

A Citizen of Two Kingdoms

A Message from the Master sermon series on church and government

September 7 – October 19, 2008 + 7 Sundays

The world cheers on Olympic athletes, warring nations disagree about style of government and terms for human rights, and the United States gears up for another presidential election. Patriotism is everywhere – even in the Bible. In this new series Message from the Master preachers will explore and explain what the Bible says about the purpose of church and state, their separation and cooperation, and how Christians can serve both God and country.

September 7 – Mattek **Government is God's Servant**

Romans 13:1-5

God establishes governments of all kinds around our world. While the particular form of government is not God-ordained, the authority wielded by the government is given by God and, with it, a responsibility to provide peace for all people.

September 14 – Westendorf **Separation of Church and State**

Matthew 22:15-22

The church and the state each have their distinctly God-assigned purpose and tools. This separation of purpose must remain clear for each to accomplish its Scriptural mission, and if such is the case each benefits from the other.

September 21 – D. Pagel **Dual Citizenship for the Christian**

1 Peter 2:13-17

Christians, in obedience to our Savior, honor and serve both God and country. The best citizens and patriots of a nation are those who recognize that their nationalistic pride is an appreciation for the blessings God bestows through government.

September 28 – Bivens **God Bless America**

Psalms 33:12

Historically, the United States can thank its founders for weaving some Christian values and ideas into the fabric of our nation. However, the assertion is inaccurate that America is a Christian nation, even one that parallels the theocracy of Old Testament Israel. Does God favor America over other nations? Are we more Christian than other nations?

October 5 – S. Pagels **A Christian View of War**

Romans 13:4, 1 Peter 2:14

The Fifth Commandment and the moral responsibility of Jesus' directive to turn the other cheek make a hard case for the Christian to disagree with any government involved in war. Yet the assignment that God gives to governing authorities does involve the right – when used responsibly – to engage in war if necessary.

October 12 – Lindemann **Voting as a Christian**

1 Timothy 2:1-4

Government leaders are not necessarily Christian leaders, so how does a Christian in a democracy vote appropriately? And is a government leader who is a Christian necessarily better than one who is not?

October 19 – Westendorf **The Church and Social Reform**

John 18:36

Jesus offers words of guidance and truth for a church hoping that our neighbors in the world might act more like Christians. Reforming society is done best when we remember our role in the two kingdoms.