

Luther's Legacy for Laity
Disc 2: Dr. David Lose
Academic Dean
The Marbury E. Anderson Chair in Biblical Preaching
Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, MN

This study guide will follow the 8 parts of Dr. Lose's DVD. Each part will include a brief summary, a list of Biblical passages (if any were referenced) and questions for discussion. Key glossary terms will be listed at the end of each section.

Part 5: Two Kingdoms Part 1

Summary:

After baptism comes life! Luther uses Law and Gospel to help us know what it means to live the Christian life now that we know we are God's children. Luther divides up all of life into two kingdoms/realms. The first dimension is the kingdom on the right, which has to do with all things spiritual/eternal, such as our relationship to God and our identity as children of God. The other dimension is the kingdom on the left, which has to do with all things that are temporary, such as our relationships to each other and our responsibility to God's creation.

God has created institutions to help us in each of these two arenas of our lives. The church is the primary institution in the kingdom on the right. In worship and in education we should expect to hear about our relationship with God. The family (private lives) and the government (public lives) are the primary institutions in the kingdom on the left. All three of these institutions were ordained by God.

Luther was not a proponent of the separation of church and state. Rather he wanted to make a clear distinction between them. Yet they do influence each other. The family and government work together to create peace in the world. The church is called to pray for and support the work of government and families as well as call them to account when they aren't fulfilling their God given purpose. Luther was not an advocate of the complete separation of church and state. They support each other and correct each other.

Luther said that if it is up to the government to proclaim the Gospel, then we are all going to go to hell. However if it is left up to the church to run the world, then we are surely all going to go to hell. Both sides are God's gift to God's people and God's world.

Biblical References:

(none)

Confessional References:

Explanation of the Fourth Commandment in the Large Catechism, Pages 400ff.

Questions for Discussion:

1. Dr. Lose said, "We baptize children in case they live." What did he mean by that?

2. Should there be a solid line, dotted line or no line between the two kingdoms?
How would you draw the relationship between the two kingdoms?
3. Why should the decrease in the quality of our family life cause us concern for the stability of our world?
4. What does Luther mean when he says, “Government is parents writ large.”?
5. How do you feel about the role of Lutheran Services in America or Lutheran Social Services?

Glossary:

Two Kingdoms – For Luther, this described the two arenas in which the Christian lives, and where God is active. One has to do with all things spiritual (domain of the Gospel), the other with all things temporal (domain of the law).

Government – Luther had a much broader understanding of government than we do. For Luther, it included mass transit, commerce, education, and many other aspects of our public life in addition to the actual magistrates and judges of his day or the local, state and federal government of our day.