

The Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms

Lesson 7-Some practical considerations

“While Scripture has significant things to say about all of our cultural endeavors, it does not tell us everything about any of them...God therefore leaves much to the wisdom and discretion of Christians as they make their way in the common kingdom and interact with unbelieving colleagues...We should be modest about claiming our own decisions and views about such things as the Christian view.”

“Here then is the one way in which cultural activity should be uniquely Christian: even in their most ordinary and mundane tasks, Christians must act from faith, in accord with God’s law, and for God’s glory.”

“Christians must think critically about the claims and activities of unbelievers (and believers) in the common kingdom, for the sinful mind and heart continually seek ways to pervert truth and morality. Scripture is crucial for this critical thinking, serving as the lens through which we most clearly recognize sin and corruption.” - VanDrunnen

Education

When thinking about education we must remember there are two branches of education: that which deals with _____ revelation and that which deals with _____ revelation. Christians must acknowledge that unbelievers can and have made significant contributions in the realm of education. However, Christians must acknowledge that sin is pervasive in all of life and must exercise wisdom when thinking about educational options.

“Each field of learning explores some aspect of the created order, and thus the very first thing taught in Scripture, that God has created all things, pertains generally to all academic inquiry.”

“The discipline of theology, whose primary purpose it to interpret and communicate the Scriptures, is under the primary jurisdiction of the church...Since the church is to proclaim all that the Scriptures say, then the church should teach something (directly or indirectly) about every discipline...The obligation of the church to proclaim only what the Scriptures say, and no more, means that the church and her ministers have no authority from Christ to teach the technical details of the nontheological disciplines.”

“Parents have primary authority for educating their children in the nontheological academic principles, but only secondary jurisdiction for educating them about theology...even parents have no authority to preach the Word or to administer the sacraments, which are God’s specially ordained ways to make His people grow in grace.”

“Since sin is pervasive in human nature, sin will be pervasive in human activities. Yet while Christians are in fundamental conflict with unbelievers in regard to their basic presuppositions about God and the world, they find that they can often cooperate with them on a great many things when it comes to the narrower and technical aspects of their work.”

“Where to educate our children is a decision that must be left to the liberty of each Christian family and whatever decision they make they must be vigilant about their children’s education and attentive to the shortcomings of every educational option.”

Vocation

Does the Bible say anything about our work? What does it mean to do work in a Christian way? The Bible does give us _____ details about how we are to approach the issue of work.

“Productive labor is ordained by God and inherently dignified...all work that is lawful and beneficial has His blessing.”

“Many authors speak about Christian’s vocation as ‘holy’ and ‘sacred’ and claim that God ‘redeems’ it. But while Christians themselves are holy and redeemed, as citizens of the redemptive kingdom, their daily vocations are not.”

“Unbelievers may have all sorts of motivations for pursuing their vocations, but Christians are to pursue theirs ‘in Christ’. Their work should reflect their faith in Him and should be dedicated to His glory.”

“The church has authority to teach all that the Scripture teaches but nothing beyond, and in extrabiblical matters Christians must exercise their own wisdom to make God-pleasing decisions.

“As vocations to which Christians and non-Christians alike are called in the common kingdom, their objective ethics are determined by the moral demands binding all people under the Noahic covenant. Honesty, industriousness, and justice in the workplace are ‘Christian’ obligations in the Christians are obliged to pursue them, but they are not uniquely Christian, since the same demands oblige non-Christians.”

Politics

Few issues get people as worked up as politics. The doctrine of the two-kingdoms helps us to realize the _____ of politics and at the same time to see the _____ and earthly nature of politics.

“Politics is a matter of the common kingdom...Christians must strive to neither deny the importance of politics-since it has a great bearing on justice, peace, and prosperity in the world-nor to exalt politics as a means of ushering in the redemptive kingdom of heaven. The latter extreme is probably the greater temptation for most believers.”

We are given 5 truths from Scripture that pertain to a Christian and politics:

1. The civil magistrate has been _____ by God
2. These magistrates are primarily responsible for keeping order and enforcing _____
3. Believers are obligated to _____ to them, pay them honor, pay their taxes, and pray for them
4. Christians may _____ in politics even when the governments are not “Christian”
5. The state’s authority is _____