed, as well as justice must be done : and though it be the magistrate's duty to do you this justice, it is not your duty always to require it, but charity may make the contrary to be your duty. Therefore I say unto you; overvalue not the concernments of your flesh, nor the trifles of this world, but if a man abuse you, or wrong you in these trifles, make no great matter of it, and be not presently inflamed to revenge, and to right yourselves ; but exercise your patience and your charity to him that wrongeth you, and by a habituated stedfastness herein, be ready to receive another injury with equal patience, yea, many such, rather than to fly to an unnecessary vindication

\* Matt. v. 38—42.

of your right. For what if he give you another stroke? Or what if he also take your cloak? Or what if he compel you to go another mile for him? Let him do it; let him take it; how small is your hurt! What inconsiderable things are these! Your resistance and vindication of your right may violate charity and peace, and inflame his passion, and kindle your own, and hurt both your souls, and draw you into other sins, and cost you dearer than your right was worth: whereas your patience, and yieldingness, and submission, and readiness to serve another, and to let go your own for peace and charity, may shame him, or melt him, and prevent contention, and keep your own and the public peace, and may shew the excellency of your holy religion, and win men's souls to the love of it, that they may be saved. Therefore instead of exacting or vindicating your utmost right, set light by your corporal sufferings and wrongs, and study and labour with all your power, to excel in charity, and to do good to all, and to stoop to any service to another, and humble yourselves, and exercise patience, and give and lend according to your abilities; and pretend not justice against the great duties of charity and patience." So that here is forbidden both violent and legal revenge for our corporal abuses, when the law of charity or patience is against it: but this disobligeth not magistrates to do justice, or men to seek it, in any of the cases mentioned in the seven first propositions.

*Quest.* III. 'Am I bound to forgive another, if he ask me not forgiveness? The reason of the question is, because Christ saith, "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him: and if he repent, forgive him; and if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent, thou shalt forgive him<sup>b</sup>."

*Ans.* In the resolving of this, while some have barely affirmed, and others denied, for want of distinguishing, they have said worse than nothing. It is necessary that we distinguish,

1. Between the forgiving of an enemy, and of a stranger, and of a neighbour, and of a brother, as such.

2. Between the several penalties to be remitted (as well

<sup>b</sup> Luke xvii. 3, 4.



as revenges to be forborne). And so briefly the case must be thus resolved.

*Prop. I.* An enemy, a stranger and a neighbour, as such, must be forgiven (in the cases before asserted) though they ask not forgiveness, nor say, I repent: for,

1. Many other Scriptures absolutely require it.

2. And forgiving them as such, is but the continuing them in our common charity, as men or neighbours; that is, our not endeavouring to ruin them, or do them any hurt, and our hearty desiring and endeavouring their good, according to their capacities and ours; and thus far we must forgive them.

*Prop. II.* A brother must be also thus far forgiven, though he say not, I repent; that is, we must love him as a man, and wish and endeavour his good to our power.

*Prop. III.* A brother as a brother, is not to be so forgiven, as to be restored to our estimation, and affection, and usage of him as a brother, either in spiritual account, or intimate special love and familiarity, as long as he is impenitent in his gross offences; and that is, till he turn again and say, I repent. A natural brother is still to be loved as a natural brother. For that kind of love dependeth not on his honesty or repentance. But,

1. A brother in a religious sense.

2. Or a bosom, familiar friend, are both unfit for to be received in these capacities, till they are penitent for gross offences; therefore the church is not to pardon the impenitent, in point of communion, nor particular Christians to pardon them in their esteem and carriage; nor am I bound to take an unfit person to be my bosom friend to know my secrets; therefore if either of these offend, I must not forgive them, that is, by forgiveness continue them in the respect and usage of this brotherhood, till they repent; and this (first especially) is the brother mentioned in the text.

*Quest. iv.* 'Is it lawful to sue a brother at law? The reason of the question is, from the words of the apostle Paul, "There is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another: why do you not rather take wrong? Why do you not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?"

*Ans. 1.* Distinguish betwixt going to law before hea-

thens, or other enemies to the Christian religion, and before Christian magistrates.

2. Between going to law in malice for revenge, and going merely to seek my right, or to seek the suppression and reformation of sin.

3. Between going to law when you are bound to forgive, and when you are not.

4. And between going to law in haste and needlessly, and going to law as the last remedy, in case of necessity, when other means fail.

5. And between going to law when the hurt is like to be greater than the benefit, and going to law when it is likely to do good. There is a great deal of difference between these cases.

*Prop. i.* Christians must rather suffer wrong, than go to law before the enemies of religion, when it is like to harden them, and to bring Christianity into contempt.

*Prop. ii.* It is not lawful to make law and justice the means of private unlawful revenge; nor to vent our malice nor to oppress the innocent.

*Prop. iii.* Whenever I am bound to forgive the trespass, wrong or debt, then it is unlawful to seek my own at law. For that is not forgiving.

*Prop. iv.* There are many other remedies which must first be tried (ordinarily) before we go to law; as,

1. To rebuke our neighbour for his wrong, and privately to desire necessary reparations.

2. To take two or three to admonish him; or to refer the matter to arbitrators (or in some cases to a lot). And if any make law their first remedy needlessly, while the other means should first be used, it is a sin.

*Prop. v.* It is not lawful to go to lawsuits, when prudence may discern that the hurt which may come by it, will be greater than the benefit; (either by hardening the person, or disturbing ourselves, or scandalizing others against religion, or drawing any to ways of unpeaceableness or revenge, &c.) The foreseen consequences may overrule the case.

But on the other side, *Prop. i.* It is lawful to make use of Christian judicatories, so it be done in a lawful manner: yea, and in some cases, of the judicatories of infidels.

*Prop. 11.* The suppressing of sin, and the defending the innocent, and righting of the wronged, being the duty of governors, it is lawful to seek these benefits at their hands.

*Prop. 111.* In cases where I am not obliged to forgive (as I have shewed before some such there be), I may justly make use of governors as the ordinance of God.

*Prop. 1v.* The order and season is when I have tried other means in vain. When persuasion or arbitration will do no good, or cannot be used with hope of success.

*Prop. v.* And the great condition to prove it lawful is, when it is not like to do more hurt than good, either directly of itself, or by men's abuse; when religion, or the soul of any man, or any one's body, or estate or name, is not like to lose more than my gain, or any other benefits will compensate; when all these concur, it is lawful to go to law.

*Quest. v.* 'Is it lawful to defend any person, life or estate against a thief, or murderer, or unjust invader, by force of arms?'

*Ans.* You must distinguish, 1. Between such defence as the law of the land alloweth, and such as it forbiddeth.

2. Between necessary and unnecessary actions of defence.

*Prop. 1.* There is no doubt but it is both lawful and a duty to defend ourselves by such convenient means as are likely to attain their end, and are not contrary to any law, of God or man. We must defend our neighbour if he be assaulted or oppressed, and we must love our neighbour as ourselves.

*Prop. 11.* This self-defence by force, is then lawful, when it is necessary, and other more gentle means have been ineffectual, or have no place, (supposing still that the means be such as the law of God or man forbiddeth not).

*Prop. 111.* And it is necessary to the lawfulness of it, that the means be such as in its nature is like to be successful, or like to do more good than harm.

But on the other side, *Prop. 1.* We may not defend ourselves by any such force as either the laws of God or our rulers, thereto authorized by him shall forbid. For,

1. The laws are made by such as have more power over our lives, than we have over them ourselves.

2. And they are made for the good of the commonwealth; which is to be preferred before the good or life of any single person. And whatever selfish infidels say, both nature and grace do teach us to lay down our lives, for the welfare of the church or state, and to prefer a multitude before ourselves. Therefore it is better to be robbed, oppressed, or killed, than to break the peace of the commonwealth.

*Prop. II.* Therefore a private man may not raise an army to defend his life against his prince, or lawful governor. Perhaps he might hold his hands if personally he went about to murder him, without the violation of the public peace; but he cannot raise a war without it.

*Prop. III.* We may not do that by blood or violence, which might be done by persuasion, or by any gentle, lawful means: violence must be used, even in defence, but in case of true necessity.

*Prop. IV.* When self-defence is like to have consequents so ill, as the saving of ourselves cannot countervail, it is then unlawful 'finis gratia,' and not to be attempted.

*Prop. v.* Therefore if self-defence be unlikely to prevail, our strength being inconsiderable, and when the enemy is but like to be the more exasperated by it, and our sufferings like to be the greater; nature and reason teach us to submit, and use the more effectual (lawful) means.

*Quest. VI.* 'Is it lawful to take away another's life, in the defending of my purse or estate?'

*Ans.* 1. You must again distinguish between such defence, as the law of the land alloweth, and such as it forbideth.

2. Between what is necessary, and what is unnecessary.

3. Between a life less worth than the prize which he contendeth for, and a life more worth than it, or than mine own.

4. Between the simple defence of my purse, and the defence of it, and my life together.

5. Between what I do with purpose and desire, and what I do unwillingly through the assailant's temerity or violence.

6. And between what I do in mere defence, and what I

do to bring a thief or robber unto legal punishment. And so I answer,

*Prop. i.* You may not defend your purse, or your estate by such actions, as the law of the land forbiddeth: (unless it go against the law of God;) because it is to be supposed, that it is better a man's estate or purse be lost, than law and public order violated.

*Prop. ii.* You may not (against an ordinary thief or robber) defend your purse with the probable hazard of his life, if a few good words, or other safe and gentle means, which you have opportunity to use, be like to serve turn without such violence.

*Prop. iii.* If it might be supposed that a prince, or other person of great use and service to the commonwealth, should in a frolic, or otherwise, assault your person for your estate or purse, it is not lawful to take away his life by a defensive violence, if you know it to be he; because (though in some countries the law might allow it you, yet) 'finis gratia' it is unlawful; because his life is more necessary to the common good, than yours.

*Prop. iv.* If a pilfering thief would steal your purse, without any violence which hazardeth your life, (ordinarily) you may not take away his life in the defending of it. Because it is the work of the magistrate to punish him by public justice, and your defence requireth it not.

*Prop. v.* All this is chiefly meant, of the voluntary, designed taking away of his life; and not of any lawful action, which doth it accidentally against your will.

On the other side, *Prop. i.* If the law of the land allow you to take away a man's life in the defending of your purse, it removeth the scruple, if the weight of the matter also do allow it: because it supposeth, that the law taketh the offender to be worthy of death, and maketh you in that case the executioner of it. And if indeed, the crime be such as deserveth death, you may be the executioner when the law alloweth it.

*Prop. ii.* And this is more clear, when the robber for your money doth assault your life, or is like for aught you see to do it.

*Prop. iii.* And when gentler means will not serve the

turn, but violence is the only remedy which is left you, which is like to avail for your defence.

*Prop. iv.* And when the person is a vile offender, who is rather a plague and burden to the commonwealth, than any necessary member of it.

*Prop. v.* If you desire not, and design not his death, but he rush upon it himself in his fury, while you lawfully defend your own, the case is yet less questionable.

*Prop. vi.* If a thief have taken your purse, though you may not take away his life after to recover it (because it is of less value) nor yet in revenge (because that belongeth not to private men); yet if the law require or allow you to pursue him to bring him to a judicial trial, if you kill him while he resisteth, it is not your sin; because you are but suppressing sin in your place, according to the allowance of the law.

*Quest. vii.* ' May I kill or wound another in the defence or vindication of my honour, or good name? '

*Ans.* No: not by private assault or violence: but if the crime be so great, that the law of the land doth punish it with death, if that law be just, you may in some cases seek to bring the offender to public justice: but that is rare, and otherwise you may not do it. For,

1. It belongeth only to the magistrate, and not to you, to be the avenger.

2. And killing a man can be no meet defence against calumny or slander; for if you will kill a man for prevention, you kill the innocent; if you kill him afterwards, it is no defence, but an unprofitable revenge, which vindicateth not your honour, but dishonoureth you more. Your patience is your honour, and your bloody revenge doth shew you to be so like the devil, the destroyer, that it is your greatest shame.

3. It is odious pride which maketh men over-value their reputation among men, and think that a man's life is a just compensation to them for their dishonour! Such bloody sacrifices are fit to appease only the blood-thirsty spirit! But what is it that pride will not do and justify?