

Prayer for all that are in Authority

By Rev. D.B. Macleod

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The Word of God exhorts us to pray for kings and for all in authority so that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty, 1 Tim. 2: 12. This is a duty which may not be neglected without sin and without the loss of the blessings held out - that is, the leading of a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Failure to remember at a Throne of grace those who rule over us in the nation is fraught with many dangers, including those of civil wars and insurrections.

Christ is not only King over His Church but also King over the nations. Whether men recognise this or not does not affect the truth of the matter in any way. The more men would come to recognise it the more would it be of profit to them. Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords. He rules in heaven above and in the earth beneath. He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the world. None can stay His hand or say to Him, what doest Thou? All His purposes are being carried out in the affairs of the nations of the world. This is reason for rejoicing. "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof". Men have reason to magnify the Lord's great name that it is not man that reigns but God. What a fearful place the world would be if man was always permitted to have His way. But God has so ordered it in His providence that men are held within certain bounds. One of the principal means that God has ordained for the order and peace of society is the Civil Magistrate. It is for such that we are commanded to pray.

The Civil Magistrate is a divine institution and is a blessing from God to men. The jurisdiction which they possess is not an arbitrary one, but one they are to exercise under God who requires that they act righteously and justly. Such have to give in their account to God in the day of judgment as to how they fulfilled their commission given to them by God. It is by the law of God they are to be guided, not by the views or opinions of men. It is the Lord who raises men to such positions of eminence in any land. "For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is judge; He putteth down one, and setteth up another." Psalm 75: 6,7. Sometimes because of a nation's sin God permits evil men to be raised to high office. At other times

God is pleased to raise up righteous men over a nation. Blessed is that nation which has righteous rulers. It is a blessing from the Most High and men ought to be unspeakably thankful for it wherever it exists.

How forgetful we are ready to be of the heavy responsibilities of those in high office in the nation. It ought not to be so. They are exercising their authority and rule for our good, and yet are we to forget them to the extent that we forget to pray for them? The Word of God forbids such dereliction of duty on our part. The burdens they carry are national burdens, burdens not necessarily of their own making, and shall we not help them to bear these heavy burdens by bearing them and their burdens on our hearts at a Throne of grace? Are they to be deprived of rest and sleep through the weight of responsibility lying upon them, and are we to lie down to sleep in the quietness and peace which they have secured for us and yet not remember them at the throne of grace? If it has been so in the past - if we have woefully neglected this duty - let it not be so in the future. They must of necessity seek counsel from God if the affairs of the nation are to be ordered aright and will we not plead with the Lord that He would lead, guide and direct them? Clearly it is our duty. Let us then fulfil it. Do we wish to lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty? Then let us pray for our rulers and for all that are in authority. To them the Lord says:

"Now therefore, kings, be wise; be taught,
ye judges of the earth:
Serve God in fear, and see that ye
join trembling with your mirth.

Kiss ye the Son, lest in His ire
ye perish from the way,
If once His wrath begin to burn:
bless'd all that on Him stay."