

## SERMON UPON LUKE XIX. 14.

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*But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.—LUKE XIX. 14.*

THESE words are part of a parable uttered by our Lord Jesus when he came nigh to Jerusalem, where they thought he would assume the regal power, and reign among them in great pomp and glory. To prevent this misconceit, he puts forth this parable, wherein by the nobleman he intendeth himself; by his servants, all believers, especially the teachers and ministers of his church; by the pounds given to them, spiritual gifts and graces; by his going into a far country to receive a kingdom, his ascension into heaven, and sitting down at the right hand of majesty; by his own citizens that tumultuated during his absence, the stiff-necked Jews, and by consequence all other people that refuse his government; by his return, his last coming to judgment, when he shall reward every one according to his works. My purpose only obligeth me to insist upon that clause which expresseth the unwillingness of men to be subject to Christ, 'But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him,' &c.

In which words take notice of—

1. The crime, 'We will not have this man,' &c.
2. The persons guilty, 'His citizens;' John i. 11, 'He came to his own, and they received him not.'
3. The internal moving cause, 'They hated him.' Hatred is a malicious dislike notwithstanding conviction: John xv. 23, 'He that hateth me, hateth my Father also.' They did disclaim and renounce all subjection to Christ, though they had enough to convince them of his being the Messiah. In carnal and wicked men there is not only a neglect of Christ, but an hatred of Christ; partly because from neglect the passage is easy to contempt and hatred; partly because their hearts being bestowed elsewhere, they have no affection to him, that would reduce and reclaim them: John iii. 19, 'This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil;' and partly because they count him as one that condemneth that course of life which they affect: John iii. 20, 'For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.'
4. The manner of expressing their hatred: they 'sent a message after him.' This must be understood with respect to the parable; therefore this message they sent after him is nothing else but the perse-

cution of the christian faith, and the disciples that professed Christ's name, which is as it were an open bidding defiance to Christ in heaven, a sending a message after him. The apostle Paul saith of the Jews, 1 Thes. ii. 15, 'Who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men.'

5. The crime, which is wilful refusal of subjection to Christ: 'We will not have this man to rule over us;' and here—

[1.] The thing refused is his reign. Where Christ cometh he will be lord and sovereign. His kingdom is that administration which requireth spiritual obedience from us; this the licentious world cannot endure.

[2.] The manner of refusing; it is wilful, *οὐ θέλομεν*, 'We will not.' They allege no lawful reason, but wilfully and contumaciously reject his government; and so it taxeth the obstinacy of the Jews, standing out unreasonably against the faith.

*Doct.* That it is the spiritual kingdom of Christ which is most opposed by the carnal world.

The Jews disclaimed him from being their king; their whole carriage towards him and his messengers speak this language, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.' When he was present, they contemned and slighted his person, calling him 'This man' by way of contempt; yet in the parable he is represented as a nobleman, and heir of a kingdom. When absent, and gone to receive a kingdom, they abused his messengers. The rebellious world maketh defection from Christ, because he is out of sight; they will not be controlled by an invisible king. But it was not the sin of the Jews only, but of the gentiles also; for why did the gentiles rage against the Lord and his anointed? Ps. ii. 3, 'Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us.' All the business of the rebellious world is to cast away Christ's yoke, to dissolve the bonds of loyalty and obedience to him.

I will prove—(1.) That Christ hath a kingdom; (2.) That in all reason this kingdom should be submitted unto; (3.) What moveth and induceth men so much to dislike his kingly office.

I. That Christ hath a spiritual kingdom; for all things concur here which belong to a kingdom: here is a monarch, which is Christ; a law, which is the gospel; subjects, which are penitent believers; rewards and punishments, eternal life and eternal torment.

1. Here is a monarch, the mediator, whose kingdom it is. Originally it belongeth to God as God, but derivatively to Christ as mediator: Ps. ii. 6, 'I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion;' Phil. ii. 10, 11, 'That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.' This kingdom, which is exercised by a Redeemer, doth not vacate or make void our duty to God. No; this new dominion is not destructive of the former, but accumulative; that is, it doth not abolish the power and right which God hath to govern; that continueth still, and will continue as long as man receiveth his being from God, and the continuance of his being by daily providence and preservation;

but this is superadded to the former. Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father: the right of governing is still in God, but the actual administration is by Christ.

2. There are subjects. Before I tell you who they are, I must premise that there is a double consideration of subjects. Some are subjects by the grant of God, others are subjects not only by the grant of God, but their own consent. By divine donation all things are put into the hands of Christ, and under the power of the Son of God and our Redeemer; so no creature is exempted from his dominion; no, not the devils themselves, though revolters and rebels against God: Eph. i. 22, 'And hath put all things under his feet, and given him to be head over all things to the church.' Whether they will or no, they are bound to his absolute dominion and sovereign authority; and so all men are subjects of Christ's kingdom, partly by divine obligation bound to be so, and partly by his overruling providence they are forced to submit to his disposing will. There is a passive submission to his power, though not a voluntary subjection to his laws; but of this we speak not now. The other sort is of those who are subjects by consent, who willingly give up themselves to the Redeemer, to be saved upon his terms: 2 Cor. viii. 5, 'But first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God.' And so the subjects of this kingdom are penitent believers. Devils and wicked men are his subjects whether they will or no; but all Christ's people are his by a voluntary subjection and consent, or yield up themselves to him by covenant. Now these I call penitent believers, because both faith and repentance is necessary to our entrance into this subjection.

[1.] Repentance, that we may lay down our former hostility, and so enter into confederation and covenant with him. Therefore often preaching repentance is called preaching the kingdom of God: Mat. iv. 17, 'From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand;' Mark i. 14, 15, 'Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand; repent ye and believe the gospel.'

[2.] Faith is required; for receiving of Christ is made equivalent with believing: John i. 12, 'To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to as many as believe in his name.' Now what is receiving of Christ? To entertain him to the end for which he was sent of God; or, in short, to own him as lord and king; as is explained by the apostle, Col. ii. 6, 'As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him.'

3. The law of commerce between this sovereign and these subjects (for all kingdoms are governed by laws). Now the law of Christ is the gospel or new covenant, which is both a rule of duty to show what is due from us to Christ, and a charter of grace to show what we may expect from him upon account of his merit and mercy, if we be duly qualified; therefore the whole design of the gospel is to bring us to an humble submission and obedience to Christ's healing and saving methods; all the doctrines, precepts, and promises of the gospel tend to this. The gospel is not only a promise, but a law: Rom. iii. 27, called a 'law of faith;' and requireth not only confidence, but obed-

ience: 2 Thes. i. 8, 'In flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel;' 1 Peter iv. 17, 'What shall be the end of them that obey not the gospel of God?' It is not enough to profess the gospel, but we must obey the gospel. Some of the precepts of the gospel are mystical, such as believing in Christ: 1 John iii. 23, 'And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his son Jesus Christ.' Some moral, viz., the primitive duty we owe to God: 1 Cor. ix. 21, 'Being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ.' Not *ἀνομος* but *ἐννομος*.

#### 4. Rewards and punishments.

[1.] For punishments. Though the proper intent and business of the gospel is to bless, and not to curse, yet, if men wilfully refuse the benefit of this dispensation, they are involved in the greatest curse that can be thought of: John iii. 19, 'This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil;' Heb. x. 29, 'Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith ye were sanctified an unholy thing, and hath done despite to the Spirit of grace?' It will be more grievous to sin against our remedy than our bare duty. More aggravating circumstances are in it; and therefore, the more it increaseth our torment, not only on God's part inflicting, but on our part reflecting upon our sin and ingratitude.

[2.] Rewards. The privileges of Christ's kingdom are exceeding great.

(1.) For the present, pardon and peace are obtained, both in the way of justification; as, Rom. v. 1, 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.' And also of sanctification: Gal. vi. 16, 'As many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.' This is the entertainment God giveth to the obedient soul, and the fruit of Christ's internal government.

(2.) Hereafter, eternal happiness, or an immutable state of glory: Mat. xxv. 34, 'Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' That is the consummation of the kingdom of God; and it shall be the portion of all those that obey Christ, how despicable soever their condition be in this world: James ii. 5, 'Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?'

II. That in all reason this kingdom should be submitted unto—

1. Because of the right which Christ hath to govern. He hath an unquestionable title by the grant of God: Acts ii. 36, 'Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.' And his own merit and purchase: Rom. xiv. 9, 'For to this end Christ both died, and rose again, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living;' which should silence and quiet all rebellious motions. Hath not God a right to dispose of you: and shall Christ lay down his life to be head of the renewed estate, and at length be deprived of

that honour, and that merely by the rebellious obstinacy of the creature? There can be no hope of exemption. His we must be, whether we will or no. Our consent and willingness doth not add to the validity of his title, only aggravateth our sin if we refuse or prove unfaithful, or maketh our obedience acceptable if we be sincere in it. Now God is tender of his grant, and Christ of his acquired right and purchase, that he may not lose the fruit of his death and sufferings.

2. This new right and title is comfortable and beneficial to us. It was the fruit of God's pity to mankind, to set up a new government, which might be remedial of our misery, but not destructive of our duty. It is a full remedy for our misery; for the purpose of it is to effect man's cure and recovery to God. The scripture always speaketh of it as medicinal and restorative: Acts x. 38, 'God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.' 'Preaching peace in his name, for he is Lord of all.' So Acts v. 31, 'Exalted to be a prince and saviour, to give repentance, and remission of sins,' that we might enjoy God's favour, and live in his obedience. In this new remedial dispensation, God aimed at the healing of our natures, and the restoring our peace and comfort, that we might serve him with pleasure and delight, who otherwise could not think of him without fear and horror, much less set ourselves to please him with any hope of acceptation.

3. It is by his kingly office that all Christ's benefits are applied to us. As a priest, he purchased them for us; as a prophet, he giveth us the knowledge of these mysteries; but as a king, he conveyeth them to us, overcoming our enemies, changing our natures, and inclining us to believe in him, love him, and obey him: for he doth not only convey the benefits, giving us remission of sins, but he worketh in us the qualifications, giving as well as requiring repentance: Acts v. 31, 'He hath exalted him to be a prince and saviour, to give repentance.' Well, then, since his executive power attendeth upon his kingly office, we have no reason to dislike it, but to bless God for this part of his administration. The fruit and effect of it is the gift of the Spirit, by which all is applied to us; so that the communication to us is done this way: His work as a priest lieth with God; and as a prophet and king, with us. As a prophet, he maketh way by giving us the good knowledge of God through the remission of sins; but he actually communicateth his benefits to us as our quickening head and king.

4. Our actual personal title to all the benefits intended to us is mainly evidenced by our subjection to his regal authority. Certainly without it we can have no benefit by Christ: Heb. v. 9, 'And being made perfect, he is become the author of eternal salvation to them that obey him.' And that agreeth not only with his doctrine, but example: ver. 8, 'Though he was a son, yet he learned obedience by the things he suffered.' Now, till this be cleared, we have no rest to our souls: Mat. xi. 29, 'Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, and you shall find rest for your souls.' It is good to believe his doctrine as a prophet, to depend upon his merit as a priest, but if we refuse to obey him, our qualification is not complete, and other acts are but counterfeit and pretended. For none know

him aright but those that obey him ; none depend upon his merit but those that trust him in his own way, and submit to his healing and instructing methods. And it is the great mercy and wisdom of God to state the terms so that poor tender consciences may sooner come to ease and rest ; for no man, unless strangely infatuated, and slight in settling his eternal interests, will question his obligation to duties, but every serious soul will question their claim to privileges, unless they see good ground and warrant. Now when we plainly demonstrate unto them that their all dependeth upon their receiving Christ the Lord, and framing themselves to his obedience, they will more easily hearken to us ; and resigning up themselves to him by covenant, they more readily put themselves in the way of getting a solid and unquestionable peace, and so by following their duty are sooner freed from scruples about their interest ; for if this work be minded, it will interpret itself, and make itself evident.

5. We shall be unwillingly subject to his kingdom of power if we be not willingly subject to his kingdom of grace. God's decree is passed that every knee must bow to Christ, by force and constraint, or willingly and readily. If by constraint we are subjects, it is our ruin and destruction ; if willingly, we have our reward. Christ will utterly destroy the obstinate ; they shall feel the effects of his merely regal, not his pastoral power : ' He will break them with a rod of iron,' Ps. ii. 9. But his pastoral rod and staff are a comfort to his people, Ps. xxiii. 4, for he ruleth them with a saving and gentle government. Now you are left to your choice ; which pleaseth you best, his iron rod or his pastoral rod ? to perish with the obdurate world, or to be conducted to heavenly glory ? to refuse your remedy, or submit to the motions of his preventing grace ? Or let me thus express it : Christ, who is set upon the throne for the exercise of his regal power, hath a sword and a sceptre in his hand, to subdue his enemies and rule his people. The sword is his all-powerful providence ; the sceptre is his all-conquering Spirit. Now it is better to be in the number of humble and obedient christians than to continue his obstinate and spiteful enemies ; to consecrate ourselves and all that we have to him, than to fall a sacrifice to his justice, and the revenges of his indignation.

6. This government, which we so much stick at, is a blessed government. Christ himself pleadeth this, Mat. xi. 30, ' My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' It is sweet in itself, and sweet in the issue. It concerneth us much to have good thoughts of Christ's reign and government, for he doth not rule us for our hurt, or by needless laws, that have no respect to our good and safety. Look upon them in themselves ; what hath he required but such a sincere obedience as consists in purity and charity ? Both which oppress not human nature, but perfect it, and put an excellency upon us, which others have not : Prov. xii. 26, ' The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour ;' Ps. xvi. 3, ' But to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight.' And look upon them in their event and issue ; all that he hath required is in order to our happiness. If repentance and faith, it is in order to our pardon and peace : Acts iii. 19, ' Repent, that your sins may be blotted out when times of refresh-

ment shall come from the presence of the Lord.' If moral obedience, it is that by holiness he may lead us unto God, without which we cannot see him and enjoy him, Heb. xii. 14. So that if our sinful customs have not made us incompetent judges, this government should be submitted unto and chosen, before liberty and freedom from it; for all these things are for our good.

III. What moveth and induceth men so much to dislike Christ's reign and government.

1. The evil constitution of men's souls. This government is contrary to men's carnal and brutish affections. Now the flesh is loath to be restrained and curbed, and therefore 'the carnal mind is enmity against God,' Rom. viii. 7. Part of this opposition remaineth in the regenerate: Rom. vii. 23, 'I see a law in my members warring against the law of my mind;' and Gal. v. 17, 'For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.' Therefore no wonder if wicked men shake off that yoke which they cannot endure, and galleth them upon all occasions when they would fulfil their lusts. Hence is it they refuse to be subject to Christ.

2. It comes from an affectation of liberty. Men would be at their own dispose, and do whatsoever pleaseth them, without any to call them to an account: Ps. xii. 4, 'Who have said, With our tongue we will prevail; our lips are our own; who is lord over us?' They cannot endure strictly to consider what they should say and do. So they may please themselves, and advantage themselves, they will take no notice of what is right or wrong, or any superior to whom they are accountable. I remember it is said, Judges xxi. 25, 'In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes.' So it is true here. Man, that is prone to all sin and wickedness, would have no king or lord over him, be under no government; therefore 'We will not have this man to reign over us.' There is a false notion of liberty possesseth all our hearts. We take it to be a power to do what we list, not a power to do what we ought. The absurdity of it would soon appear if we considered the mischiefs it would produce in man's government. If men were under no rule and order, what monsters of wickedness would they grow! And the world would soon prove a stage to act all manner of villanies upon. And the falsehood of it will more appear if we consider man in his relation to God. He hath no true liberty but such as becometh a creature, whose absolute dependence doth necessarily infer his subjection to God, to whom he is accountable for all his actions. So that his true liberty lieth in a readiness to obey his proper lord: Ps. cxix. 45, 'I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts;' to will and do things pleasing to our creator, preserver, and redeemer. Again, if man have a liberty, it must be such a liberty as leaveth him in a capacity to pursue his chief good and last end. The more we are restrained from this, the more we are in bondage; the less, the more free. Certainly the reasonable nature is under a defect, as it is restrained and disabled from the fruition of God, or seeking after it; for man was made for this end, and is so far fettered as he is kept from it. But this is little minded; all our desire is to live at large, and to have none to control us.

3. It proceeds from the nature of Christ's laws—(1.) They are spiritual; (2.) They require self-denial.

[1.] They are strict and spiritual precepts, which require the subjection of the whole man to Christ; thoughts, desires, inclinations, as well as actions; 'The law is spiritual, but I am carnal,' saith the apostle, Rom. vii. 14; that is, it requireth inward purity as well as external conformity. Now men will rather endure any external burdens, how heavy and hard soever, than Christ's spiritual yoke. Take for an instance the pharisaical institutions and Christ's law. For the one, it is said, Mat. xxiii. 4, 'They bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders.' They had little compassion on the people, and therefore imposed rigorous and severe ordinances upon them. But, Mat. xi. 30, Christ saith, 'My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.' Yet at that time there were more proselyted to the sect of the pharisees than embraced the doctrine of Christ. Men will part with anything sooner than their lusts, Micah vi. 6, 7; perform costly sacrifices, deny many of the feelings of nature, and all that they may keep their beloved sins. The sensual nature of man is such that it is loath to be crossed, which produceth profaneness and dissoluteness, and men engulf themselves in all manner of sensualities, because they are loath to deny their natural appetites and desires, and to row against the stream of flesh and blood. So the young man is said to walk in the ways of his own heart and the sight of his eyes, Eccles. xi. 9. But if nature be to be crossed a little, it is done by some only for a while, and in some slight manner, and this produceth hypocrisy: Isa. lviii. 5, 'To bow down the head for a day like a bulrush.' If this will not quiet conscience, we are apt to exceed in outward observances and rigorous impositions, or macerating the body by some by-laws of our own, and this produceth superstition: Col. ii. 21, 'Touch not, taste not, handle not.' We place our religion in abstinence from such meats, or in such penances and exterior mortifications, and so lie bound in chains of our own making. Thus these three great evils, profaneness, hypocrisy, and superstition, grow upon the same stem and root. But when Christ requireth us to serve God in the spirit, to subdue the heart to him, this we cannot endure. Therefore in all these ways of religion wherein men walk who would not have Christ to reign over them, you may still observe they check at his spiritual laws.

[2.] Christ by his laws requireth self-denial: Mat. xvi. 24, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.' We are to deny our own wit and our own will. Our own wit or wisdom, so far as it is contrary to christianity: 1 Cor. iii. 18, 'Let no man deceive himself: if any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him be a fool that he may be wise.' To condemn our own former life wherein we so much pleased ourselves, our own will; for none are longer to be at their own dispose: 1 Cor. vi. 19, 'What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?' Now men are so averse from this, that it is a kind of a miracle that any are brought to deny themselves, and subject all their thoughts and desires to Christ.

*Use 1. Information.*



1. It showeth us whence all the contentions arise which are raised about religion in the world. Some may ignorantly mistake things, and some proud wits may oppose Christ's prophetic office, contradict the mysteries of our most holy faith; some may lessen the merit of his sacrifice, but the most general error is, men will not have him to reign over them. All the corrupt part of the world oppose his kingly office. Many that are right in doctrine are yet carnal as to practice. They acknowledge the redemption of Christ, and justification by faith, but will not make straight steps to their feet, and live by Christ's laws. I am sure this is the great damning sin in the orthodox. And as to doctrine in the reformed part of the world, alas! what will it avail you to cry up his merits, while you cannot endure his strict spiritual precepts? This is to set the saviour against the lawgiver, the priest against the king.

2. It informeth us how much they disserve christianity that will hear of no injunctions of duty, or mention of the law of faith, or of the new covenant as a law. Besides that they take part with the carnal world, who cannot endure Christ's reign and government, they blot out all religion with one dash. If there be no law, there is no government, nor governor, no duty, no sin, no punishment nor reward; for these things necessarily infer one another. A governor inferreth a government, and all regular government is by law; how shall the subjects else know what is sin and duty? for *Verum est index sui et obliqui*. The law that stateth duty doth give us the knowledge of sin, and without a sanction of penalties and rewards all is but an arbitrary direction, which we may observe or neglect at our pleasure, and no harm or good come of it. Now these are horrid and uncouth notions, that stab religion at the very heart.

3. It informeth us what a difficult thing it is to seat Christ in his spiritual throne, namely, in the hearts of all faithful christians. The voice of corrupt nature is, 'We will not have this man to reign over us;' and till we are brought under the government of Christ, 'other lords have dominion over us;' as the prophet speaketh, Isa. xxvi. 13; and they will not easily quit their possession. We are ruled by the devil, the flesh, and the world. The devil, and we must be rescued from him before we can be brought into the kingdom of Christ, Col. i. 13. Now there is old tugging and wrestling to rescue the prey out of Satan's hands. The world; Christ's ransom respected that: Gal. i. 4, 'Who gave himself that he might deliver us from this present evil world.' And so doth the application of this salvation by the Spirit; for till we get rid of the worldly spirit we are not fit for Christ: 1 Cor. ii. 12, 'Now we have not received the spirit of the world, but the spirit of God.' So much as the spirit of the world is deadened in us, so far doth Christ prevail upon us. So for the flesh. Men are given up to their own hearts' lusts till God changeth them, and care not for God, nor Christ and his salvation; brutish appetite and sense governeth them. But what will be the issue of these things? See Rom. viii. 13, 'If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die.' Well, then, to bring us back again to God, that we may totally resign up ourselves to him, you see what a power is necessary to vanquish the devil, and save us from the world, and change our own flesh by his Spirit.

4. It informeth us of the reason why so many nations shut the door against Christ, or else grow weary of him. You see frequently men can bear any religion rather than christianity in its power; sottish superstitions, such as were practised and in vogue among the gentiles; popery, which is palliated atheism, or gentilism tricked up in a christian dress and form, half christianity; the form, not the power; privileges, not the duties. The world disputeth it with Christ by inches. What is the reason? His spiritual kingdom, which is not calculated for the interest of the carnal world, and altogether draweth us to an heavenly life and state; those that submit to it, or would speak of it, exasperate the world against them, as upbraiding their course of life.

5. It informeth us how ill they deal with Christ who have only notional opinions about his authority, but never practically submit to it. Many will say, We must receive Christ as a king, as well as a priest and prophet; but do we live accordingly? Luke vi. 46, 'Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?' Professed opinions, unless followed with suitable actions, are but a mockage of Christ, and a cheat and fallacy that we put upon ourselves. A mockage of Christ: *Cui res nomini subjecta negatur, is nomine illuditur*—He that wants the thing signified by the name is deceived by the name. They did little honour to Christ who buffeted him and spit upon him, and all the while cried, 'Hail, king of the Jews;' so whilst we call him lord and king, but make little conscience of his precepts, we deny him the honour in deeds which in words we ascribe to him. So that a practical sense of Christ's authority and right to govern should be deeply impressed upon our hearts. When is it practical? When it breedeth an awe upon us, and checketh sin; as the Rechabites were afraid to transgress the commandment of their father: Jer. xxxv. 6, 'They said, We will drink no wine; for Jonadab the son of Rechab, our father, commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever.' So Joseph, Gen. xxxix. 9, when tempted by his mistress to lie with her, he repels the temptation, saying, 'How can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?' So all that have a reverence of their supreme Lord, you shall find that it works upon all occasions. If tempted to fleshly lusts, Do this to please thy flesh, they answer as the apostle Paul, Rom. viii. 12, 'We are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.' If they be assaulted by the persecutions of the world, still they have the authority of the great Lord. If threatened for speaking in his name, and commanded not to speak at all, or teach in the name of Jesus, as the apostles Peter and John answered, Acts iv. 19, 'Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye;' so I dare not obey the wills of men, or the inclinations of the flesh, but my great Lord. If Satan would draw you to any inconvenience, answer as Christ himself did to Peter, dissuading him from suffering: Mat. xvi. 23, 'Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.' When there is something that doth constrain within us, and urgeth us to a constant obedience; for Christ, that requireth us to die unto sin, doth also require us to live unto righteousness; when the sense of this becomes as an habit or new nature in us, or the principle of our course of living, it puts the soul upon obedience; it constraineth

us most powerfully to live in him and to him: Col. ii. 6, 'As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him;' ver. 10, 'Ye are complete in him;' and Rom. vi. 16, 'Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?'

*Use 2. Exhortation.* If we would distinguish ourselves from the carnal world, let us resolve upon a thorough course of christianity, owning Christ's authority in all things.

1. If we be to begin, and have hitherto stood against Christ, oh! let us repent and reform, and return to our obedience: Mat. xviii. 3, 'Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.'

2. Remember that faith is a great part of your works from first to last: John vi. 27, 'Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.' All the grace and mercy of the new covenant is begun, kept up, and carried on by faith. We are sincerely to believe on him before we can rightly obey him.

3. Your obedience must be delightful, and such as cometh from love: 1 John v. 3, 'For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments.' Believers are not called to the obedience of slaves, nor to be acted only by the fear of hell, but to the obedience of sons and children, that you may obey with love and delight. Forced motives endure not long; fears will abate, and then your duty be neglected. Love should be as a new nature, and the habitual constitution of our souls; and you should act not as driven to obedience, but as inclined to it, and delighted in it: Ps. xl. 8, 'I delight to do thy will, O God;' for this is a sovereignty, not forced upon us, but consented unto.

4. Your obedience must be very circumspect and accurate: Heb. xii. 28, 'Having received a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, that we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.' A kingdom may be received, either by a king to govern, or subjects to be governed. A king to govern: Luke xix. 12, 'A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive a kingdom.' Or subjects to be governed, when we submit to the sovereign, to enjoy the privileges which belong to that kingdom. So we must serve him with reverence and godly fear; for boldness in sinning, and coldness in duty, is a depreciation of his majesty. He is 'a great king,' as God pleadeth it when they brought a corrupt thing for a sacrifice, Mal. i. 13. No terrors comparable to his frowns, no comforts to his smiles. So Ps. ii. 11, 'Serve the Lord with fear, rejoice with trembling.' Obey him most circumspectly, with all carefulness, watchfulness and diligence, making it your chief business to please him.

5. It is a considerable part of our work to look for our wages, or expect the endless blessedness to which we are appointed: Titus ii. 13, 'Looking for the blessed hope, and the glorious appearance of the great God;' Col. iii. 1, 2, 'If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God: set your affection upon things above, and not upon the earth;' Phil. iii. 20, 'But our conversation is in heaven, from whence we look for a Saviour,

the Lord Jesus Christ.' That we may see that we have considerable motives to do what Christ requireth of us. It is for our master's honour; and besides, it puts life into our work, and maketh our painful obedience comfortable and sweet to us; for all this is but the way to eternal life.

6. The reign of Christ doth not only establish your duty, but is the ground of your safety; for he is set down upon the throne of majesty, to protect his subjects and destroy his enemies. Besides the endless reward in another world, there are many evidences of his goodness, and signal preservations and deliverances in this world; at least peaceable opportunities of serving him, while he hath a mind to employ us. He can powerfully support us against all our enemies: Isa. xxxiii. 22, 'The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king; he will save us.' As a sovereign protects his subjects that continue loyal to him, so will Christ be our sovereign. Upon this confidence must we carry on our obedience, notwithstanding opposition: 1 Tim. iv. 10, 'For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.'

7. One part of our obedience helpeth another, sets the soul in a right posture; as in the wheels of a watch, the whole motion is hindered by a defect in a part: the less complete you are in all the will of God, the more difficult will it be.

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