A ONE-PAGE SHEET

The Prince

Niccolò Machiavelli

AD 1513 (PUB. 1532) · W. K. MARRIOTT, 1908

> *"It may be answered that one should wish to be both, but, because it is difficult to unite them in one person, it is much safer to be feared than loved, when, of the two, either must be dispensed with."*
>
> CHAPTER XVII · W. K. MARRIOTT, 1908

A handbook for keeping power

Machiavelli writes about how principalities are gained, held, and lost. He claims to look at what is done, not only at what good men have imagined a ruler should be.

Arms of your own

A prince, he says, should rest on his own troops and his own ability. Hired or borrowed arms are weak supports, because they serve their own interest first.

Fortune and ability

He distinguishes luck from the skill and energy by which a man meets luck. Fortune is like a river: it can flood, but dikes and foresight can limit the ruin.

Feared and lo

He would like a p
choose, he judges
turn into hatred.

The lion and

A ruler, in this ad
because laws alon
always play fair.

The appearan

It is useful, he wr
also writes that a
keeping the state

Where it goes wrong

Machiavelli measures success by keeping power, not by justice before God. The appearance of virtue is not virtue, and a ruler is not exempt from the moral law. Read t
statecraft, and judge it; do not take “safer to be feared” as a rule of Christian life.