

AMERICAN CITIZEN.

"Let us have Faith that Right makes Might; and in that Faith let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it"—A. LINCOLN.

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DUTY TO RULERS:

A sermon preached by Rev. J. H. Fritz, in the English Evangelical Lutheran Church, Butler, Pa., Feb. 19th, 1865.

MARK, 12:17.—"And Jesus answering, said unto them: Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's."

At the time when our Lord and Saviour was upon the earth, and when the words of our text were spoken, there were two great political parties in Judea. The one party, to whom the Pharisees, as a class, belonged, were the followers of Judas of Galilee, who denied obedience and national submission to any ruler who was not of their own Jewish nation and religion. They avowed submission only to God and the established hierarchy among them, founded upon the law of Moses and the prophets. They especially denied submission to the Roman emperor, the Caesar who had conquered them and who was a Gentile and an idolater. The Pharisees endeavored by every possible means to deny and throw off the Roman yoke, so galling to their proud necks. They advocated Jewish political liberty, of which the Jewish people were now deprived and unworthy, on account of their national sins. Therefore, also, their opposition to the Saviour, the true Messiah, the Redeemer of Israel. They did not desire a spiritual king to save them from their sins, and give them the true liberty of the children of God, which to possess is to possess all else desirable on earth; but they desired a great political prince, a Messiah, who would come with great pomp and power, with a mighty army and great military glory—a David and a Solomon combined—who would be able to throw off the Roman yoke, and raise up the fallen fortunes of the Jewish nation. In this national humiliation, they acknowledged their helplessness, and therefore this was the sort of a Messiah that they wanted; and because Jesus did not suit their notions in this respect, they rejected him. They, therefore, endeavored to ensnare him, laid political traps, as in the question, to which our text is an answer, in order that they might take away his life. In this they were not successful at this time; but finally did succeed in having him accused as a political king of the Jews, before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor, who tried him on political lies, and crucified him, as a malefactor on the cross.

The other party were called Herodians, the name no doubt derived from Herod the great, and the three younger Herods, and composed that class of people who supported the interests of the Herod's and the Roman power. Herod the great and the three younger Herods, had ruled among them as kings or governors, under the Roman power. These kings derived their positions from the Roman Caesars, and were tributary to them. Hence the Herodians, as a party, advocated submission to the Roman government, paying tribute or taxes to it, and proclaimed the duty of being loyal and obedient subjects to Caesar. Some of the Jewish people, and of the baser sort of this party, even went so far, as to lay aside their own enlightened worship and service of Jehovah and adopted the Roman mythology, superstition, and idolatry, with its lusts and vices.

Under these circumstances of party loyalty and disloyalty to the Roman power, the question was proposed to the Saviour: "Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar or not?" Before answering the question, the Saviour asked to be shown a Roman penny, (a coin, in our currency of the value of about sixteen cents,) after having seen it, the Saviour said: "Whose is this image and superscription?" They said: "Caesar's." Then said Jesus unto them: "Render unto Caesar, the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." That is, that the people should give unto God those things that belong to Him, as the holy ruler of heaven and earth; and give unto his temporal rulers, sent to bear the sword of justice, in the order of His wise providence, that honor and submission that is due unto them.

This subject is still applicable to our own times. Many are still desirous of knowing, "what is my duty to the government, under which God in His providence, has placed me?" The answer of Christ is: "Render unto Caesar, the things that are Caesar's," and the true Christian must heed. Another may also enquire of the Lord: "For how long will the Scriptures warrant the extension of the sword of justice over the rebellious spirits of our land?" The answer is: "Until they 'render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's.'" The term Caesar was applied to the Roman emperors, and is thus a term that can be applied to all kings, chief rulers and magistrates of every land, even to our own chief magistrate of the nation. Certain duties belong to these chief magistrates, which the people are to render unto them;

as a Christian duty, pleasing to God. Let us then, consider now particularly, the doctrine of the text, which is: "That men should render to the chief ruler those duties that belong to him." And, we would remark:

1. That the ruler is to be prayed for. The Scriptures enjoin this, as a primary duty. Says St. Paul to Timothy (2:1-3): "I exhort therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty. For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." Prayer is a holy power with God; for we are told: (Jas. 5:16) "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." True prayer will be heard and answered on the part of God. The good people are therefore exhorted, first of all to make supplications, prayers, intercessions, for kings and for all who are in authority over them. This is a duty of the first importance, that the blessing of God may rest upon the ruler, and upon the people through him.

They are to pray for him personally that God would be pleased to bless him with His fear, which is the beginning and continuance of true wisdom. Bless him with divine wisdom, to discern clearly his duty, and to discharge it in such a way as will truly be conducive to the extension of God's kingdom of righteousness, and the best interests of the whole people. That he may be kept free from ignorance, dishonesty, and corruption, and that He may give him courage to execute the laws without fear, or favor of man, not holding the sword of justice in vain, but that he may be "a terror to evil-doers, and a praise to them who do well." That thus the people may have one of God's choicest blessings upon earth, namely, of being well governed. If the whole people were to observe this in junction of the word of God, they would have no lack of good rulers. King Saul after being anointed king, was by no means as good a man, as he ought and might have been; but when he came among the company of prophets "the Spirit of God came upon him and he prophesied among them," so that it was said: "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

They are to pray for themselves, also, as a part of that government, for where there are no subjects, there can be no governor, and where there are no good subjects, there can be no good governor. So, also, if the subjects are good, they will in a general way have a good government. They are to pray, therefore, that they may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty, and pray to be kept from all unholiness, passions, which give birth to uproar, tumult, strife, and rebellion. Republics, especially, will never stand unless these virtues of a good citizen and Christian are prayed for, and sincerely cultivated. A good people will be free, because they desire to do no wrong, and true liberty consists in every man being privileged to do right, and not to do wrong. Were men all good Christians, observing the command of Christ: "love your neighbor as yourself," there would be no necessity for jails, penitentiaries, and capital punishments; yea, there would be no necessity for law, except those defining civil rights, and civil duties; but certainly the penal code would have no place of application. But because of the wickedness of men, who disregard divine as well as civil law, and break them, these places of punishment must be erected, and penal laws must be enacted: By these men of wicked ways are deprived of their personal liberties—they lose their freedom, and justly so, because they are enemies to all true liberty, and the peace of their fellow men. Ignorance and vice will beget tyranny, and a bad people will become slaves and bondmen. Thus the heathen, in darkness and depravity, are governed by the whim of the one man power—thus Rome lost her liberties in the same proportion as she lost her moral virtue; and thus modern Italy, Spain, Mexico, the Southern republics, were religion is adulterated with superstition, and were but the twilight of true intelligence and the pure religion of Jesus exists and wherever vice and wickedness abound, are but half civilized, and if not absolute monarchies, yet republics but in name. A good people must then pray for their rulers, and pray for themselves, that they may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.

2. The second duty to be rendered to the chief ruler is, that he should be honored. Says the apostle Paul: (Rom. 13:7) "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom: fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor." And says the apostle Peter: (1 Pet. 2:17) "Honor all men: love the brotherhood: fear God: honor the king?" Honor is a precious gift

to worth—it is high estimation of the character of the ruler by words or actions. The chief magistrate has the title of "excellency," and the principal law-makers, have the title of "honorable." They should be esteemed as such, and in order that this may be done without doing violence to a Christian conscience, none but the excellent and truly honorable of the land, having the grace and gifts to adorn their stations, should be elevated to those high positions. They should be honored, not only from a sense of cold duty alone, as those must be honored, who occupy their stations unworthily; but from a sense of love and duty, as a faithful subject to a faithful ruler. Honoring the ruler, implies:

A godly fear. Says Solomon: (Prov. 24:21) "My son fear thou the Lord and king." This is not a servile but an honorable fear, such as is due from a son to a father—from a subject to a magistrate, from a law-enjoying subject to a law-dispensing power—godly fear, profitable to citizen and sovereign. This implies also:

Proper Reverence such as David showed to king Saul, at the cave of Engedi, when David said: "My Lord the king." And when Saul looked behind him, "David stooped with his face to the earth and bowed himself." (1 Sam. 24:8.) This is not only an outward reverential respect; but a truly inward reverential regard.—Saul was the enemy of David, and at this time sought his life; and David had Saul's life in his hands, while in the cave, yet reverential fear and dutiful respect for the person of the king, and the ruler of the people forbade him touching a hair of his head. Honor all men, especially the king, in word and in deed, is a Christian duty. Improper defamation of the characters of rulers is contentiousness, and is a vice to be shunned by the wise and good. Says Plato: "Law is the god of good men: contentiousness the god of fools. The wicked and vicious despise and break the law, and dishonor its administrators: this suits their purpose, it is their gain, but with the wise and good it must be otherwise. They must love the law, honor, fear and reverence the king."

3. The third duty to be rendered to the chief ruler is submission. This is a very important part of Christian duty. This implies:

Submission to ordinances, or the laws of the land. Says St. Peter: (1 Pet. 2:13) "Submit yourselves to every 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." The words rendered "every ordinance of man," may signify every human constitution, or form of government and code of laws, not contrary to God's will, as expressed in His word. If a statute commands anything clearly contrary to the word of God, then we have the injunction of the apostle Paul: (Acts 5:29) "We ought to obey God rather than men." But within this limitation, it is Christian duty to obey every ordinance of Caesar. God is a God of order. This is evident from His word and His providence. Order brings peace, and godly peace brings prosperity and happiness. Laws and all rules for the regulation of society and its things, arise from the very nature and constitution of society. Society in a state of nature, like the heart of man, is in moral disorder.—Laws and constitutions have a tendency to remedy this evil and to produce order, peace, security, and happiness. Therefore the breach of them is crime, in the sight of the law and in the opinion of wise and good men, and, in the sight of God as founded upon His word, *sin*—sin, because contrary to the will of God, whose will is always good. Therefore, too, the teaching of Jesus, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's," and as far as duty to Caesar, and obedience to the civil authority was concerned, giving the example in his own person, of meek submission to Pilate's unjust decree, and dying the death of the cross, the just for the unjust, the innocent one for the guilty, the loyal one to Caesar and law, although supposed by the ignorant and wicked to be a malefactor and rebel against constituted authority; but nevertheless the true and the good to God and to man. No man then, who pretends to be a follower of Christ, in precept and example, can be a rebel against the wise laws of the land. No one whose mind is enlightened with right knowledge, unblinded and unbiased by passion, can be a conspirator against the wise laws of society. No one, who loves domestic peace, domestic happiness, his land with a pure patriotism, which is a common love and charity for the whole nation, can be a rebel. But the ignorant outlaw, the slave of lust and

passion, branded probably by a wicked king in the dream of Pharaoh. Especially must republics combat such sentiments as have lately been enunciated by pope Pius IX, of Rome, in his encyclical letter, dated Rome, Dec. 8th, 1864, (published in the weekly N. Y. Tribune, Jan. 21st, 1865,) in which he says: "Actuated by an idea of social government so absolutely false, they do not hesitate farther to propagate the erroneous opinion, very hurtful to the safety of the Catholic Church and of souls, and termed delirium by our predecessor, Gregory XVI, of excellent memory, viz: 'liberty of conscience and of worship is the right of every man.'" This is not only a thrust at religious liberty, but also a blow at civil freedom.

If a Christian government, its morality and religion must be defended. This is essential to its very life and happiness. No scheme of government ever so perfect, will bring with it, the ends of a good government, peace and happiness, unless it is conducted in the fear of God, and according to the principles of a true Christian morality. God governs heaven and earth and this great theocracy, men can never set aside. The various forms of government are equally pleasing to Him, if they but maintain His true spiritual kingdom in them all—His law within the law, as a wheel within a wheel. God never changes the outward form of any government; but his spirit modifies them all, that they work together for the glory of His name, and for the real happiness of the people. Therefore its pure and undefiled religion must be defended against the inroads of unbelief, infidelity, and against such vices as the monstrous vice of slavery, and against all immorality, profanity, dishonesty and all ungodliness.

Agreeing Caesar must be defended against temporal war, an empty treasury. Those who share Caesar's protection in person and property, and partake of the many blessings of a good government are also justly called upon to share its burdens and dangers. For the support of the government men ought to be willing to pay tribute, tax, labor, and be willing to practice some self-denial. This was implied by the penny shown to Christ, which represented labor, and He meant to say: "Render this unto Caesar also," and no man, especially a Christian, can evade this duty and please God. Not to do so, would be dishonesty to Caesar, ingratitude, a petty rebellion on the basis of a vicious, covetousness.

But finally, Caesar must be defended against his domestic and foreign foes—rebels at home, enemies abroad. This is only another form of labor. In peace, labor in the form of taxes alone is needed; but in war, personal labor as a soldier, for the common defense, is additionally necessary. This is often a perilous duty to perform; but nevertheless an honorable duty in all Christian men; for it belongs to that class of duties, of which Christ has said: "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." A course of conduct the reverse of this, would show dishonesty, cowardice, offensiveness, a lack of Christian gratitude, from the fact of having shared Caesar's days of prosperity, in peace and plenty; but when his evil days came, and his very life was imperiled, then to desert him. The Christian in his relation to Christ, is alone to use the sword of the spirit, and fight the good fight of faith; but in his relations to Caesar, who holds the sword of temporal justice, he is, with him, to fight the battles of the land, and like him and with him, "to be a terror to evil-doers and a praise to them who do well."

"And Jesus said unto them: Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's." If these Jewish people had hardened to these admonishing words of Jesus, and had laid them to heart, and carried them out in their lives, they would have been spared the greatest calamity, probably, the world has ever witnessed, and history has recorded, namely, the destruction of Jerusalem forty years after, in the year seventy-one, by this same Caesar, and the dispersion and annihilation of the Jewish people as a distinct nation. They were still a nation then, although subservient to the Roman power; but they did not repent, and carried their rebellious spirit towards God and towards Caesar, so far, that God's fiery wrath was poured out upon them, and now, for nearly eighteen hundred years, they have had no land, no country, no nationality strictly their own; but are dispersed among all nations. Surely then, we and other nations, ought to lay this lesson to heart, and render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's. And also to remember St. Paul's injunction: (Rom. 13:1-2) "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God; the powers that are, are ordained of God. Whosoever, therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the

ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." May God guide us by His Spirit, and save us by His grace. In Christ. Amen.

A Story of Napoleon.

In the beginning of his consulate he often used to escape from the Tuilleries disguised in a big great coat and a large round hat, so that even the soldiers did not know him, and go early in the morning to Gen. Sebastian's lodgings, awaken him, and walk arm in arm along the Boulevards. In one of these morning walks, Bonaparte wishing to make a handsome present to his Josephine, stopped at a large store of precious curiosities. They found a chamber-maid cleaning the store, went in and asked the master of the house. The servant answered in a dry tone, that there was no master of the house, looking with a suspicious eye upon the two intruders whom she thought might be a pair of rogues who had entered the store so early, truly with no favorable exterior, their boots and great coats covered with mud. She ran quickly into a bed room where two young clerks slept, and awakened them in haste, whilst the two strangers looked upon each other and smiled. One of the young men came hastily and half clothed from his room and asked their pleasure. Bonaparte's eyes fell upon two large and beautifully transparent vases of an exquisite workmanship, whilst Sebastian spoke with the clerk, who sent immediately for the mistress of the store, when Bonaparte in his abrupt and peremptory manner, asked the price of these vases; the widow measured him from head to foot and said, "that their prices were beyond his reach."

"That may be madame," said Bonaparte, irritated, but still in a moderate tone, "but I think it would not cost much to answer my question."

"Ten thousand francs, sir," answered the lady in a dry tone.

"Well, madame, is that your lowest price?"

"Yes, sir, I have but one price, as every one of my customers know."

"Well, madame, I think I shall buy them; be so good as to place them aside, so that nobody else may take them."

"But, sir," said the astonished lady "how then? I shall say they are sold, but—but—"

"What but, madame?" said Bonaparte, growing warm.

Sebastian gave him a hint and said: "Madame is right; she does not know us, and of course is not to be blamed for asking at least something by which she might be assured that we are in earnest."

He handed her at the same moment a bank note of one thousand francs. The widow, still more astonished, received the note, turned and returned it, and handed it to a clerk, directing him to a whisper to go to a neighbor's and see if it was not a forged one, and then addressing herself to the two strangers, said with the Parisian gracefulness so characteristic of all those female shop-keepers.

"Gentlemen, I ask your pardon; you appear to be fine and well-dressed gentlemen, but God knows since that Corsican has been as the head of our government, we are overrun with rogues and vagabonds, who have ever attempted to commit forgeries, (which is true,) and therefore, I have sent to my neighbor's who is an agent de change, (a broker,) and who understands his business well."

"But how, then, madame, I thought Bonaparte was a good Frenchman," said the consul, "and although born in Corsica, that he has never ceased to be a Frenchman."

"Yes, yes," answered the merchant, smiling, "he has been a good Frenchman, because he was too greatly interested to be otherwise."

Sebastian saw that Bonaparte began to grow warm, and interrupted the loquacious lady by asking her "what she had to say of the first consul, if he had not crushed anarchy, re-established order, and put France in a flourishing state."

"Yes, he has so re-established order that we have now instead of laws, by-words—instead of liberty, slavery, and a legion of miserable spies who denounce and arrest every one who dares to speak against him or his adherents."

This woman was of an exalted character, very handsome and bold, and astonished both by her vehemence and the facility with which she talked to them. Bonaparte could not resist interrupting her in saying, "but, madame, you forgot yourself in touching those very delicate political matters, in which you cannot have the least concern, being obliged often so deal with the first consul's friends and adherents; and if we should belong to them, what then, madame! would you not fear to be arrested?"

"I fear to be arrested," said she, laughing aloud; "you, gentlemen, could you denounce a poor widow who has five little children to provide for? No certainly not, I have nothing to fear from you—you appear to be too honest and good, gentlemen, to wish to ruin a poor woman because she used with freedom the only gift of God, her tongue, which she usurper has left her."

On leaving the store, Bonaparte told her he would send the money, and also for the two vases. In walking out they took a hackney coach, and stopped at a short distance from the Tuilleries, in the rue de l'Eschelle. Bonaparte, although not well treated by this spirited lady, was, nevertheless, the first who said he liked her frankness, but that she deserved some good lesson for the future. As soon as he arrived at the Tuilleries, he sent General Lasnes with one of his carriages in search of the widow, with a polite invitation to come immediately with him to see the gentlemen who had bought the vases, as they wished to speak with her upon other purchases, and pay her what they owed. The unsuspecting lady seeing a gentleman clad in citizen's clothes, and an elegant, but a plain coach, was soon ready to go, and off they went at full speed. On the road she inquired very anxiously after the names of these gentlemen—if he (Lasnes) was their friend, and many other questions, which Lasnes was expressly prohibited against answering. But what was her perplexity when she alighted at the great staircase of the Tuilleries, and saw that she had to deal with one of the generals attached to the consul. She exclaimed at intervals, "Oh mon dieu, mon dieu, what will become of me if these should denounce me to the consul." Lasnes, although a very rough soldier, was nevertheless humane, and of a good heart, assured her, as well as he could, that no harm was intended against her.

But what was her terror when the first consul's cabinet opened, and she recognized in him the stranger to whom she had spoken so freely. She was ready to faint, and fell upon her knees and wept bitterly, humbly asking pardon. Bonaparte himself was moved, helped her up, led her to a chair, and requested her to be quiet and composed. These kind words restored her spirits, and she was able to listen to the following:

"Macame, you have been a little imprudent in speaking so freely of me to strangers; happily for your sake, these words have not been heard by Fouché or one of his agents, you would not come off so easily. Let this be a warning to you for the future. Here is your money, and give this (20,000 francs) to your children, and say to them that if the mother is not my friend, I wish at least the children should be."

It was by such means that he made himself popular.

THE EFFECTS OF IMPATIENCE.—Nothing more incapacitates a man for the lead than impatience. No constitutionally impatient man, who has indulged this tendency, ever gets to the bottom of things, or knows with any nicety the standing disposition and circumstances of the people he is thrown or has thrown himself amongst. Certain salient points he is possessed of, but not what reconciles and accounts for them. Something in him—or a train of thought, or liking and antipathies—will always come between him and an impartial judgment. Neither does he win confidence, for he checks the eye, uncertain advances which are the precursors to it. We doubt if a thoroughly impatient man can read the heart or be a fair critic or understand the rights of any knotty question, or make himself master of any difficult situation. The power of waiting, deliberating, hanging in suspense, is necessary for all these—the power of staying off for considerable periods of time merely personal learnings.—*London Saturday Review.*

HUMOROUS.—If you lose an opportunity, your opponent may find it. Men, like bullets, go farthest when they are smoothest.

Wealth is not apt to be modest; the face on a guinea never blushes.

If there is unbanity in cities, may we not look for suburban banity in suburbs?

Puns are unpopular. Men with one idea are perplexed with a double meaning.

With great trees the seed is smaller and the blossoms later than with small bushes.

It isn't pleasant to be in company with fellows who are only what a sandwich should be—half-bred.

Beauty has its privileges. A woman who has plainness of countenance must not indulge in the luxury of plainness of speech.