



## Key Terms

### Lesson 9 – The State: Whose Law?

**Boundary questions:** Questions that address authority boundaries of particular social institutions. Examples: Can the state steal? Can the state murder? The story of Naboth's Vineyard is an example. 1 Kings 21 – King Ahab had Naboth killed in order to take Naboth's vineyard. In God's perspective, King Ahab overstepped his boundaries and committed murder and theft.

**Civil Magistrate:** The authority position of a nation or state.

**Delegation of Authority:** The formal grant of power, responsibility, and authority to someone else; this concept, like submission, is part of the triune nature of God. This grant is almost always carried out with a formal declaration (oath) and often with some mark of delegation (i.e. uniform).

**Pervasive:** To spread throughout, occupying a great area, permeate.

**Politics:** "The science of government; that part of ethics which consists in the regulation and government of a nation or state, for the preservation of its safety, peace, and prosperity; comprehending the defense of its existence and rights against foreign control or conquest ... and the protection of its citizens in their rights, with the preservation and improvement of their morals." From Webster's 1828 dictionary.

**Rise of the State:** Because the state has the means to garner vast wealth and power, it can also begin to think that it has ultimate authority over every other social sphere. When this happens, the state will begin to see itself as God, with no boundaries and reject the idea of sphere sovereignty, bringing every other social sphere under its control.

**Roles of the King/Civil Magistrate:** God's servant to punish evil and condone good. Based on Romans 13.

**Sphere Sovereignty:** God has designed each social sphere for a particular purpose with unique laws, roles and responsibilities to fulfill that purpose. Therefore, a pastor has the position of authority in the sphere of the church, but does not have authority in the sphere of the State. This concept was originally developed by Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920). That sphere has been given a sovereign charge to fulfill that purpose that another sphere should not breach. An example of the "breach" is found in the story of Uzziah. 2 Chronicles 26 – King Uzziah assumed authority in the sphere of the church. The Lord struck him with leprosy because he had overstepped the boundaries of his authority.

**Subjection:** The bringing of a person or people under the control of another. Like submission and delegation, this is found within God's social design because it is found within the Godhead (i.e. Jesus "subjected to" the Father).