



## The jurisdiction, purpose, and tools of the Church

### **Luke 17:21**

Nor will people say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'Look, there it is!' because the kingdom of God is within you.

1. With what aspect of our lives is the church concerned?

### **Romans 3:20**

For this reason, no one will be declared righteous in his sight by works of the law, for through the law we become aware of sin.

### **Mark 16:15,16**

He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned."

2. What goal does the church seek to achieve with its concern?

### **Psalms 19:7**

The law of the LORD is perfect.

It revives the soul.

The testimony of the LORD is trustworthy.

It gives wisdom to the inexperienced.

3. As the church preaches God's law with the goal of leading sinners to repentance, on what will that law be based?

### **Hebrews 4:12**

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword. It penetrates even to the point of dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow, even being able to judge the ideas and thoughts of the heart.

4. As the church carries out its mission of leading sinners to repentance and then leading repentant sinners to their Savior, what tools has God given it?

## The jurisdiction, purpose, and tools of the civil government

### **1 Peter 2:13,14**

Submit to every human authority because of the Lord, whether to the king as the supreme authority or to governors as those who have been sent by him to punish those who do what is wrong and to praise those who do what is right.

1. With what aspect of our lives is the civil government concerned?

### **1 Timothy 2:1,2**

First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all those who are in authority, in order that we might live a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and dignity.

2. What goal is civil government seeking to achieve with its concern?

### **Romans 2:14,15**

In fact, whenever Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature what the law requires – even though they do not have the law – they are a law for themselves. They demonstrate the work of the law that is written in their hearts, since their conscience also bears witness as their thoughts go back and forth, at times accusing or at times even defending them.

3. As government regulates behavior by passing laws, on what will those laws be based?

### **Romans 13:3,4**

For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to evil. Would you like to have no fear of the one in authority? Do what is good, and you will receive praise from him, because he is God's servant for your benefit. But if you do wrong, be afraid, because he does not carry the sword without reason. He is God's servant, a punisher to bring wrath on the wrongdoer.

4. As government regulates behavior by enforcing those laws, what tool has it been given by God?

## The overlap

As separate and as different as these two institutions are, though both established by God, they inevitably overlap. Most notably this occurs in the life of the individual Christian. He or she is a citizen of both kingdoms. Therefore, pastors rightly speak the Word of God to the people of God to encourage them in their lives as citizens of both. Discuss the wisdom of pastors engaging in each of the following:

1. Telling members of the church whom they should vote for in an election.
2. Telling members of the church to vote.
3. Letting it be widely known whom he will vote for (or where he stands on other political issues).
4. Identifying legislation passed by civil government as contrary to God's law and therefore bad for society.
5. Helping people formulate sound arguments on the basis of reason that they can take into the civic arena to support laws that conform with God's laws.

## Case study

On Friday, June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) legalized same-sex marriage. Anyone who loves God and takes his Word seriously will naturally also love God's plan for marriage. Contrary to what we are told by the world, God's Word is clear. Homosexuality is a sin. Marriage is instituted by God between one man and one woman. While we might think of potential negative consequences that this ruling will have for the church, what are some potential blessings that it might lead to?

- In our mission of proclaiming the gospel.
- In our desire to honor and uphold the beauty of God's design for marriage.
- In the way we interact with people, especially those who disagree with us.