

A SUPPLICATION TO THE MAGISTRACY.

We poor, wretched men, deprived of all human assistance and consolation, who like innocent sheep without a shepherd, have become a prey to the roaring lions of the forest, and devouring beasts of the field; a spectacle and reproach to the whole world, have to suffer daily, under the oppressive sword of lords and princes; have to hear and endure, the inhuman revilings and abuse of the learned, the abominable lying and scoffing of the common people; we humbly entreat the imperial majesty, kings, lords, princes, authorities and officers, every one in his calling, dignity and honor, and all our beloved and gracious rulers, through the deep and bloody wounds of our blessed Lord Jesus Christ, that you would but once lay aside all displeasure and evil opinions concerning us, and with sincere pity reflect upon the inhuman and severe trials, misery, necessities, crosses and martyrizations of your distressed and innocent servants; for the great God before whom we stand, who is the Searcher of all hearts, and before whose eyes all things are open and revealed; who knows that we seek nothing else upon this earth than that we, with a good conscience, may live according to his holy commandments, ordinances, word and will; but if there are some pernicious sects, as alas! in our day there have been, they will, no doubt, in due time become manifest.

Do therefore condescend so much as to peruse our writings diligently and meditate upon them with a God-fearing and impartial heart, so that you may know with certainty

why we are not deterred from our doctrine, faith and practice, by coercion, poverty, misery persecution and death; that you may thus more thoroughly examine the truth and be no longer guilty of innocent blood. Be pleased to show some natural candor, and human charity towards your poor servants. Think not in your hearts, that we poor, forsaken men, after the flesh, are wood or stone; but we are with you descended from one father, Adam, and from one mother, Eve, and are created by the same God, having a common entrance into this world, are clothed with the same nature, desiring rest and peace, concerned for wives and children as well as you, and naturally, as all other creatures on earth, fearful of death.

Therefore, humble yourselves in the name of Jesus, that your poor souls may be saved. Examine I say, our doctrine and instructions, and you will find through the grace of God, that they are the pure and unadulterated doctrines of Christ, the holy word, the word of eternal peace, the word of eternal truth, the word of divine grace, the word of our salvation, the unconquerable word, against which the gates of hell shall never prevail, Matt. 16: 18; they are the two-edged sword that proceeded out of the mouth of the Lord, Rev. 1: 16, the sword of the spirit by which all must be judged, that dwell upon the earth, Eph. 6: 17.

O, ye beloved sirs, put the sword into the sheath; for as true as the Lord liveth, you do not fight against flesh and blood, but against Him, whose eyes are a flame of fire,

who judgeth and maketh war in righteousness; who is crowned with many crowns, whose name no one knoweth but himself; who is clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; whose name is called the Word of God; who rules the nations with a rod of iron; who treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God; who hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS**, Rev. 19: 11—16.

O, ye highly renowned lords and princes, it is against this Being that you are in this manner contending with your counsel and sword. Remember what the great prophet of the Lord, Zechariah, said concerning the children of God, who, in this world are ever subject to suffering, "He that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of mine eye," Zech. 2: 8. It is a fearful abomination, and bitter enmity, thus miserably to murder, destroy and exterminate those, who with such warm hearts, seek the Lord and eternal life, and who would not molest any one upon the earth. "Precious in the sight of the Lord," David says, "is the death of his saints," Ps. 116: 15. It is Jesus of Nazareth whom ye persecute, Acts 9: 5, and not us; therefore awake, forbear, fear God and his word, for we shall all be called to appear before one Judge, before whom neither power, exaltation, comeliness, fine speech nor talents will avail. Judgment will there be passed in righteousness upon all flesh, impartially and without respect to persons; the oppressed will then receive justice, and the crucified Jesus with his elect, released from the power of death, and the hands of tyrants, will enter into his promised inheritance, kingdom and glory.

Seeing then that you deal so unjustly and tyrannically, according to the evil intentions of your hearts, without the sanction of scripture and mercy, with the helpless and God-fearing, how can you expect any grace and mercy in the day of the Lord? when we shall all have to stand before the impartial judgment seat, where every one will be rewarded according to his deeds, 2 Cor. 5: 10.

We desire not such favors as the evil-doers of this world; for we have not sinned in this our doctrine, faith and practice, although we have to suffer so much; but we, only

with the word of the Lord, as the scriptures direct us, resist the anti-christian doctrines, ordinances and life. We resist neither the emperor, the king, nor any authority to which they are called of God; but we are ready to obey till death, in all things which are not contrary to God and his word, and well know what the scriptures teach and enjoin concerning this matter, Rom. 13: 1—8. But we desire so much mercy, that under your gracious protection we may live, teach, labor, and serve the Lord, according to the dictates of our consciences, so that to you and many with you, the gospel of Christ may be rightly preached, and the gate of life opened. Alas! if the learned had the word of God, and we had it not, how gladly would we be taught by them. But since we have it, and they do not, therefore we pray, for Jesus' sake, do not urge us to leave Christ and join anti-christ; to go from truth to error; from life to certain death.

Oh, ye renowned lords and princes, who are appointed of God, to be heads and rulers, consider well and believe on the word of the Lord; for if you will not desist from unrighteousness, fear God and do right, it would be better for you if you had never been born. The innocent blood of Abel calls unto heaven, and will be strictly demanded at your hands at the last day. Again we say, awake, fear God's word; for God, the Lord himself, will rule in heaven, in his kingdom, that is, in the hearts of men. He will permit none to detract from his glory, or become exalted above him. Lucifer, the fair angel of God, desired to exalt himself to the Most High, and was cast out of heaven into the abyss of hell; and is retained in chains of darkness till the judgement of the last day, Isa. 14: 12—15; Rev. 12: 7—9; Pet. 2: 4.

Beloved Sirs, receive it in love, and be not offended, for the truth must be made known. Your pride has arisen to heaven; look to Christ and his word, his example and his life; judge impartially, and you will find this to be true. The Almighty, eternal Father, through his eternal Wisdom, Christ Jesus, has instituted and commanded all things in his kingdom, that is, in his church, relating to doctrines, sacraments and life, according to his divine counsel, will and

wisdom. But you, through the counsel and instigation of the learned, by your inhuman, and cruel mandates, have changed, destroyed and corrupted these, as if the almighty and eternal word should yield to your command and authority; and as though the divine ordinances of the Son of God might be changed into a more suitable form, and to a better purpose through the wisdom of men. O presumption of all presumption! O folly of all follies! Why exalt thyself, O earth and dust! Acknowledge Christ Jesus, your chief Lord, who, of God, is made to you a Prince and Judge. "The heaven, even the heavens are the Lord's," saith David, "but the earth hath he given to the children of men," Ps. 115: 16. I have no doubt, that if any were to rise up against the emperor or king, and enter into his kingdom and government, he would not be borne with patiently, nor go unpunished; how much less then, will a poor, fleshly mortal go unpunished, who rises up against the Almighty Emperor, and King, Christ Jesus, to dethrone him from the seat of his divine majesty, and to rob him of his sceptre, and the crown of his glory, as though Christ Jesus, the eternal wisdom of God, was unreasonable and unfit for the heavenly government. Reflect what became of those haughty and proud hearts from the beginning, who desired to place their seats unto the throne of God.

Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, as Peter teaches. Take as an example, the great and prosperous king Nebuchadnezzar, and observe how grievously God punished him, on account

of his pride; and how, after being punished, he turned to wisdom, feared the Almighty, highly praised his wonderful and glorious works, and his great and adorable name.

Beloved Sirs, awake, and mend your ways, for it does not become the creature to rise up against the Creator. Christ *alone* will be the head of his church, the Teacher in his school; and he *alone*, the King who will judge his kingdom; not with the doctrines and commands of men, nor with slaying and murdering, but with his Holy Spirit, power, grace and word.

Therefore, we pray you, O ye great ones of the earth, whom we, through the mercy of God, acknowledge in all temporal things, as our gracious lords, that you would receive the eternal, Almighty King, Christ Jesus, as the only Savior, Lord and sovereign of our poor souls, even as he was ordained by his Father; and that you would attend to the duties of your office and temporal government, to which you have been called; for we with all our hearts, desire to render unto "Caesar, the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things which are God's," Matt. 22: 21. Be pleased also to consider this, our doctrine and instruction, concerning baptism, the Lord's supper, and the shunning of Babylonian deeds; and compare them well with the word of the Lord. We hope, through the grace of God, that you will find, in truth, that we believe and teach nothing but that which the true oracle of the Lord has commanded us, and the holy apostles have taught and confirmed; to this end, may the great Lord grant you his grace, Amen.