



Lesson 1 - A Tale of Two Kingdoms

Lesson 2 - The Imperfect State

Lesson 3 - The Separation of Church and State

Lesson 4 - Our Messy Political World

- 1) **PSALM 146** - Why it is wiser to look to the church rather than the state for our security.

Review the differences between the church and the state.

The church	The state
Established by <i>the gospel</i>	Established by <i>the sword</i>
Governed by <i>God's Word</i>	Governed by <i>human reason</i>
The church will last <i>forever</i>	Kingdoms of this world will <i>fall</i>
God's people distinguish themselves by <i>humble service</i>	The rulers of this world seek <i>their own glory</i>
The church moves <i>faith</i>	The state moves <i>by sight</i>

++ Let's Talk ++

- 2) Identify times in the history of the church when God has used the governments of this world to benefit his church, and then
Why must we be cautious about identifying current events as divine interventions?
- 3) How might you address the following conflicts in the life of a Christian who has citizenship in both of these kingdoms?
- ✓ We become involved in a political discussion and want to witness to our unbelieving friends.
 - ✓ Increasingly in our culture, we as Christians are defined by what we are against and not what we are for.
 - ✓ We are frustrated because the state does not reflect our Christian values.

- ✓ Imagine that a friend suggests the church should mobilize to get conservative Supreme Court judges approved in order to overturn *Roe v. Wade* (or choose the social/moral issue of your choice). How would you respond?
- 4) The state, which God has instituted, has a dual personality. The state does good work when it protects and provides for its citizens, but the state is an ally of Satan when it works to destroy the faith of God's people. How do the following passages describe the state as an agent of God or an agent of evil?
- **Acts 22:22-29 and Philippians 1:12-18**
 - **Luke 2:1-7 and Matthew 2:13-18**
 - **Ezra 1:1-11 and Daniel 3:1-12**
- ✓ How was God's agenda (that is, his desire to save us) evident even when governments persecuted the church? Give examples.
 - ✓ Can you think of examples of the same in recent history?
- 5) **Read Acts 4:16-20.** These verses clearly show us that when the state tells us to do wrong or forbids us to proclaim the gospel, we ought to obey God rather than man. Discuss which of the following would fall under that category.
- ✓ In your role as a public-school teacher, you are required to teach evolution. Can you do this, or should you refuse?
 - ✓ The state might say you must offer your services (like baking a wedding cake) to people regardless of their lifestyles or sexual identification. Can you do this, **or** should you refuse?
 - ✓ Your local parent-teacher organization wants your public school to begin its day with prayer. On which side of the fence would you fall?
 - ✓ You are an official in the government office charged with issuing wedding licenses. A gay couple comes to you for a license. Should you oblige or refuse to provide the license?
- 6) The book of Daniel gives us excellent examples of how God's people act when their government oppresses them or forces them to act against their consciences. In each story, tell what the faithful did not do and what they did do.
- **Daniel 1**
 - **Daniel 3**
 - **Daniel 6**
- ✓ Is the United States a Christian nation? Explain.

- ✓ There is a deep divide in our political discourse today. We are subjected to false information, exaggerations, and angry rhetoric. What will guide a Christian's actions and speech in regard to political discourse?