

Luther's Legacy for Laity
Disc 2: Dr. David Lose
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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 6: Two Kingdoms Part 2

Summary:

Luther puts a high premium on order, since he believed that churches can preach the Gospel, families can prosper and governments can function best during times of peace and order. During World War Two, the German Lutheran church turned a blind eye to the Nazi's demonizing the Jews because Hitler was able to establish order out of the chaos that was Germany after World War One. This turned the dotted line between the two kingdoms into a solid line. They gave up their role as God's tool to critique government when it is persecuting others. Only the Confessing Church of Germany were willing to challenge the Nazis.

Since families, churches and governments are made up of people, they will always be sinful. That doesn't change the offices they hold. God is still at work in the world through these institutions. It is only at the second coming that this is set to right once and for all.

Luther broke with medieval theology when he said that God is at work in the world through both kingdoms. Think of it as God's two hands. Neither is superior to the other! If you want to see God most clearly, go to church, since it is harder to see God at work in our families and government.

Dr. Lose then spent time describing the struggle between free will, predestination and election. These terms are defined in the Glossary below. Luther wanted to make sure that our relationship with God was the one relationship we couldn't blow! However, he refused to make it static, established before the creation of the world. Instead, trust God, and share your faith through your actions and your words in all arenas of your life.

Biblical References:

John 3:16

John 17

Revelation 3:5 & 20:11-12

Confessional References:

(none)

Questions for Discussion:

1. Dr. Lose said that when churches and governments align, get nervous. What did he mean by that?

2. Why is Lutheranism ill suited for televangelism?
3. How are Christians in the world like the little Dutch boy who stuck his finger in the dike to stop the leak?
4. What does Luther mean when he says that the difference between the kingdom on the left and the kingdom on the right is one of clarity not superiority?

Glossary:

Paradox – Holding two things simultaneously to be true that seem to be mutually contradictory.

Free Will – Take our ability to make choices seriously. The limit of this argument is that 9 times out of 10 we make choices against God's will. Why then, when we choose to accept Jesus into our heart, how does that stand against or counter all the times we choose against God? Luther felt that this was terrifying because we almost always choose against God.

Predestination – The solution to free will is predestination. It says that all things of this world are free for us to choose between. The one thing that we are not free to choose is to believe in God. God predetermines that. While generally it is far better to have God doing the deciding, this system simply is not fair! If we are not chosen, our religious life is simply a farce.

Election – Luther offers a third option. Luther rejected the idea that we can choose for God. If it is up to us, we are lost, because we have a bound will. Rather than using the term predestination, Luther preferred election. It is a present tense activity, rather than prior to the creation of the world. It happens in the preaching of the word, which creates faith in a person. It happens in baptism when God chooses the child to be part of God's family. It happens in the work place when you share your faith with your co-worker.