

25-0528, The Truth Project, Tour 9

The State: Whose Law?

This tour conflicts many... This is where many find out they have been taken captive by the world.
—Del Tackett

Understanding God’s Design for Government

In the ninth lesson of The Truth Project, “The State: Whose Law?”, Dr. Del Tackett takes us on a profound journey through the biblical perspective on the state, politics, and law. Situated in the southwest quadrant of the worldview compass, the state is one of several social spheres—alongside family, church, labor, community, and the God-man relationship—that God has designed to order human society. This lesson explores the state’s purpose, its limits, and the catastrophic consequences when it oversteps its God-given boundaries. Through Scripture, history, and practical application, Tackett challenges us to reconsider the state’s role and our response as Christians in an age where government is increasingly seen as savior.

The Ethical Foundation of the State

Tackett begins with a foundational question: Should politics and law be concerned with ethics and morals? According to Webster’s 1828 Dictionary, the state’s role includes preserving and improving a people’s morals—a definition that feels foreign in today’s secular landscape. Yet, as Tackett illustrates, this ethical tether is essential. He poses a simple yet piercing question: “Can the state steal?” The answer, grounded in Scripture, is yes—and when it does, it must be held accountable to a higher law.

Consider the story of Ahab and Naboth’s vineyard (1 Kings 21). Ahab, Israel’s king, coveted Naboth’s land and, with Jezebel’s help, orchestrated Naboth’s murder to seize it. This act of theft and murder by a ruler demonstrates that the state is not exempt from God’s ethical standards. Similarly, Nebuchadnezzar’s pride (Daniel 4:20-30) led to his humbling, as God reduced him to eating grass like cattle. These accounts underscore a critical truth: rulers and governments are subject to God’s sovereignty. When they transgress, divine judgment follows.

God’s Design for the State

Scripture provides a clear framework for the state’s role. Romans 13:1-6 teaches that governing authorities are established by God, tasked with wielding the sword to punish evil and condone good. This authority, however, is not absolute—it is delegated. Just as the Son submits to the Father (1 Corinthians 11:3) and wives to husbands (Ephesians 5:22-24), the state operates under God’s dominion. Governors and magistrates are God’s representatives, not independent powers.

The concept of sphere sovereignty, a key theme in this lesson, ensures balance among social spheres. Each sphere—family, church, state—has distinct roles and boundaries. Tackett illustrates this with the story of Uzziah (2 Chronicles 26), who, as king, entered the temple to burn incense—a role reserved for priests. Though his intention seemed “good,” God struck him with leprosy for

crossing this boundary. Similarly, in cowboy movies, churches stood on “God’s soil,” not the state’s, symbolizing their independence. When the state encroaches on other spheres, it disrupts God’s design, leading to tyranny.

Israel’s demand for a king in 1 Samuel 8 further illuminates this. Rejecting God as their king, the people sought a human ruler to “go before us and fight our battles” (1 Samuel 8:19-20). This desire for a state to supplant God’s role foreshadows modern trends, where governments assume responsibilities belonging to families or churches, such as education or welfare.

The Rise of the State

Tackett warns of “The Rise of the State,” a trend where governments expand beyond their God-ordained limits, seeking control over every aspect of life. History is replete with examples. In the 20th century, regimes under Stalin, Lenin, Hitler, Mao, and Pol Pot unleashed oppression and violence by denying God’s authority and centralizing power. These rulers, wielding the state’s sword unchecked, committed atrocities that scarred millions.

This godless expansion is not confined to the past. Tackett argues it is resurging today, as people increasingly view the state as savior and provider. Philosopher Hegel’s claim that “the State is the march of God through the world” reflects this idolatry, where government replaces God as the source of truth and provision. In modern societies, the state often assumes roles traditionally held by families—child-rearing, education, even moral instruction—eroding sphere sovereignty.

This shift mirrors Israel’s rebellion in 1 Samuel 8:7, where God declared, “...they have rejected Me as their king.” When cultures abandon God and absolute truth, they turn to the state to fill the void. Tackett draws a sobering parallel to the decline of Rome, noting that America’s social disorder—moral relativism, family breakdown, and dependence on government—echoes Rome’s fall.

The Christian Response

Tackett’s message is not merely diagnostic; it is a call to action. Christians must resist the state’s overreach by standing firm on biblical truth. This resistance is not rebellion but a commitment to God’s design, ensuring the state remains within its proper boundaries. Romans 13 calls for submission to authority, but this submission is not blind—when the state defies God’s law, Christians must draw a line, as the apostles did in Acts 5:29, declaring, “We must obey God rather than men.”

This stance may cause conflict, especially in a culture captivated by the lie that the state is our ultimate provider. Tackett acknowledges that some may feel “conflicted” by this message, particularly those swayed by the welfare state’s promises or secular ideologies. Yet, the Cosmic Battle—God’s truth versus Satan’s lies—demands clarity. Christians must reject the notion that the state can “go before us” (Isaiah 52:12) and instead proclaim God’s sovereignty.

Conclusion

The state, when aligned with God’s design, is a force for good, punishing evil and promoting justice. But without accountability to God’s law, it becomes a tool of oppression. Lesson 9 of The Truth Project reminds us that the state is not our savior—God is. As believers, we are called to uphold

sphere sovereignty, resist tyranny, and ensure the state serves its God-ordained purpose. In an era of expanding government power, let us stand firm, draw a line in the sand, and declare, “This far and no more,” trusting in the King of all kings.