

TWO KINGDOMS ONE CALLING

SUNDAY MORNING ADULT BIBLE STUDY

OCTOBER 4, 11, 18 • NOVEMBER 1, 8, 15 • 10:15 AM

WEEK 3 • WHEN THE HANDS GET CONFUSED

A WORD AT THE START *This study is not intended to elevate one party or political system above another, or to endorse or encourage any particular policy or candidate for office. Its purpose is to help us navigate our calling to be both Christians and citizens in a divided world.*

BIG QUESTION

What happens when one hand tries to do the other hand's job — and how do we recognize it?

LAST WEEK: GOD'S TWO HANDS

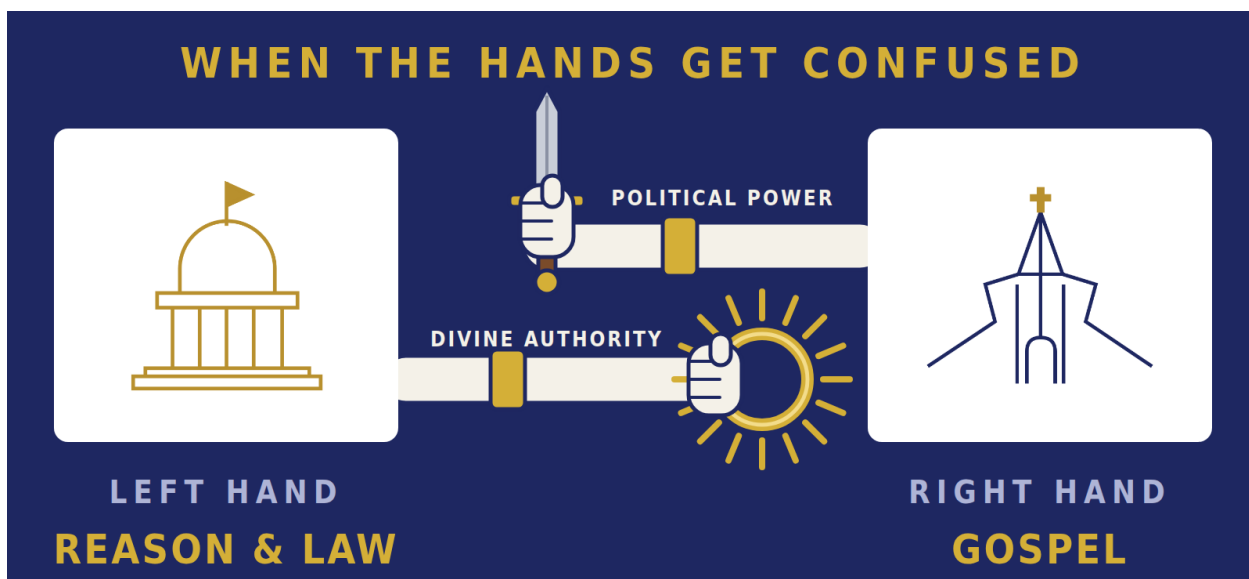
Last week we saw that one God rules the world with two hands.

With his **left hand**, God rules _____

With his **right hand**, God rules _____

WHEN THE HANDS GET CONFUSED

God's two hands are not competing with each other; both belong to the one God. Trouble starts when we confuse their different purposes and means. For example: **When the church reaches for political power to accomplish God's work, while the nation reaches for divine authority to legitimize its power.**



	CONFUSION 1: THE CHURCH REACHES FOR POLITICAL POWER	CONFUSION 2: THE NATION REACHES FOR DIVINE AUTHORITY
What it grabs		
What it says		
Why it fails		
What happens		
A faithful response		

BIBLICAL STUDY

Read each passage and ask: Who is reaching for what? Is someone grasping for political power, claiming divine authority, or refusing that confusion?

1 Samuel 8:19–20

But the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel; and they said, “No, but we will have a king over us, that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.”

CONTEXT

WHO IS REACHING FOR WHAT?

Luke 4:5–8

The devil ... showed him all the kingdoms of the world ... and said to him, “I will give you all this authority, and their glory ... If you therefore will worship before me, it will all be yours.” Jesus answered him, “Get behind me, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.’”

CONTEXT

WHO IS REACHING FOR WHAT?

John 6:14–15

When therefore the people saw the sign which Jesus did, they said, "This is truly the prophet who comes into the world." Jesus therefore perceiving that they were about to come and take him by force, to make him king, withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

CONTEXT

WHO IS REACHING FOR WHAT?

Daniel 3:16–18

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego answered the king ... "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us ... But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods, nor worship the golden image which you have set up."

CONTEXT

WHO IS REACHING FOR WHAT?

Acts 17:6–7

"These who have turned the world upside down have come here also ... These all act contrary to the decrees of Caesar, saying that there is another king, Jesus."

CONTEXT

WHO IS REACHING FOR WHAT?

A HARD QUESTION – A CHOSEN NATION?

The Bible tells us that God chose Israel and made a covenant with its people. Some Christians believe that the modern State of Israel therefore has a unique divine status and that supporting it politically is a Christian obligation.

If God chose Israel, why shouldn't we see our own nation—or the modern State of Israel—as God's chosen nation in the same way?

Three things to consider:

1.

2.

3.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Last week we asked whether you'd want a doctor who used only medicines named in the Bible. That is a small picture of the church reaching for political power to accomplish God's work. Where have you seen Christians or churches reach for pressure, power, or control to get something done? What did it do to how people heard the Gospel?

2. Where do you see a nation, party, or cause claiming divine authority for its own purposes—telling us who we are, who is “saved,” or who deserves our ultimate loyalty? What is the difference between loving our country and worshiping it?

3. How might we catch this confusion in ourselves, not just in “them”? What is one practical habit that keeps God alone at the center?

TAKEAWAY

Neither hand is meant to do the other's job. The church is called to witness, not dominate. The nation is called to serve the common good, not claim God's place. When the church grabs the sword, the GOSPEL suffers. When a nation takes the church's place, it becomes an IDOL.

God alone is Lord of both the left and right hands of God's reign.