

1: Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos

Print PDF. A Defense of Liberty Against Tyrants By Stephen Junius Brutus [Stephen Junius Brutus (pseudonym). Vindiciae contra Tyrannos: A Defence of Liberty against Tyrants, OR, Of the Lawful Power of the Prince over the People and of the People over the Prince.

At first, the answer to this question may seem to be obvious, for it seems to question an axiom held by all Christians, confirmed in many places in Holy Scripture, various examples throughout history, and by the deaths of all the holy martyrs. Otherwise, why should the apostles have answered that God must rather be obeyed than men? But there are many rulers in these days who call themselves "Christian", who arrogantly assume that their power is limited by no one, not even by God, and they surround themselves with flatterers who adore them as gods upon earth. Not to mention the many others who, out of fear or constraint, either believe, or appear to believe, that rulers ought to be obeyed in all things, and by all men. Therefore, seeing the unhappiness of these times is such that there is nothing so firm, certain, or pure, that it is not shaken, disgraced, or polluted, that anyone who shall thoroughly consider these things will admit that this question is not only most profitable, but also most necessary. For my own part, when I consider the cause of the many calamities that have afflicted Christendom lately, I am reminded of the words of the prophet Hosea: On them I will pour out my wrath like water. Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment, because he was determined to follow the commandments of men. The rulers exceed their authority, not being content with that authority which the almighty and all good God has given them, but seek to usurp that sovereignty which He has reserved to Himself over all men. And not being content with absolute power over the lives and property of their subjects, these tyrants seize for themselves the right to rule over their consciences as well, over which the authority belongs to Jesus Christ alone. Holding the earth not great enough for their ambition, they want to climb and conquer heaven itself. The people, on the other hand, follow the commandments of men when they yield to these rulers who command that which is against the law of God. Thus, the people burn incense and adore these earthly gods and, instead of resisting them if they are able, they instead permit them to usurp the place of God, apparently untroubled by their giving to Caesar that which belongs properly to God. Everyone knows that if a man disobeys a prince who commands that which is wicked and unlawful, he shall immediately be accused of being a rebel, a traitor, and guilty of high treason. Our Savior Christ, the apostles, and all the Christians of the early church were accused with these false charges. If any man, following the example of Ezra and Nehemiah, set himself the task of rebuilding the temple of the Lord, it will be said he aspires to the crown, hatches innovations, and seeks the ruin of the state. Then you shall presently see a million of these minions and flatterers of the rulers tickling their ears with the opinion, that if they once permit this temple to be rebuilt, they will lose their kingdom, and never be able to impose levies or taxes on these men. But this is madness! There are no rulers which ought to be considered as firm and stable, except for those in whom the temple of God is built, and which are indeed the temple itself. These we may truly call Kings. For they reign with God, seeing that it is by Him only that kings reign. On the contrary, what beastly foolishness it is to think that the state and kingdom can be maintained if God Almighty is excluded, and His temple demolished. From this view comes so many tyrannous enterprises, unhappy and tragic deaths of kings, and ruinations of people. If these sycophants knew what difference there is between God and Caesar, between the King of Kings and a simple king, between the lord and the vassal, and what tributes this Lord requires of His subjects, and what authority he gives to kings over those his subjects, certainly so many rulers would not strive to trouble the kingdom of God. And we should not see some of them cast down from their thrones by the just instigation of the Almighty, revenging himself of them, in the midst of their greatest strength, and the people should not be sacked and pillaged and trodden down. Accordingly, rulers need to know how far they are permitted to extend their authority over their subjects, and their subjects need to know in what ways they are to obey, lest should the one encroach on that jurisdiction, which no way belongs to them, and the others obey him which commands further than he ought, they be both chastised when they shall give an account of themselves before another Judge. Now the end and scope of this question in which the Holy Scripture shall

principally give the resolution, is that which follows. The question is, whether subjects are bound to obey kings, in case they command that which is against the law of God: When the question is resolved concerning the king, to whom is attributed the fullest power, the question concerning other magistrates will be also determined. First, the Holy Scripture teach that God reigns by His own proper authority, and kings rule by derivation, God from Himself, kings from God. God has a jurisdiction proper and kings are his delegates. It follows then that the jurisdiction of God has no limits, but that of kings is finite, that the power of God is infinite, but that of kings is confined, that the kingdom of God extends itself to all places, but that of kings is restrained within the confines of certain countries. In like manner God has created out of nothing both heaven and earth, therefore, by good right He is lord and master of both. All the inhabitants of the earth have received from Him everything they have, and are, essentially, His tenants and lease-holders. All the rulers and governors of the world are but His hirelings and vassals, and are obligated to take and acknowledge their investitures from Him. God alone is the owner and lord, and all men, whatever their station in life, are His tenants, agents, officers and vassals. All without exception owe fealty to Him, according to that which He has committed to their dispensation. The higher their place is, the greater their responsibility to God must be, and according to the rank where God has raised them, must they make their reckoning before His divine majesty. This is what the Holy Scriptures teach in innumerable places, and all the faithful and even the wisest heathens have ever acknowledged: And to the end that men should not falsely worship their own labor and enterprise, the earth yields no increase without the dew of heaven. This is why God commanded that His people should offer to Him the first of their fruits, and the heathens themselves have consecrated the same to their gods, that is, that God might be acknowledged lord, and they his farmers and field workers. The heaven is the throne of the Lord, and the earth His footstool. And, therefore, since all the kings of the world are under His feet, it is no marvel, if God be called the King of Kings and Lord of Lords; all kings he termed His ministers established to judge rightly, and govern justly the world in the quality of lieutenants. By me says the divine wisdom kings reign, and the princes judge the earth. If they do it not "He takes off the shackles put on by kings and ties a loincloth around thier waist" Job As if He should say, it is in my power to establish kings in their thrones, or to thrust them out, and for that reason, the throne of kings is called the throne of God. As the Queen of Sheba said to King Solomon: This is the title given to David, to Solomon, to Hezekiah and to other good rulers. When also the covenant is passed between God and the king, it is upon condition that the people are, and remain always, the people of God. This shows that God will not in any case despoil himself of His property and possession, when He gives to kings the government of the people, but establish them to take charge of, and treat them well. Just as he who makes choice of a shepherd to look to his flocks, he remains still master and owner of them. This was always known to those good kings, David, Solomon, Jehosaphat, and others who acknowledged God to be the Lord of their kingdoms and nations, and yet lost no privilege that justly belongs to real power. They even reigned much more happily in that they employed themselves cheerfully in the service of God, and in obedience to his commandments. Nehuchadnezar, although he was a heathen, and a mighty emperor, did yet at the end acknowledge this, for though Daniel called him the king of kings, to whom the King of Heaven had granted power and royal majesty above all others, yet, on the contrary said he , "Thy God, O Daniel, is truly the God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, giving kingdoms to whom He pleases," even to the most wretched of the world. For which cause Xenophon said at the coronation of Cyrus, "let us sacrifice to God. At this day at the inaugurating of kings and Christian rulers, they are called the servants of God, destined to govern his people. It may be that the court flatterers will reply that God has given earthy dominion to kings, reserving heaven for himself, and allowing the earth to them to reign, and govern there according to their own fancies. In short, that the kings of the world divide an empire between them and with God Himself. Consider an argument proper enough for that impudent villain Cleon, who was the sycophant of Alexander, or for the poet Martial, which was not ashamed to call the edicts of Domitian the ordinances of the Lord God. This argument, I say, is worthy of that execrable Domitian who as Suetonius recites thought of himself as God and Lord. But it is one that is altogether unworthy of the ears of a Christian ruler, and of the mouth of good subjects. For this sentence of God Almighty must always remain irrevocably true, "I will not give My glory to any other. God does not at any time divest himself of his power. He holds a sceptre in one hand to repress and

quell the arrogance of those rulers who mutiny against him, and in the other, a balance to control those who do not administer justice with equity as they ought. There cannot be expressed more certain marks of sovereign command. And if the emperor, in creating a king, reserves always to himself the imperial sovereignty, or a king, as in France, in granting the government or possession of a province to a stranger or if it be to his brother or son, reserves always to himself legal appeals, and the knowledge of such things as are the marks of royalty and sovereignty, which are always understood to be excepted from the grant, although they were not specified in the grant of investiture and fealty promised; with much more reason should God have sovereign power and command over all kings as they are his servants and officers. Accordingly, we read, in so many places of Scripture, that he will call them to an account, and punish them, if they do not faithfully discharge their duties. Therefore all kings are the vassals of the King of Kings, invested into their office by the sword, which is the recognition of their royal authority, to the end that with the sword they maintain the law of God, defend good, and punish evil. This is even as we commonly see, that he who is a sovereign lord grants his vassals possession of their landed estates by girding them with a sword, delivering them a buckler and a standard, with the condition that they shall fight for them with those arms if the occasion arises. Now if we consider what is the duty of vassals, we shall find that what may be said of them applies also to kings. The vassal receives land from his lord with right of justice, and obligation to serve him in his wars. The king is established by the Lord God, the King of Kings, to the end he should administer justice to his people and defend them against all their enemies. The vassal receives laws and conditions from his sovereign. God commands the king to observe His laws and to have them always before his eyes, promising that he and his successors shall long possess the kingdom, if they be obedient, and that their reign will be short if they prove rebellious to their sovereign king. The vassal obliges himself by oath onto his lord, and swears that he will be faithful and obedient. In like manner the king promises solemnly to command, according to the explicit law of God. Briefly, the vassal loses his estate if he rebels, and by law forfeits all his privileges. Likewise the king loses his right, and many times his realm also, if he despise God, if he plots with his enemies, and if he rebels against that Royal Majesty. This will seem more obvious by the consideration of the covenant which is contracted between God and the king, for God does that honor to His servants to call them His confederates. Now we read of two sorts of covenants at the inaugurating of kings, the first between God, the king, and the people, that the people might be the people of God. The second, between the king and the people, that the people shall obey faithfully, and the king command justly. The latter we will treat later, and now speak of the former. Return to [Index of this book](#) Return to [Documents](#) page.

2: MEHAP Blog: du Plessis-Mornay, "A Defense of Liberty against Tyrants"

A DEFENCE OF LIBERTY AGAINST TYRANTS I. THE FIRST QUESTION. Whether subjects are obligated to obey rulers who issue commands contrary to the law of God.

Thoughts on Canadian Political Culture: Criticisms, Reviews and the Poverty of Parliament Excavations In truth, it is always possible, often urgent, to displace oneself, with the risk of becoming that passerby, that wanderer, that flaneur, that vagabond, stray dog that our fragmented contemporary culture both sets in motion and paralyzes. And conversely a good leader is always teaching his followers to become leaders in their turn. All its virtues and some of its vices follow from this. It was printed pseudonymously supposedly in Edinburgh, but truly in Basel and the authorship is something of a mystery, though it was likely the collaborative work of Hubert Languet and Philippe de Mornay, thus putting it in the same league as the Catholic resistance text *On Voluntary Servitude* see my blog entry, as they each attempt to make a defence of society. The early-modern English is retained for its flavour, and I invite the reader to sift through the writing, for there are various commonalities with Canada today. Assuredly, looking abroad, there are resonances with the Arab Spring. And the current pressing question is: Parenthetically-speaking, there are some worthy historical nuggets in the excerpts, too, for the devoted antiquarian. And as Francis Bacon points out perhaps a little presumptuously in *The Essays*: And there are plums here for those interested in linking Stephen Harper to notions of tyranny. The Egyptian Pyramids, the German Autobahn, and the Great Wall of China can all be compared to another huge construction or, rather, destruction project: *Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos* was divided into four chapter questions listed below, the most interesting of which was Question 3, discussed here. Questions discussed in this Treatise Whether Subjects are bound and ought to obey Princes, if they command that which is against the Law of God. Whether it be lawful to resist a Prince which doth infringe the Law of God, or ruin the Church, by whom, how, and how far it is lawful. Whether it be lawful to resist a Prince which doth oppress or ruin a public state, and how far such resistance may be extended, by whom, how, and by what Right, or Law it is permitted. Whether neighbour Princes or States may be, or bound by Law, to give succours to the Subjects of other Princes, afflicted for the Cause of true Religion, or oppressed by manifest Tyranny. The whole Body of the People is above the King. No truly, but it is said in regard of all the People, whom the business principally concerns, who lend to the King for the good of the Common-wealth, their Eyes, their Ears, their Means, their Faculties. Let the People forsake the King, he presently falls to the Ground, although before his Hearing and Sight seemed most excellent, and that he was strong and in the best Disposition that might be; yea, that he seemed to triumph in all significance, yet in an instant he will become most vile and contemptible, to be brief, instead of the Divine Honours wherewith all men adore him, he shall be compelled to be a Pedant and whip children in the school at Corinth. Take away but the Basis to this Giant, and like the Rhodian Colossus, he presently tumbles on the ground and falls into pieces. Seeing then that the King is established in this degree by the People, and for their Sake, and that he cannot subsist without them, who can think it strange then for us to conclude, that the People are above the King? The Kingly Dignity to speak properly is not a Title of Honour but a weighty and burdensome Office; It is not a discharge or vacation from affairs, to run a licentious course of liberty, but a charge and vocation to all industrious Employments, for the service of the Common-wealth; the which has some glimpse of honour in it, because in those first and Golden Ages, no man would have tasted of such continual troubles, if they had not been sweetened with some relish of honour; insomuch, as there was nothing more true, then that which was commonly said in those times. If every man knew with what turmoil and troubles the Royal Wreath was wrapped withal, no man would vouchsafe to take it up, although it lay at his feet. When therefore that these Words of mine and thine entered in the World, and that differences fell among fellow Citizens, touching the propriety of Goods, and Wars amongst Neighbouring People about the right of their Confines, the People bethought themselves to have recourse to someone, who both could and should take order that the Poor were not oppressed by the Rich, nor the Patriots wronged by Strangers. Shall it not be lawful for a Prince to make new Laws and abrogate the old? Seeing it belongs to the King, not only to advise that nothing be done against, nor to defraud the Laws but also that nothing be wanting in them, nor

anything too much in them; briefly that neither Age nor Lapse of time do abolish or entomb them; if there be anything to abridge, to be added or taken away from them, it is his Duty to assemble the Estates, and to demand their Advice and Resolution, without presuming to publish anything before the whole have been, first, duly examined and approved by them, after the Law is once enacted and published, there is no more dispute to be made about it, all men owe obedience to it, and the Prince in the first place, to teach other men their Duty, and for that all men are easier led by Example than by Precepts, the Prince must necessarily express his Willingness to observe the Laws, or else by what equity can he require Obedience in his Subjects, to that which he himself contemns. Must it not then necessarily come to pass, that the King as some have been be infected with Lunacy, either continually or by intervals, that the whole State fall inevitably to ruin? But if the Laws be superior to the King, as we have already proved, and that the King be tied to the same respect of obedience to the Laws, as a Servant is to his Master, who will be so senseless, that will not rather obey the Law than the King? Or will not readily yield his best assistance against those that seek to violate or infringe them? Now seeing that the King is not Lord over the Laws, let us examine how his Power may be justly extended in other things. For what if a Man for the Flocks sake have made thee Shepherd, does it follow that thou has liberty to slay, pill, sell, and transport the Sheep at thy pleasure? Although the People have established thee Judge, or Governor of a City, or of some Province, have thou therefore power to alienate, sell, or play away that City or Province? And seeing that in alienating or passing away a Province, the People also are told, have they raised thee to that Authority to the end thou should separate them from the rest, or that thou should prostitute and make them slaves to whom thou pleased. Furthermore I demand if the Royal dignity be a Patrimony, or an Office? If it be an Office, what Community has it with any propriety? If it be a Patrimony, is it not such a one that the Paramount property remains still in the People who were the Donors? Briefly if the revenue of the Exchequer, or the Demeans of the Kingdom, be called the Dowry of the Common-wealth, and by good right, and such a Dowry whose dismembering or wasting brings with it the ruin of the public State, the Kingdom and the King, by what Law shall it be lawful to alienate this Dowry? And if he misgoverns the State, seeing it imports the Commonwealth that everyone make use of his own Talent, it is much more requisite for the public Good, that he which has the managing of it, carry himself as he ought. And therefore if a prodigal Lord by the Authority of Justice, be committed to the Tuition of his Kinsmen and Friends, and compelled to suffer his Revenues and Means to be ordered, and disposed of by others; by much more reason than those which have interest in the Affairs of State, and whose Duty obliges them to, take all the Administration and Government of the State out of the hands of he who either negligently executes his place, Ruins the Commonwealth, if after admonition he endeavours not to perform his Duty. And for so much as it is easily to be proved, the King cannot be held Lord in Propriety of the demean. Now the condition of a Stipulator is in terms of Law more worthy than of a Promiser. The People ask the King, whether he will govern justly and according to the Laws? He promises he will. Then the People answer, and not before, that while he governs uprightly, they will obey faithfully. The King therefore promises simply and absolutely, the People upon condition: In the first Covenant or Contract, there is only an obligation to piety; in the second, to Justice. In that the King promises to serve God religiously: By the one he is obliged with the utmost of his Endeavours to Procure the Glory of God: In the first there is a Condition expressed, If thou keep my Commandments: God is the proper avenger of deficiency in the former, and the whole People the lawful punisher of the delinquency of the latter, or the Estates, the representative Body thereof, who have assumed to themselves the Protection of the People. This has been always practiced in all well-governed Estates. Hitherto we have treated of a King, it now rests somewhat more fully describe a Tyrant. We have shown that he is a King, which lawfully governs a Kingdom, either derived to him by succession, or committed to him by Election. It follows therefore that he is reputed a Tyrant, which is opposite to a King, either gains a Kingdom by violence, or indirect means, or being invested therewith by lawful election, or succession, governs it not according to law and equity, or neglects those contracts and agreements, to the observation where he was strictly obliged at his reception. All which may very well occur in one and the same person. The first is commonly called a Tyrant without Title; the second a Tyrant by Practice. Now it may well come to pass, that he who possesses a Kingdom by force, to govern justly, and he on whom it descends a lawful Title, rule

unjustly. But for so much as a Kingdom is rather a right than an inheritance, and an office than a possession: A King, never makes war, but compelled unto it, and for the preservation of the public; he never desires to purchase advantage by treason, he never enters into any war that exposes the Commonwealth that it affords probable hope of commodity. A Tyrant leaves no design unattempted by which he may fleece his Subjects of their subsistence and turn it to his proper benefit, that being continually troubled in gaining means to live, they may have no leisure no hope how to regain their liberty: A tyrant extorts unjustly from many to cast prodigally upon two or three Minions, and those unworthy; he imposes on all: For a Tyrant as says Cicero, is culpable in effect of the greatest injustice that may be imagined, that when he most deceives, it is when he carries it so appearance to deal sincerely. And therefore he artificially counterfeit Religion and devotion, wherein faith Aristotle, he expresses one of the most absolute subtleties that tyrants can possibly practice: He fains also to be exceedingly affected to the public good; not so much for the love of it, as for the fear of his own safety. Finally, that we may come to some period of this third question: In the receiving and inauguration of a Prince, there are Covenants and Contracts passed between him and the People, which are tacit and expressed; to wit, obey him faithfully while he commands justly, that he serving the Common-wealth, all men shall serve him, that while he governs according to Law, all shall be submitted to his Government, etc. And therefore the Officers of the State may judge him according to the Laws: And if he support his Tyranny by strong hands, their duty binds them, when no other man can be effected, by Force of Arms to suppress him. Cambridge University Press, , p. Burns with Mark Goldie Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, , pp. Yale University Press, The Trial of Charles I London: The Folio Society, , p. John Pitcher Markham, Ontario: Penguin, , p. Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos, a defence of liberty against tyrants, or, Of the lawful power of the prince over the people, and of the people over the prince. Printed for Richard Baldwin, , p.

3: Vidiciae Contra Tyrannos

Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos A Defense of Liberty Against Tyrants by Junius Brutus VINDICIAE, CONTRA TYRANNOS: SIVE, DE PRINCIPIIS IN Populum, Populique in Principem, legitima postestate.

In the Public Domain. This question happily may seem at the first view to be altogether superfluous and unprofitable, for that it seems to make a doubt of an axiom always held infallible among Christians, confirmed by many testimonies in Holy Scripture, divers examples of the histories of all ages, and by the death of all the holy martyrs. There are no estates which ought to be esteemed firm and stable, but those in whom the temple of God is built, and which are indeed the temple itself, and these we may truly call kings, which reign with God, seeing that it is by him only that kings reign: On the contrary, what beastly foolishness it is to think that the state and kingdom cannot subsist if God Almighty be not excluded, and his temple demolished. From hence proceed so many tyrannous enterprises, unhappy and tragic death of kings, and ruins of people. The question is, if subjects be bound to obey kings, in case they command that which is against the law of God: God from himself, kings from God, that God has a jurisdiction proper, kings are his delegates. In like manner God had created of nothing both heaven and earth; wherefore by good right He is lord, and true proprietor, both of the one and the other. Now if we consider what is the duty of vassals, we shall find that what may be said of them, agrees properly to kings. The vassal receives his fee of his lord with right of justice, and charge to serve him in his wars. The king is established by the Lord God, the King of Kings, to the end he should administer justice to his people and defend them against all their enemies. The vassal receives laws and conditions from his sovereign. The vassal obliges himself by oath unto his lord, and swears that he will be faithful and obedient. Briefly, the vassal loses his fee, if he commit a felony, and by law forfeits all his privileges. Now we read of two sorts of covenants at the inaugurating of kings, the first between God, the king, and the people, that the people might be the people of God. Briefly, even as those rebellious vassals who endeavor to possess themselves of the kingdom, do commit felony by the testimony of all laws, and deserve to be extirpated; in like manner those are as really guilty which will not observe the divine law, whereunto all men without exception owe their obedience, or who persecute those who desire to conform themselves thereunto, without hearing them in their just defenses: If God commands one thing, and the king commands the contrary, what is that proud man that would term him a rebel who refuses to obey the king, when else he must disobey God? In doing this we justly incur the malediction of the prophet Micah, who does detest and curse, in the name of God, all those who obey the wicked and perverse ordinances of kings. The first comprehends that which we owe to God, the second that which we must do to our neighbors; briefly, they contain piety and justice conjoined with charity, from which the preaching of the gospel does not derogate, but rather authorize and confirm. But who may punish the king for here is question of corporal and temporal punishment if it be not the whole body of the people to whom the king swears and obliges himself, no more nor less, than the people do to the king? What will you say? That a whole people, that beast of many heads, must they run in a mutinous disorder, to order the business of the commonwealth? What address or direction is there in an unruly and unbridled multitude? What counsel or wisdom, to manage the affairs of state? At the election of the first king, who was Saul, all the ancients of Israel assembled together at Kama. In like manner all Israel was assembled, or all Judah and Benjamin, etc. Now, it is no way probable, that all the people, one by one, met together there. A combination or conjuration is good or ill, according as the end whereunto it is addressed is good or ill; and perhaps also according as they are affected who are the managers of it. We say then, that the princes of Judah have done well, and that in following any other course they had failed of the right way. To be short, as it is lawful for a whole people to resist and oppose tyranny, so likewise the principal persons of the kingdom may as heads, and for the good of the whole body, confederate and associate themselves together; and as in a public state, that which is done by the greatest part is esteemed and taken as the act of all, so in like manner must it be said to be done, which the better part of the most principal have acted, briefly, that all the people had their hand in it. Divers ages before that, the people of Israel demanded a king. I will set a king over me like as all the nations that are about me, thou shalt in any wise set him whom

the Lord thy God shall choose from amongst thy brethren, etc. Then Samuel anointed Saul, and performed all those rights which belong to the election of a king required by the people. Now this might, perhaps, have seemed sufficient, if Samuel had presented to the people the king who was chosen by God, and had admonished them all to become good and obedient subjects. Notwithstanding, to the end that the king might know that he was established by the people. Samuel appointed the estates to meet at Mizpah, where being assembled as if the business were but then to begin, and nothing had already been done, to be brief, as if the election of Saul were then only to be treated of, the lot is cast and falls on the tribe of Benjamin, after on the family of Matri, and lastly on Saul, born of that family, who was the same whom God had chosen. Then by the consent of all the people Saul was declared king. Finally, that Saul nor any other might attribute the aforesaid business to chance or lot, after that Saul had made some proof of his valor in raising the siege of the Ammonites in Jabish Gilead, some of the people pressing the business, he was again confirmed king in a full assembly at Gilgal. You see that he whom God had chosen, and the lot had separated from all the rest, is established king by the suffrages of the people. The sons do not succeed the fathers, before the people have first, as it were, anew established them by their new approbation: It is commonly said that masters establish their servants, kings their officers. Furthermore, there is an infinite sort of people who live without a king, but we cannot imagine a king without people. Is it because they are like to Argos. No, truly, but it is said in regard to all the people, whom the business principally concerns, who lend to the king for the good of the commonwealth, their eyes, their ears, their means, their faculties. Let the people forsake the king, he presently falls to the ground, although before, his hearing and sight seemed most excellent, and that he was strong and in the best disposition that might be; yea, that he seemed to triumph in all magnificence, yet in an instant he will become most vile and contemptible: Take away but the basis to this giant, and like the Rhodian Colossus he presently tumbles on the ground and falls into pieces. We must consequently see wherefore first kings were established, and what is principally their duty. We usually esteem a thing just and good when it attains to the proper end for which it is ordained. For as Aesop says. For, as says the same doctor, they command not for the desire of dominion, but for the duty they owe to provide for the good of those who are subjected to them: Seneca in the eighty-first epistle says: No man made trial what he was able to do against them, because every one received what he was capable of from them. Therefore then, to govern is nothing else but to provide for. Nor as wars and suits increased, they chose someone, in whose wisdom and valor they reposed most confidence. We must here yet proceed a little further: Must the kings be subject to the law, or does the law depend upon the king? But it shall not be amiss to carry this matter a little higher. When people began to seek for justice to determine their differences, if they met with any private man that did justly appoint them, they were satisfied with it. Now for so much as such men were rarely and with much difficulty met withal, and for that the judgments of kings received as laws were oftentimes found contrary and difficult, then the magistrates and others of great wisdom invented laws, which might speak to all men in one and the same voice. I will, I command, my will shall serve instead of reason. Who can doubt, but that it is a thing more profitable and convenient to obey the law, than the king who is but one man? The law is the soul of a good king, it gives him motion, sense and life. Now it is a thing much more reasonable to obey the soul, than the body; the law is the wisdom of diverse sages, recollected in few words, but many see more clear and further than one alone. Must it not then necessarily come to pass, that if the king as some have been be infected with lunacy, either continually, or by intervals, that the whole state fall inevitably to ruin? And to the end that we think not this strange, let us hear what God Himself says when He prescribes a law to kings: That they lift not their heart above their brethren from amongst whom they were chosen. Also king David was not ashamed to call his subjects his brethren. His lieutenants, that subjects ought rather to be held in obedience by love, than by fear. But, lest they should except against me, as if I sought to entrench too much upon the royal authority, I verily believe it is so much the greater, by how much it is likely to be of longer continuance. Whereas, on the contrary, the subjects of good kings are ever as solicitously careful of their safety, as of their own welfare. After that Saul was established king, the royal law was given him, according to which he ought to govern. David made a covenant in Hebron before the Lord, that is to say, taking God for witness, with all the ancients of Israel, who represented the whole body of the people, and even then he was made king. In this assembly

was the creating of the king determined of, for it was the people who made the king, and not the king the people. It is certain, then, that the people by way or stipulation require a performance of covenants. The king promises it. Now the condition of a stipulator is in terms of law more worthy than of a promiser. The people ask the king, whether he will govern justly and according to the laws? He promises he will. The king therefore promises simply and absolutely, the people upon condition: In the first covenant or contract there is only an obligation to piety: In that, the king promises to serve God religiously: This has been always practiced in all well-governed estates. I would ask here, wherefore a man does swear, if it be not to declare that what he delivers he sincerely intends from his heart? Furthermore, what is the reason the king swears first, and at the instance, and required by the people, but to accept a condition either tacit or expressed? Wherefore is there a condition opposed to the contract, if it be not that in failing to perform the condition, the contract, according to law, remains void? And what if all these ceremonies, solemn oaths, nay, sacramental promises, had never been taken? Does not nature herself sufficiently teach that kings were on this condition ordained by the people, that they should govern well: But what if a people you will reply subdued by force, be compelled by the king to take an oath of servitude? There is, therefore, a mutual obligation between the king and the people, which, whether it be civil or natural only, whether tacit or expressed in words, it cannot by any means be annihilated, or by any law be abrogated, much less by force made void. And this obligation is of such power that the prince who willfully violates it, is a tyrant. And the people who purposely break it, may be justly termed seditious.

4: Defense of Liberty Against Tyrants - Exodus Books

The Defense of Liberty The American Revolution was a war over taxation, lawful authority, and the traditional rights of Englishmen. When the British Parliament passed the Stamp Act (), it sought to impose on the American Colonies an authority the Colonies did not recognize.

Our Authority depending on the Authority of the Laws, and in very Deed to submit the Principality to Law, is a greater thing than to bear Rule. We therefore make it known unto all Men, by the Declaration of this our Edict, that We do not allow Ourselves, or repute it Lawful, to do anything contrary to this. For he made no Laws for Others, to the Obedience whereof he did not first submit Himself: Fashioning the People to obey willingly, and the Prince to Govern uprightly. This question happily may seem at the first view to be altogether superfluous and unprofitable, for that it seems to make a doubt of an axiom always held infallible amongst Christians, confirmed by many testimonies in Holy Scripture, divers examples of the histories of all ages, and by the death of all the holy martyrs. For it may be well demanded wherefore Christians have endured so many afflictions, but that they were always persuaded that God must be obeyed simply and absolutely, and kings with this exception, that they command not that which is repugnant to the law of God. But for so much as there are many princes in these days, calling themselves Christians, which arrogantly assume an unlimited power, over which God himself hath no command, and that they have no want of flatterers, which adore them as gods upon earth, many others also, which for fear, or by constraint, either seem, or else do believe, that princes ought to be obeyed in all things, and by all men. And withal, seeing the unhappiness of these times is such, that there is nothing so firm, certain, or pure, which is not shaken, disgraced, or polluted; I fear me that whosoever shall nearly and thoroughly consider these things, will confess this question to be not only most profitable, but also, the times considered, most necessary. For my own part, when I consider the cause of the many calamities wherewith Christendom hath been afflicted for these late years, I cannot but remember that of the prophet Hosea, "the princes of Judah were like them that remove the bounds: Ephraim is oppressed, and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked after the commandments. The princes exceed their bounds, not contenting themselves with that authority which the almighty and all good God hath given them, but seek to usurp that sovereignty, which he hath reserved to himself over all men, being not content to command the bodies and goods of their subjects at their pleasure, but assume licence to themselves to enforce the consciences, which appertains chiefly to Jesus Christ. Holding the earth not great enough for their ambition, they will climb and conquer heaven itself. Now is there any man that sees not this, if a man disobey a prince commanding that which is wicked and unlawful, he shall presently be esteemed a rebel, a traitor, and guilty of high treason. Our Saviour Christ, the apostles and all the Christians of the primitive church were charged with these calumnies. If any, after the example of Ezra and Nehemiah, dispose himself to the building of the temple of the Lord, it will be said he aspires to the crown, hatches innovations, and seeks the ruin of the state. Then you shall presently see a million of these minions and flatterers of princes tickling their ears with an opinion, that if they once suffer this temple to be re-built, they may bid their kingdom farewell, and never look to raise impost or taxes on these men. But what a madness is this! There are no estates which ought to be esteemed firm and stable, but those in whom the temple of God is built, and which are indeed the temple itself, and these we may truly call kings, which reign with God, seeing that it is by him only that Kings reign: On the Contrary, what beastly foolishness it is to think that the state and kingdom cannot subsist if God Almighty be not excluded, and his temple demolished. From hence proceeds so many tyrannous enterprises, unhappy and tragic death of kings, and ruins of people. It then belongs to princes to know how far they may extend their authority, and to subjects in what they may obey them, lest the one encroaching on that jurisdiction, which no way belongs to them, and the others obeying him which commandeth further than he ought, they be both chastised, when they shall give an account thereof before another judge. Now the end and scope of the question propounded, whereof the Holy Scripture shall principally give the resolution, is that which followeth. The question is, if subjects be bound to obey kings, in case they command that which is against the law of God: First, the Holy Scripture doth teach, that God reigns by his own proper authority, and kings by

derivation, God from himself, kings from God, that God hath a jurisdiction proper, kings are his delegates. It follows then, that the jurisdiction of God hath no limits, that of kings bounded, that the power of God is infinite, that of kings confined, that the kingdom of God extends itself to all places, that of kings is restrained within the confines of certain countries. In like manner God hath created of nothing both heaven and earth; wherefore by good right He is lord, and true proprietor, both of the one and the other. All the inhabitants of the earth hold of Him that which they have, and are but His tenants and farmers; all the princes and governors of the world are His stipendiaries and vassals, and are bound to take and acknowledge their investitures from Him. Briefly, God alone is the owner and lord, and all men of what degree or quality soever they be, are His servants, farmers, officers and vassals, and owe account and acknowledgment to Him, according to that which He hath committed to their dispensation; the higher their place is the greater their account must be, and according to the ranks whereunto God hath raised them, must they make their reckoning before His divine majesty, which the Holy Scriptures teacheth in infinite places, and all the faithful, yea, and the wisest among the heathen have ever acknowledged. And to the end that men should not sacrifice to their own industry; the earth yields no increase without the dew of heaven. Wherefore God commanded that His people should offer unto Him the first of their fruits, and the heathens themselves hath consecrated the same unto their gods; to the end, that God might be acknowledged lord, and they his grangers and vine dressers, the heaven is the throne of the Lord, and the earth His footstool. And, therefore, seeing all the kings of the world are under his feet, it is no marvel, if God be called the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; all kings be termed His ministers established to judge rightly, and govern justly the world in the quality of lieutenants. By me so saith the divine wisdom kings reign, and the princes judge the earth. If they do it not he looseth the bonds of kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle. As if he should say, it is in my power to establish kings in their thrones, or to thrust them out, and from that occasion the throne of kings is called the throne of God. Blessed be the Lord thy God saith the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon which delighted in thee to set thee on his throne to be king for the Lord thy God, to do judgment and justice. This was always known to those good kings, David, Solomon, Jehosaphat, and others who acknowledged God to be the Lord of their kingdoms and nations, and yet lost no privilege that justly belongs to real power; yea, they reigned much more happily in that they employed themselves cheerfully in the service of God, and in obedience to his commandments. Nebuchadnezar, although he was a heathen, and a mighty emperor, did yet at the end acknowledge this, for though Daniel called him the king of kings, to whom the King of Heaven had granted power and royal majesty above all others, yet, on the contrary said he, "Thy God, O Daniel, is truly the God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, giving kingdoms to whom He pleaseth," yea, to the most wretched of the world. For which cause Xenophon said at the coronation of Cyrus," let us sacrifice to God. At this day at the inaugurating of kings and Christian princes, they are called the servants of God, destined to govern his people. It may be that the flatterers of the court will reply, that God has resigned his power unto kings, reserving heaven for himself, and allowing the earth to them to reign, and govern there according to their own fancies; briefly that the great ones of the world hold a divided empire with God himself. Behold a discourse proper enough for that impudent villain Cleon the sycophant of Alexander, or for the poet Martial, which was not ashamed to call the edicts of Domitian, the ordinances of the Lord God. This discourse, I say, is worthy of that execrable Domitian who as Suetonius recites would be called God and Lord. But altogether unworthy of the ears of a Christian prince, and of the mouth of good subjects, that sentence of God Almighty must always remain irrevocably true, "I will not give My glory to any other," that is, no man shall have such absolute authority, but I will always remain Sovereign.

5: A Defense of Liberty Against Tyrants | Natural Law, Natural Rights, and American Constitutionalism

Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos (A Defense of Liberty Against Tyrants) is currently being sold for a slim buck. Lovers of liberty who also happen to have a Kindle reading device could hardly do better than to pick up this long-neglected treasure.

We have yet one other question to treat of, in the discussing whereof, there is more use of an equitable judgment than of a nimble apprehension; and if charity were but in any reasonable proportion prevalent amongst the men of this age, the disputation thereof was altogether frivolous; but, seeing nothing in these days is more rare, nor less esteemed than charity, we will speak somewhat of this our question. We have already sufficiently proved, that all tyrants, whether those who seek to captivate the minds and souls of the people with an erroneous and superstitious opinion in matter of religion, or, those who would enthral their bodies and estates with miserable servitude and excessive impositions, may justly by the people, be both suppressed and expelled? But, for so much as tyrants are for the most part so cunning, and subjects seldom so cautelous, that the disease is hardly known, or, at the least, not carefully observed before the remedy prove almost desperate, nor think of their own defence before they are brought to those straits, that they are unable to defend themselves, but compelled to implore the assistance of others: Our demand therefore is, if Christian princes lawfully may, and ought to succour those subjects who are afflicted for true religion, or oppressed by unjust servitude, and whose sufferings are either for the kingdom of Christ, or for the liberty of their own state? And in this manner the Romans, Alexander the Great, and divers others, pretending to suppress tyrants, have oftentimes enlarged their own limits. It is not long since we saw King Henry the Second make wars on the Emperor Charles the Fifth, under colour of defending and delivering the Protestant princes. But if there be some appearance of danger, and little expectance of profit, then it is that most princes do vehemently dispute the lawfulness of the action. Therefore, without leaning either to the one side or the other, let us follow those rules which piety and justice trace us out in matter of religion. First, all accord in this, that there is only one Church, whereof Jesus Christ is the head, the members whereof are so united and conjoined together, that if the least of them be offended or wronged, they all participate both in the harm and sorrow, as throughout Holy Scripture plainly appears: Now, it oftentimes happens, that the body is not only overthrown by a wound in the arm or thigh, but even also much endangered, yea, sometimes killed by a small hurt in the little finger. Vainly, therefore, does any man vaunt that this body is recommended to his care and custody, if he suffer that to be dismembered and pulled in pieces which he might have preserved whole and entire. The church is compared to an edifice: Would not all hold him for a madman who should neglect by countermining to frustrate a mine, because it was intended to overthrow that wall there, and not this here. Again, the church is resembled to a ship, which, as it sails together, so does it sink together; in so much that in a tempest, those who be in the fore-castle, or in the keel, are no more secure than those who remain at the stern or on the deck: He who has any sense of religion in his heart, ought no more to doubt whether he be obliged to aid the afflicted members of the church, than he would be assisting to himself in the like distress; for the union of the church unites us all into one body, and therefore every one in his calling must be ready to assist the needy, and so much the more willingly, by how much the Almighty has bestowed a greater portion of his blessings on us, which were not conferred that we should be made possessors of them, but that we should be dispensers thereof according to the necessity of his saints. As this church is one, so is she recommended and given in charge to all Christian princes in general, and to every one of them in particular; for so much as it was dangerous to leave the care to one alone, and the unity of it would not by any means permit that she should be divided into pieces and every portion assigned unto one particular; God has committed it all entire to particulars, and all the parts of it to all in general, not only to preserve and defend it, but also to amplify and increase it as much as might be. Insomuch that if a prince who has undertaken the care of a portion of the church, as that of Germany and England, and, notwithstanding neglect and forsake another part that is oppressed, and which he might succour, he doubtless abandons the church, Christ having but one only spouse, which the prince is so bound to preserve and defend, that she be not violated or corrupted in any part, if it be possible. And in the same manner, as

every private person is bound by his humble and ardent prayers to God, to desire the restoring of the church, so likewise are the magistrates tied diligently to procure the same, with the utmost of their power and means which God has put into their hands. Wherefore there was but one temple in Judea built by Solomon, which represented the unity of the church; and therefore ridiculous and worthy of punishment was that churchwarden, who had care only of some small part of the church, and suffered all the rest to be spoiled with rain and weather. In like manner, all Christian kings, when they receive the sword on the day of their coronation, solemnly swear to maintain the catholic or universal church, and the ceremony then used cloth fully express it, for holding the sword in their hands, they turn to the east, west, north, and south, and brandish it, to the end that it may be known that no part of the world is excepted. As by this ceremony they assume the protection of the church, it must be questionless understood of the true church, and not of the false; therefore ought they to employ the utmost of their ability to reform, and wholly to restore that which they hold to be the pure and truly Christian church, to wit, ordered and governed according to the direction of the Word of God. That this was the practice of godly princes, we have their examples to instruct us. In the time of Ezechias, King of Judah, the kingdom of Israel had been a long time before in subjection to the Assyrians, to wit, ever since the King Hosea, his time; and therefore if the church of Judah only, and not the whole universal church had been committed to the custody of Ezechias; and if in the preservation of the church, the same course were to be held, as in the dividing of lands, and imposing of tributes, then questionably Ezechias would have contained himself within his own limits, especially then when the exorbitant power of the Assyrians forded it everywhere. Now, we read that he sent express messengers throughout Israel, to wit, to the subjects of the King of Assyria, to invite them to come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Paschal Feast; yea, and he aided the faithful Israelites of the tribes of Ephraim and Manasses, and others the subjects of the Assyrians, to ruin the high places which were in their quarters. We read also, that the good king Josias expelled idolatry, not only out of his own kingdom, but also even out of the kingdom of Israel, which was then wholly in subjection to the King of Assyria, and no marvel, for where the glory of God and the kingdom of Christ are in question, there no bounds or limits can confine the zeal and fervent affection of pious and godly princes. Though the opposition be great, and the power of the opposers greater, yet the more they fear God, the less they will fear men. These generous examples of divers godly princes, have since been imitated by sundry Christian kings, by whose means the church which was heretofore restrained within the narrow limits of Palestine has since been dilated throughout the universal world. Constantine and Licinius governed the empire together, the one in the Orient, the other in the Occident. They were associates of equal power and authority. And amongst equals, as the proverb is, "There is no command. Constans favoured the orthodox Christians, Constantus, being the elder, leaned to the Arrians, and for that cause banished the learned Athanasius from Alexandria; the greatest professed adversary of the Arrians. Certainly, if any consideration in matter of confines be absolutely requisite, it must needs be amongst brethren; and notwithstanding, Constans threatened to war on his brother if he restore not Athanasius, and had without doubt performed it, if the other had long deferred the accomplishment of his desire. And if he proceeded so far for the restitution of one bishop, had it not been much more likely and reasonable for him to have assisted a good part of the people, if they implored his aid against the tyranny of those who refused them the exercise of their religion, under the authority of their magistrates and governors? But to what end were so many expeditions undertaken by Christian princes into the Holy Land against the Saracens? Wherefore were demanded and raised so many of those Saladine tenths? To what purpose were so many confederacies made, and crusades proclaimed against the Turks, if it were not lawful for Christian princes, yea, those furthest remote, to deliver the church of God from the oppression of tyrants, and to free captive Christians from under the yoke of bondage? What were the motives that led them to those wars? What were the reasons that urged them to undergo those dangers? For all men are bound to repulse common dangers with a joint and common opposition, all which have a natural consent and relation with this we now treat of. If this were lawful for them against Mahomet, and not only lawful, but that the backward and negligent were ever made liable to all infamous contempt, and the forward and ready undertakers always recompensed with all honourable respect and reward, according to the merit of their virtues; wherefore not now against the enemy of Christ and his saints? If it be a lawful war to fight against the

Greeks that I may use that phrase when they assail our Troy; wherefore is it unlawful to pursue and prevent that incendiary Sinon? Finally, if it have been esteemed an heroic act to deliver Christians from corporal servitude for the Turks enforce none in point of religion, is it not a thing yet much more noble to enfranchise and set at liberty souls imprisoned in the mists of error? These examples of so many religious princes, might well have the directive power of law. But let us hear what God Himself pronounces in many places of His Word by the mouth of His prophets, against those who advance not the building up of His church, or who make no reckoning of her afflictions. The Gadites, the Reubenites, and half the tribe of Manasses desire of Moses that he would allot them their portion on the other side of Jordan. Moses grants their request, but with this proviso and condition, that they should not only assist their other brethren the Israelites to conquer the land of Canaan; but also that they should march the first, and serve as vanguard to the rest, because they had their portions first set them forth, and if they fail to perform this duty, he with an anathema, destines them to destruction, and compares them to those who were adjudged rebels at Cadisbarnea. And what, says he, "your brethren shall fight, and you in the mean season rest quiet at home? He shews by this that those who God first blessed with so great a benefit, if they help not their brethren, if they make not themselves sharers in their labours, companions in their travels, and leaders in their dangers, they must questionless expect a heavy punishment to fall upon them. Likewise when under the conduct of Deborah, the Nephtalites and Zabulonites took arms against the tyrant Jabin; and that in the mean season the Reubenites, who should have been first in the field, took their ease and played on their pipes, whilst their flocks and herds fed at liberty; the Gadites held themselves secured with the rampire of the ever; the Danites gloried in their command at sea, and Ashur, to be brief, was confident in the difficult access of their mountains. The Spirit of the Lord speaking by the prophetess, does in express terms condemn them all: And therefore Uriah spoke religiously, and like a true patriarch, when he said: As thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing. As much may be said of the Israelites, who, seeing David overcome the difficulty of his affairs, and remain a peaceable king, say aloud, "We are thy flesh and thy bones. Briefly, who adore one and the same God the Father, acknowledge and avow themselves of the same household of faith, and profess to be one and the same body in Jesus Christ, and, notwithstanding, yield no succour nor assistance to their Saviour, afflicted in his members; what vengeance do you think will God inflict on such impiety? Moses compares those who abandon their brethren to the rebels of Cadisbarnea. Now, none of those by the decree of the Almighty, entered into the land of Canaan. Let not those then pretend any interest in the heavenly Canaan, who will not succour Christ when He is crucified, and suffering a thousand times a day in his members; and, as it were, begging their alms from door to door. The Son of God with his own mouth condemns them to everlasting fire, that when he was hungry gave Him no meat; when He was thirsty gave Him no drink; when He was a stranger, lodged Him not; naked, and clothed Him not; sick, and in prison, and visited Him not. No, certainly, the Jews hold Him as impostor, the Ethnicks a malefactor, the Turks an infidel, the others an heretic, insomuch as if we consider the intention of these men, as the censoring of all offences ought to have principal relation "hereunto, we cannot conclude that it is properly Christ that they persecute with such hatred, but some criminal person, who, in their opinion deserves this usage. But they do truly and properly persecute and crucify Christ Jesus, who profess to acknowledge Him for the Messiah, God and Redeemer of the world; and which, notwithstanding, fail to free Him from persecution and vexation in His members, when it is in their power to do it. Briefly, he who omits to deliver his neighbour from the hands of the murderer, when he sees him in evident danger of his life, is questionless guilty of the murder, as well as the murderer. For seeing he neglected when he had means to preserve his life, it must needs necessarily follow that he desired his death. And in all crimes the will and intendment ought principally to be regarded. But questionless, these Christian princes, who do not relieve and assist the true professors, who suffer for true religion, are much more guilty of murder than any other, because they might deliver from danger an infinite number of people, who for want of timely succour, suffer death and torments under the cruel hands of their persecutors. Nay, I say further, These forsakers of their brethren in their time of danger and distress, are more vile, and more to be abhorred than the tyrants themselves who persecute them. For it is much more wicked, and worthy of greater punishment, to kill an honest man who is innocent and fearing God as those who consent with them in the faith, must of necessity know the true

professors to be, than a thief, an impostor, a magician, or an heretic, as those who persecute the true Christians do commonly believe them to be. It is a greater offence by many degrees to strive with God, than man. Briefly, in one and the same action it is a much more grievous crime, perfidiously to betray, than ignorantly to offend. But may the same also be said of them who refuse to assist those who are oppressed by tyranny, or defend the liberty of the commonwealth against the oppression of tyrants? For in this case the conjunction or confederacy seems not to be of so strict a condition between the one and the other; here we speak of the commonwealth diversely governed according to the customs of the countries, and particularly recommended to these here, or those there; and not of the church of God, which is composed of all, and recommended to all in general, and to every one in particular. The Jew says, our Saviour Christ is not only neighbour to the Jew, but also to the Samaritan, and to every other man. But we ought to love our neighbour as ourselves; and therefore an Israelite is not only bound to deliver an Israelite from the hands of thieves, if it be in his power, but every stranger also; yea, though unknown, if he will rightly discharge his duty. Neither let him dispute whether it be lawful to defend another, who believes he may justly defend himself. Furthermore, the heathens themselves may teach us what humane society, and what the law of nature requires of us in this business; wherefore Cicero says, "That nature being the common mother of mankind, prescribes and ordains, that every man endeavour and procure the good of another, whatsoever he be, only because he is a man; otherwise all bonds of society, yea, and mankind itself, must needs go to ruin. So also are there two sorts of injustice; the first, in those who offer injury to their neighbours; the second, in them who, when they have means to deliver the oppressed, do, notwithstanding, suffer them to sink under the burden of their wrongs. For whosoever does wrong to another, either moved "hereunto by anger, or any other passion, he may in a sort be truly said to lay violent hands on his companion; but he that hath means, and defends not the afflicted, or to his power, wards not the blows that are struck at him, is as much faulty, as if he forsook his parents, or his friends, or his country in their distress. That which was done by the first may well be attributed to choler which is a short madness; the fault committed by the other discovers a bad mind and a wicked purpose, which are the perpetual tormentors and tyrants of the conscience. The fury of the first may be in some sort excused, but the malice of the second admits no colour of defence. Peradventure you will say, I fear in aiding the one I shall do wrong to the other. And I answer, you seek a cloak of justice wherewith to cover your base remissness. And, if you lay your hand on your heart, you will presently confess, that it is somewhat else, and not justice, that withholds you from performing your duty. For, as the same Cicero says in another place, "Either thou wilt not make the wrongdoer shine enemy, or not take pains, or not be at so much charge, or else negligence, sloth or the hindering of shine own occasions, or the crossing of other purposes, takes thee off from the defence of those who otherwise thou art bound to relieve. Now in saying thou only attend shine own affairs, fearing to wrong another, thou fallest into another kind of injustice: From hence also proceeds, that the Roman law designs punishment to that neighbour who will not deliver the slave from the outrageous fury of his master. Amongst the Egyptians, if any man had seen another assailed and distressed by thieves and robbers, and did not according to his power presently aid him, he was adjudged worthy of death, if at the least he discovered or delivered not the delinquents into the hand of the magistrate. If he were negligent in performing this duty for the first mulct, he was to receive a certain number of blows on his body, and to fast for three days together. If the neighbour be so firmly obliged in this mutual duty of succour to his neighbour, yea, to an unknown person in case he be assailed by thieves: And, if he carelessly or wilfully omit this duty, deserves he not himself to be esteemed a tyrant, and punished accordingly, as well as the other a robber, who neglected to assist his neighbour in that danger? Thucydides upon this matter says, "That those are not only tyrants which make other men slaves, but much more those who, having means to suppress and prevent such oppression, take no care to perform it"; and amongst others, those who assumed the title of protectors of Greece, and defenders of the country, and yet stir not to deliver their country from oppression of strangers. And truly indeed; for a tyrant is in some sort compelled to hold a straight and tyrannous hand over those who, by violence and tyranny, he hath constrained to obey him, because, as Tiberius said, "he holds the wolf by the ears, whom he can neither hold without pain and force, nor let go without danger and death. But the prince who, with a negligent and idle regard, looks on the outrageousness of a tyrant, and the massacring of innocents

that he might have preserved, like the barbarous spectacles of the Roman sword-plays is so much more guilty than the tyrant himself, by how much the cruel and homicidious directors and appointers of these bloody sports were more justly punishable by all good laws than the poor and constrained actors in those murdering tragedies. And as he questionless deserves greater punishment who, out of insolent jollity, murders one, than he who unwillingly for fear of a further harm kills a man; if any object that is it against reason and good order to meddle in the affairs of another, I answer with the old man in Terence "I am a man, and I believe that all duties of humanity are fit and convenient for me. I will not say that after the manner of those arbitrators whom Cicero speaks of, thou adjudge the things in controversy to thyself. But I require that you repress the prince who invades the kingdom of Christ, that you contain the tyrant within his own limits, that you stretch forth your hand of compassion to the people afflicted, that you raise up the commonwealth lying grovelling on the ground, and that you so carry yourself in the ordering and managing of this, that all men may see your principal aim and end was the public benefit of human society, and not any private profit or advantage of your own. For seeing that justice respects only the public, and that which is without, and injustice fixes a man wholly on himself, it doubtless becomes a man truly honest to dispose his actions, that every private interest give place, and yield to public commodity. And if he neglect or omit his duty herein, he shews himself a wicked and unworthy magistrate. If a prince tyrannize over the people, a neighbour prince ought to yield succour as freely and willingly to the people, as he would do to the prince his brother if the people mutinied against him: If Porsenna brought Tarquinius Superbus back to Rome, much more justly might Constantine, requested by the senate, and Roman people, expel Maxentius the tyrant from Rome. Briefly, if man become a wolf to man, who hinders that man according to the proverb, may not be instead of God to the needy?

6: Vindiciae contra tyrannos - Wikipedia

a defence of liberty against tyrants THE FIRST QUESTION Whether subjects are bound and ought to obey princes, if they command that which is against the law of God.

It was published by Valckenier in the year in the city of Amsterdam. Reported by Erik Geleyns - Short - Title Catalogue Netherlands STCN Newton Key reported that Vindiciae Contra Tyrannos was among the books to be burned for the proposition "That if lawful governors become tyrants, or govern otherwise than by the laws of God and man [as] they ought to do, they forfeit the right they had unto their government. At first, the answer to this question may seem to be obvious, for it seems to question an axiom held by all Christians, confirmed in many places in Holy Scripture, various examples throughout history, and by the deaths of all the holy martyrs. Otherwise, why should the apostles have answered that God must rather be obeyed than men? But there are many rulers in these days who call themselves "Christian", who arrogantly assume that their power is limited by no one, not even by God, and they surround themselves with flatterers who adore them as gods upon earth. Not to mention the many others who, out of fear or constraint, either believe, or appear to believe, that rulers ought to be obeyed in all things, and by all men. Therefore, seeing the unhappiness of these times is such that there is nothing so firm, certain, or pure, that it is not shaken, disgraced, or polluted, that anyone who shall thoroughly consider these things will admit that this question is not only most profitable, but also most necessary. For my own part, when I consider the cause of the many calamities that have afflicted Christendom lately, I am reminded of the words of the prophet Hosea: On them I will pour out my wrath like water. Ephraim is oppressed, crushed in judgment, because he was determined to follow the commandments of men. The rulers exceed their authority, not being content with that authority which the almighty and all good God has given them, but seek to usurp that sovereignty which He has reserved to Himself over all men. And not being content with absolute power over the lives and property of their subjects, these tyrants seize for themselves the right to rule over their consciences as well, over which the authority belongs to Jesus Christ alone. Holding the earth not great enough for their ambition, they want to climb and conquer heaven itself. The people, on the other hand, follow the commandments of men when they yield to these rulers who command that which is against the law of God. Thus, the people burn incense and adore these earthly gods and, instead of resisting them if they are able, they instead permit them to usurp the place of God, apparently untroubled by their giving to Caesar that which belongs properly to God. Everyone knows that if a man disobeys a prince who commands that which is wicked and unlawful, he shall immediately be accused of being a rebel, a traitor, and guilty of high treason. Our Savior Christ, the apostles, and all the Christians of the early church were accused with these false charges. If any man, following the example of Ezra and Nehemiah, set himself the task of rebuilding the temple of the Lord, it will be said he aspires to the crown, hatches innovations, and seeks the ruin of the state. Then you shall presently see a million of these minions and flatterers of the rulers tickling their ears with the opinion, that if they once permit this temple to be rebuilt, they will lose their kingdom, and never be able to impose levies or taxes on these men. But this is madness! There are no rulers which ought to be considered as firm and stable, except for those in whom the temple of God is built, and which are indeed the temple itself. These we may truly call Kings. For they reign with God, seeing that it is by Him only that kings reign. On the contrary, what beastly foolishness it is to think that the state and kingdom can be maintained if God Almighty is excluded, and His temple demolished. From this view comes so many tyrannous enterprises, unhappy and tragic deaths of kings, and ruinations of people. If these sycophants knew what difference there is between God and Caesar, between the King of Kings and a simple king, between the lord and the vassal, and what tributes this Lord requires of His subjects, and what authority he gives to kings over those his subjects, certainly so many rulers would not strive to trouble the kingdom of God. And we should not see some of them cast down from their thrones by the just instigation of the Almighty, revenging himself of them, in the midst of their greatest strength, and the people should not be sacked and pillaged and trodden down. Accordingly, rulers need to know how far they are permitted to extend their authority over their subjects, and their subjects need to know in what ways they are to obey, lest should

the one encroach on that jurisdiction, which no way belongs to them, and the others obey him which commands further than he ought, they be both chastised when they shall give an account of themselves before another Judge. Now the end and scope of this question in which the Holy Scripture shall principally give the resolution, is that which follows. The question is, whether subjects are bound to obey kings, in case they command that which is against the law of God: When the question is resolved concerning the king, to whom is attributed the fullest power, the question concerning other magistrates will be also determined. First, the Holy Scripture teach that God reigns by His own proper authority, and kings rule by derivation, God from Himself, kings from God. God has a jurisdiction proper and kings are his delegates. It follows then that the jurisdiction of God has no limits, but that of kings is finite, that the power of God is infinite, but that of kings is confined, that the kingdom of God extends itself to all places, but that of kings is restrained within the confines of certain countries. In like manner God has created out of nothing both heaven and earth, therefore, by good right He is lord and master of both. All the inhabitants of the earth have received from Him everything they have, and are, essentially, His tenants and lease-holders. All the rulers and governors of the world are but His hirelings and vassals, and are obligated to take and acknowledge their investitures from Him. God alone is the owner and lord, and all men, whatever their station in life, are His tenants, agents, officers and vassals. All without exception owe fealty to Him, according to that which He has committed to their dispensation. The higher their place is, the greater their responsibility to God must be, and according to the rank where God has raised them, must they make their reckoning before His divine majesty. This is what the Holy Scriptures teach in innumerable places, and all the faithful and even the wisest heathens have ever acknowledged: And to the end that men should not falsely worship their own labor and enterprise, the earth yields no increase without the dew of heaven. This is why God commanded that His people should offer to Him the first of their fruits, and the heathens themselves have consecrated the same to their gods, that is, that God might be acknowledged lord, and they his farmers and field workers. The heaven is the throne of the Lord, and the earth His footstool. And, therefore, since all the kings of the world are under His feet, it is no marvel, if God be called the King of Kings and Lord of Lords; all kings he termed His ministers established to judge rightly, and govern justly the world in the quality of lieutenants. By me says the divine wisdom kings reign, and the princes judge the earth. If they do it not "He takes off the shackles put on by kings and ties a loincloth around their waist" Job As if He should say, it is in my power to establish kings in their thrones, or to thrust them out, and for that reason, the throne of kings is called the throne of God. As the Queen of Sheba said to King Solomon: This is the title given to David, to Solomon, to Hezekiah and to other good rulers. When also the covenant is passed between God and the king, it is upon condition that the people are, and remain always, the people of God. This shows that God will not in any case despoil himself of His property and possession, when He gives to kings the government of the people, but establish them to take charge of, and treat them well. Just as he who makes choice of a shepherd to look to his flocks, he remains still master and owner of them. This was always known to those good kings, David, Solomon, Jehosaphat, and others who acknowledged God to be the Lord of their kingdoms and nations, and yet lost no privilege that justly belongs to real power. They even reigned much more happily in that they employed themselves cheerfully in the service of God, and in obedience to his commandments. Nehuchadnezar, although he was a heathen, and a mighty emperor, did yet at the end acknowledge this, for though Daniel called him the king of kings, to whom the King of Heaven had granted power and royal majesty above all others, yet, on the contrary said he , "Thy God, O Daniel, is truly the God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, giving kingdoms to whom He pleases," even to the most wretched of the world. For which cause Xenophon said at the coronation of Cyrus, "let us sacrifice to God. At this day at the inaugurating of kings and Christian rulers, they are called the servants of God, destined to govern his people. It may be that the court flatterers will reply that God has given earthy dominion to kings, reserving heaven for himself, and allowing the earth to them to reign, and govern there according to their own fancies. In short, that the kings of the world divide an empire between them and with God Himself. Consider an argument proper enough for that impudent villain Cleon, who was the sycophant of Alexander, or for the poet Martial, which was not ashamed to call the edicts of Domitian the ordinances of the Lord God. This argument, I say, is worthy of that execrable Domitian who as Suetonius recites thought of himself as God and Lord. But it is one

that is altogether unworthy of the ears of a Christian ruler, and of the mouth of good subjects. For this sentence of God Almighty must always remain irrevocably true, "I will not give My glory to any other. God does not at any time divest himself of his power. He holds a sceptre in one hand to repress and quell the arrogance of those rulers who mutiny against him, and in the other, a balance to control those who do not administer justice with equity as they ought. There cannot be expressed more certain marks of sovereign command. And if the emperor, in creating a king, reserves always to himself the imperial sovereignty, or a king, as in France, in granting the government or possession of a province to a stranger or if it be to his brother or son, reserves always to himself legal appeals, and the knowledge of such things as are the marks of royalty and sovereignty, which are always understood to be excepted from the grant, although they were not specified in the grant of investiture and fealty promised; with much more reason should God have sovereign power and command over all kings as they are his servants and officers. Accordingly, we read, in so many places of Scripture, that he will call them to an account, and punish them, if they do not faithfully discharge their duties. Therefore all kings are the vassals of the King of Kings, invested into their office by the sword, which is the recognition of their royal authority, to the end that with the sword they maintain the law of God, defend good, and punish evil. This is even as we commonly see, that he who is a sovereign lord grants his vassals possession of their landed estates by girding them with a sword, delivering them a buckler and a standard, with the condition that they shall fight for them with those arms if the occasion arises. Now if we consider what is the duty of vassals, we shall find that what may be said of them applies also to kings. The vassal receives land from his lord with right of justice, and obligation to serve him in his wars. The king is established by the Lord God, the King of Kings, to the end he should administer justice to his people and defend them against all their enemies. The vassal receives laws and conditions from his sovereign. God commands the king to observe His laws and to have them always before his eyes, promising that he and his successors shall long possess the kingdom, if they be obedient, and that their reign will be short if they prove rebellious to their sovereign king. The vassal obliges himself by oath onto his lord, and swears that he will be faithful and obedient. In like manner the king promises solemnly to command, according to the explicit law of God. Briefly, the vassal loses his estate if he rebels, and by law forfeits all his privileges. Likewise the king loses his right, and many times his realm also, if he despise God, if he plots with his enemies, and if he rebels against that Royal Majesty. This will seem more obvious by the consideration of the covenant which is contracted between God and the king, for God does that honor to His servants to call them His confederates. Now we read of two sorts of covenants at the inaugurating of kings, the first between God, the king, and the people, that the people might be the people of God. The second, between the king and the people, that the people shall obey faithfully, and the king command justly. The latter we will treat later, and now speak of the former. In like manner we read that Josiah and all the people entered into covenants with the Lord. We may gather from these testimonies, that in making these covenants the high priest did explicitly covenant in the name of God, that the king and the people should undertake to insure that God might be served purely, and according to His will, throughout the whole kingdom of Judah, that the king should so reign that the people were permitted to serve God, and held in obedience to his law. Thus the people should so obey the king, as their obedience should have principal relation to God. It appears by this that the king and the people are jointly bound by promise, and did oblige themselves by solemn oath to serve God before all things. And indeed presently after they had sworn the covenant, Josiah and Jehoida ruined the idolatry of Baal and re-established the pure service of God. The principal points of the covenants were chiefly these: That the king himself, and all the people should be careful to honor and serve God according to His will revealed in His word, which, if they performed, God would assist and preserve their estates. If not, He would abandon and exterminate them, which plainly appears by the comparing of various passages of Holy Writ. Moses, somewhat before his death, proclaims these conditions of covenant to all the people, and at the same time commands that the law, which are those precepts given by the Lord, should be kept in the ark of the covenant. After the death of Moses, Joshua was established captain and conductor of the people of God, and as the Lord himself admonished, if he would have happy success in his affairs, he should not in any way estrange himself from the law. Summarily, he assures them all prosperity, if they observe the law. As otherwise, he declared outright that in doing the contrary they should be utterly ruined. Also at all

such times as they left the service of God, they were delivered into the hands of the Canaanites and reduced into slavery under their tyranny. Now this covenant between God and the people in the times of the judges, had vigor also in the times of the kings, and was treated with them. After that Saul had been anointed, chosen, and wholly established as king, Samuel speaks unto the people in these terms:

7: Vindiciae contra tyrannos

Vindiciae contra tyrannos, a defence of liberty against tyrants, or, Of the lawful power of the prince over the people, and of the people over the prince being a treatise / written in Latin and French by Junius Brutus [pseud.].

8: A DEFENCE OF LIBERTY AGAINST TYRANTS

A Defence of Liberty against Tyrants, or "Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos" (): Sixteenth-Century Calvinist Resistance Theory
Vindiciae, Contra Tyrannos was an infamous French Calvinist (or Huguenot) work of resistance theory published in during the period of that nation's Wars of Religion.

Puerperium and lactation D. Keith Edmonds Mechanical measuring instruments list file Practicing safer spirituality : changing the subject and focusing on justice Marvin M. Ellison Earnings Magic and the Unbalance Sheet A shadow of gulls The crucible script On some faraway beach Second Stage Advanced Model Rocketry Community Practice in the Network Society Thomas Merton My Brother Three civilizations, two cultures, one state Catia v5 macro programming with visual basic script Mover of men and mountains Sleekgeek reboot success guide Good News Bible-TEV The Child Stalker Faux Finish Secrets Properties of successive sample moment estimators Jews in the Roman world From sin to insanity Dnd 5e dungeon masters guide Integrated disaster risk and environmental health monitoring: greater Accra metropolitan area, Ghana Jaco The Skinner Family 78 Ncert 12 maths Serious mental illness and the family Penetration testing with raspberry pi second edition Ecosystem stability I: introduction and case studies Restoring the diaspora Grade 12 business studies textbook Chicago Luxury Home Condo Genealogy of the Lord family The three royal monkeys, Walter de la Mare On the excluded middle in Penthesilea Triumph and tragedy in Travancore Functioning of democracy in Pakistan Mohammad Waseem Mundane Astrology, The Astrology of Nations and States X-ray spectrochemical analysis Children for the Union From tradition to the silence of God Bombay rains, Bombay girls