"The traditional Reformed doctrine of the two kingdoms teaches that God rules all things in his Son, yet does so in two fundamentally different ways. As the creator and sustainer, through his Son as the eternal Logos, he rules over all human beings in the civil kingdom. This civil kingdom consists of a range of non-ecclesiastical cultural endeavors and institutions, among which the state has particular prominence. As redeemer, through his Son as the incarnate God-Man, God rules the other kingdom, sometimes referred to as the spiritual kingdom. This spiritual kingdom is essentially heavenly and eschatological, but has broken into history and is now expressed institutionally in the church. Both kingdoms are good, God-ordained, and regulated by divine law, and believers participate in both kingdoms during the present age.”

"Therefore, the classic Reformed paradigm suggests that Christians are citizens of two distinct kingdoms, both of which are ordained of God and under his law, yet exist for different purposes, have different functions, and operate according to different rules. In their capacity as citizens of the spiritual kingdom of Christ, Christians insist upon non-violence and the ways of peace, refusing to bear arms on behalf of his kingdom; in their capacity as citizens of the civil kingdom, they participate as necessary in the coercive work of the state, bearing arms on its behalf when occasion warrants. As citizens of the spiritual kingdom they have no patriotic allegiance to any earthly nation; but as citizens of the civil kingdom a healthy patriotism is certainly possible. As citizens of the spiritual kingdom they can make radical critiques of all theories, practices, and institutions that are not submissive to the redemptive lordship of Christ; but as citizens of the civil kingdom they can acknowledge the significant benefits that the state brings for earthly life, enjoy the amazing products of human culture, and seek common cause with non-Christians on a variety of social projects. As citizens of the spiritual kingdom they submit to the redemptive ethic of Scripture; yet as citizens of the civil kingdom they can engage in genuine moral conversation with those of other faiths through the universally accessible law of nature, without making adherence to Scripture a test for participating in cultural affairs. As citizens of the spiritual kingdom they can view the state and other social institutions as temporal and destined to pass away; but as citizens of the civil kingdom they can have keen interest in promoting the welfare of human society here and now.”

"Let us observe that in man government is twofold: the one spiritual, by which the conscience is trained to piety and divine worship; the other civil, by which the individual is instructed in those duties which, as men and citizens, we are bound to perform. . . . To these two forms are commonly given the not inappropriate names of

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**Definition: Reformed Doctrine of “Two-Kingdoms”**

spiritual and temporal jurisdiction, intimating that the former species has reference to the life of the soul, while the latter relates to matters of the present life, not only to food and clothing, but to the enacting of laws which require a man to live among his fellows purely honorably, and modestly. The former has its seat within the soul, the latter only regulates the external conduct. We may call the one the spiritual, the other the civil kingdom. Now, these two, as we have divided them, are always to be viewed apart from each other. When the one is considered, we should call off our minds, and not allow them to think of the other. For there exists in man a kind of two worlds, over which different kings and different laws can preside.”

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