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THE PROTESTANT DOCTRINE OF THE TWO KINGDOMS AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR THE PUBLIC SPHERE[†]

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INTRODUCTION

In the history of Christianity, the church has engaged the public sphere in varying levels and degrees of activity. More so, the church has always insisted that no political regime on earth lies outside God's sovereign rule. Christian theology regards the state as divinely ordained instrument for carrying out God's plan in this fallen reality.

Christians look at the state in view of an over-all understanding of God's work in the world. This view, however, varies from one tradition to another. The Roman Catholic Church (RCC) views the State as subordinate to the spiritual authority of the Church. While the Protestant Christianity holds the view that the State is distinct from the Church. This view is called the doctrine of the two-kingdom. There is a dualistic tension between the relationship of the Church and the State in the public sphere. This doctrine focuses on the distinction between the State and the Church. This particular view is quite relevant today to the topic on "Religion and the Public Sphere."

The paper focuses on the significance of Protestant two kingdoms theory in the public sphere. The paper is divided into four sections. Part 1 will discuss the Protestant's doctrine of the two-kingdom; Part 2 the task of the State; Part 3 talks about the two-fold duty of the Christians; and Part IV: State and Church as partners working for justice and democracy.

PROTESTANT DOCTRINE OF THE TWO KINGDOMS

The Protestant understanding of church-state relation came out as a critique of medievalism in theology and politics, and the struggle against papal absolutism. During this period the papacy became what R.W. Southern describes as "the dominant institution in western Europe."[1] Popes could command armies, and could forge military, political, and economic alliances on behalf of their temporal realm. In the papal bull *Unam Sanctam* (1302), Boniface VIII (1294-1303) taught that the pope held both the temporal and spiritual swords, meaning that the pope is the ultimate authority in both realms. Here the pope declared "for every human creature to be submissive to the Roman Pontiff is absolutely necessary for salvation."[2]

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[1] R. W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*, The Pelican History of the Church, 2 (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1970).24

[2] Richard McBrien, *Catholicism*, New Edition ed. (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1994). 628

The Protestant struggle against the pope's absolutism dovetails with the struggle of territorial princes for independent statehood against Rome, the seat of the church and the empire. Two important Reformers sought the liberation of the church and the state from each other's interference, paving the way to the modern concept of a secular state. The church renounces political power, while the state stays out of doctrinal and church matters.

According to Martin Luther God governs the world with his right hand and with his left.[3] With his right hand, God governs the political sphere and with his left the spiritual sphere. The two are distinct from each other and should not be confused or mixed up. The political pertains to the "outer realm of creation", while the spiritual refers to the "inner realm of creation." The political sphere concerns itself with creating and preserving a political environment that abides by the rule of justice. On the other hand, the spiritual sphere attends to creating and nurturing pious hearts among the faithful.

Calvin, like Luther, emphasized the distinction between the two realms. But unlike Luther, he believes that although the two realms are distinct they could neither be separated nor could exist independently of the other.[4] Calvin was deeply concerned about the "disorder" in social, ecclesiastical and political institutions. Human social institutions have fallen and humanity lacks the capacity to re-order itself. Only God, King of Kings and supreme legislator, can bring the world to order. Disaster is always close at hand. "Innumerable are the evils that beset human life; innumerable too the deaths that threaten it."[5] However, for some at least, God has established a spiritual order, and for all, God has ordained the political order.

This is the "twofold government," the spiritual and the civil, under which human beings exist. The one "resides in the soul or inner man and pertains to eternal life...(the other) pertains only to the establishment of civil justice and outward morality."[6] As distinct from each other but not at variance, both orders, Calvin insists, are ordained by God. Christians therefore possess a dual citizenship. He seems to have given more emphasis on the correlation than the distinction between the two realms.[7] He begins with an assertion that there is a need to make a clear distinction between the two realms and then he argues for their inseparable relatedness. In Calvin's theology church and state are two distinct but equally direct expression of divine providence.

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[3] Martin Luther, "Secular Authority: To What Extent It Should Be Obeyed,," in *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings.*, ed. John Dillenberger(Anchor Books, 1962), 363. see also the diagram on page 11.

[4] Wilhelm Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin,*, trans., Harold Knight Baker (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Book House, 1956), 229ff. see also Helmut Thielicke, *Theological Ethics*, ed. William H. Lazareth, vol. II (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 565-614. and Everett Mendoza, *Radical and Evangelical: Portrait of a Filipino Christian* (Quezon City: New Day Publishers, 1999).

[5] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans., Ford Lewis Battles, vol. I (Westminster John Knox 1960).

[6] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans., Ford Lewis Battles, vol. II (Westminster: John Knox 1960), iv, xx, 1.

[7] Ibid., IV, 20. cf.

He rejected the idea that politics is a polluted thing. Calvin upholds that civil government has a positive function for religion and for society.[8] For the proclamation of the gospel requires a favorable social arrangement. Calvin even believed that it was the duty of civil magistrates to provide the favorable political conditions for the proclamation of the gospel.[9] Thus he considered the vocation of civil authorities to be "most sacred and by far the most honorable of all callings in the whole of mortal men."[10] He regarded them "foster fathers of the church."[11] He even recognized them as "vicars of God".[12] But he is not proposing the notion that the civil authorities should assume the task of proclaiming the Word. That is the business of the Church. Christ commissions the Church to preach the Gospel “in season and out of season" (2 Timothy 4:2). Instead civil authorities could help the church by preserving order and justice, deterring evils and lawlessness, so that the Church can continue with its work. The distinction between the church and state prevents the state from interfering with it. But it also obliges the Church to leave the public sphere open to all. And both sides to respect the boundaries.

THE TASK OF THE STATE

The Protestant two kingdoms doctrine views the primary task of the State is to help human beings in the pursuit of justice. The State can even remain secular and oblivious to its transcendent source of existence as long as it performs its function of preserving justice and deterring evils.[13] Earthly political justice becomes the primary task of political authorities. The State does not exist for its own sake. It exists for the sake of human well-being and in the pursuit of justice.

However, Protestant theology recognizes that the State can and is corrupted by sin. It is neither divine nor perfect. Nevertheless God uses this earthly institution to fulfill God’s providential plan in history. For God’s grace cannot be thwarted by sin. Therefore, the State can and ought to be a significant instrument in the struggle for justice in a sinful world. The State is not to be rejected but rather to be restored to its real purpose. From the

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[8] Ibid., IV, 20. 3. p. 1488. Calvin's position on the role of governments is briefly summarized in this brief passage from his *Institutes*: "*It function among men is no less than that of bread, water, sun and air; indeed, its place of honor is far more excellent. For it does not merely see it, as all these serve to do, that men breathe, eat, drink, and are kept warm, even though it surely embraces all these activities when it provides for their living together. It does not, I repeat, look to this only, but also prevents idolatry, sacrilege against God's name, blasphemies against his truth, and other public offenses against religion from arising and spreading among the people; it prevents the public peace from being disturbed; it provides that each man may keep his property safe and sound; that men may carry on blameless intercourse among themselves; that honesty and modesty may be preserved among men. In short, it provides that a public manifestation of religion exist among Christians, and that humanity be maintained among men."*

[9] Ibid., IV, 20. 9. “*And thus all have confessed that no government can be happily established unless piety is the first concern: and that those laws are preposterous which neglect God's right and provide only for men."*

[10] Ibid., IV, 20. 4.

[11] Ibid., IV, 20. 5.

[12] Ibid., IV, 20. 6.

[13] Luther.

Protestant perspective, the power to govern society has been entrusted to the State; and Church is never to usurp this power. Nonetheless the Church is called to remind the State of its distinct tasks in society.

Moreover, Protestant theology asserts that all powers belong to God. Thus political rulers must be responsible and be good steward of God's power. To use this power to commit injustice is to blaspheme God. As God's instrument for the rule of justice in the nation, the state carries God's authority to govern the citizens, including the Christians among them. It is entrusted with the "power of the sword" or the right to apply coercive power including violence (police power) whenever necessary.

Protestant theologians maintain that kings are instruments of God's justice for civil society; they are entrusted with the power to be used against those who would oppose the rule of justice.[14] This sense of justice becomes the norm or standard of all legal and political laws of civil government.[15] In the Bible, justice specifically means the protection of the weak, the poor and the innocent from the violence and greed of the powerful.[16] The state is God's hand that binds the wicked who exploits and oppresses the little ones. In the negative sense of justice, the state protects the oppressed; in the positive sense of justice, it provides them with the necessary provisions of life. When it fails to do so, it is the church's task to remind the state and call upon the citizens to seek justice.

TWO-FOLD POLITICAL DUTY OF THE CHRISTIANS

Christians are citizens of two kingdoms, one a spiritual kingdom, and the other an earthly kingdom. Because of this dual citizenship a Christian has dual obligations.

The Protestant tradition holds that a government should be obeyed because it has the authority instituted by God. According to Calvin, such obedience to magistrates is demonstrated "by obeying their proclamations, or by paying taxes, or by undertaking

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[14] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV, 20. 9. p. 1496. "*But since they cannot perform this unless they defend good men from the wrongs of the wicked, and give aid and protection to the oppressed, they have also been armed with power with which severely to coerce the open malefactors and criminals by whose wickedness the public peace is troubled or disturbed."*

[15] Ibid., IV, 20. 2.

[16] "Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan." Exodus 22:22
"Do not deny justice to your poor people in their lawsuits." Exodus 23:6
"Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the alien. I am the LORD your God." Leviticus 19:10
"Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly." Leviticus 19:15
"Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy." Proverbs 31:9
"She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy." Proverbs 31:20
"This is what the LORD says: Do what is just and right. Rescue from the hand of his oppressor the one who has been robbed. Do no wrong or violence to the alien, the fatherless or the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place." Jeremiah 22:3
"'He defended the cause of the poor and needy, and so all went well. Is that not what it means to know me?" declares the LORD." Jeremiah 22:16
"Jesus answered, If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.'" Matthew 19:21
"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in." Matthew 25:35

public offices and burdens which pertain to the common defence."[17] He further says, it seems “good to God to set kings over kingdoms, senates or municipal officers over free cities, it is our duty to show ourselves compliant and obedient to whomever he sets over the places where we live."[18] Thus to the extent that good and just rulers are so honoured and obeyed, and to the extent that rulers in turn fulfill their obligation to safeguard and promote the good of the community, political, social, and economic expression is given to the command to love one's neighbour as oneself.[19]

Even under despotic and tyrannical rulers both reformer Luther and Calvin recommended patience, prayer and the readiness to suffer martyrdom if necessary.[20] Protestant tradition rejects the idea that the Church should usurp the power of the state. The Church has no authority to wage war against wicked rulers but only "to implore the Lord's help, in whose hands are the hearts of kings, and the changing of kingdoms."[21]

However it would be a false understanding of Protestant political theology if we focus only on the counsel to obedience. When the State falls under the power of evil and political rulers become tyrannical, Protestants are to exercise their prophetic witness.[22] The ruler has no authority apart from God's ordinance. The power of the State is derived ultimately from God. Thus the exercise of State power is subordinated to God's power. In this context, Christian's obedience to political ruler is never absolute.[23] Our obedience to political authority is subject to God's command. Thus when rulers violate God's command, Christians are necessarily bound to obey their own magistrates and laws except when commanded to sin, for then they ought to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29).[24] According to Paul Tillich, “the most important contribution of Protestantism to the world in the past, present, and future is the principle of prophetic protest against every power which claims divine character for itself-whether it be church or state, party or leader.”[25]

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[17] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV,xx,3.

[18] Ibid., IV, xx,8 (on the Diversity of Forms of Government).

[19] John T. McNeill, *Calvin: On God and Political Duty* (New York: Library of Liberal Arts, 1956), "Preface," p. xviii.

[20] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. IV, 20. 30. p. 1517; J.M. Porter, *Luther: Selected Political Writings* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974), 83-86.

[21] *Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion.*, p. 1517

[22] Levi Oracion, "Theological Reflection on Church and State," in *Journal of the Proceedings of the First Quadrennial General Assembly* (Cagayan de Oro: United Church of Christ in the Philippines, 1978), Appendix IX p. 374.

[23] John Calvin, "Commentaries on the Epistle to the Romans Chap 13.," in *Calvin: On God and Political Duty*, , ed. John T. McNeill(New York: Library of Liberal Arts, 1956), 83-87.

[24] Leif Grane, *The Augsburg Confession: A Commentary*. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1987), 166-167.

[25] Paul Tillich, "The End of the Protestant Era?", The University of Chicago Press http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=380&C=102 (accessed 28 Sept 2011).

Thus, prophetic responsibility is another duty of the Christian towards the State. What is prophetic responsibility? Prophets were not predictors of the future. It is a vital form of witness of the church also in politics. To be a prophet is to be God's spokesperson. In the Bible prophets were often portrayed as critics of kings in the name of God.[26] The prophets' main aim is precisely to appeal to their leaders and citizens to repent, to confess their sins and to mend their ways. In many instances this implies the need for reform: in the case of kings, reform of their unjust and oppressive policies and, in the case of the rich, reform of their exploitative actions against the poor.[27]

STATE AND CHURCH AS PARTNERS WORKING FOR JUSTICE AND DEMOCRACY

From a theological perspective the Philippine State remains a legitimate institution with the powers to execute justice, preserve order and safeguard the public sphere. Even a dictator understood this, perhaps better than most. In 1972 Marcos skillfully used the people's craving for social justice, peace and order by posing as the arch-enemy of oligarchies and criminal syndicates to win the consent of the governed.[28] Churches were willing to give martial law a chance precisely for this reason.[29] But they withdrew their tacit support when it became abundantly clear that Marcos was using the State for his personal enrichment and his "crony capitalists."[30]

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[26] e.g. Elija and Ahab (1 Kings 17-22); David and Nathan (2 Samuel 12); Moses and Pharaoh (Exodus)

[27] e.g. Amos 5:10-15, 21-24; Isaiah1:21-27; (Jer 22:3, 13-17; cf.21:11-12, Mic 3:9-10): "Thus says the LORD: Act with justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place. . . . Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness, and his upper rooms by injustice; who makes his neighbors work for nothing, and does not give them their wages . . . Are you a king because you compete in cedar? Did not your father eat and drink and do justice and righteousness? Then it was well with him. He judged the cause of the poor and needy; then it was well. Is not this to know me? says the LORD. But your eyes and heart are only on your dishonest gain, for shedding innocent blood, and for practicing oppression and violence."

[28] In his nationwide statement broadcast on national radio and TV on evening of September 22, 19972, he said: *"I am utilizing this power... to save the Republic and reform our society... We will eliminate the threat of a violent overthrow of our Republic. But at the same time, we must now reform the social, economic and political institutions in our country.* Ferdinand Marcos, *Presidential Speeches* vol. IV (1978), 139.. Ferdinand Marcos, *The Democratic Revolution in the Philippines* (Manila: 1971).

[29] Robert L. Youngblood, *Marcos against the Church: Economic Development and Political Repression in the Philippines* (Quezon City: New Day Publisher, 1993). cites as typical of this attitude the comments of Bishop Estanislao Abainza, General Secretary of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP). He lauded the "enforced discipline of the new society" and urged the citizenry not to "minimize" the "positive effects" of Martial Law.

[30] During the First Quadrennial General Assembly of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP) on 21-26 May 1978 in Cagayan de Oro City, a resolution was approved by the Assembly calling for the lifting of Martial Law. The resolution strongly stated that the UCCP is *"against the perpetuation of one-man rule in the country; that it is for the immediate and full restoration of all civil liberties of the citizens; and that it is for the immediate dismantling of the machinery of martial law in the country."* Lydia

The power to govern, therefore, entails the duty to do justice, deter evils and safeguard the peace. The responsibility to execute justice becomes the norm to assess the performance of the political leaders. The past and present political leaders are aware of this expectation. Cory Aquino, Fidel Ramos, Joseph Estrada, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Benigno S. Aquino III have styled their respective administrations to be pro-poor and committed to pursue social justice.

Moreover this understanding of the function of the State was clearly stated in the 1986 Philippine Constitution which states in section 4 Art.2 "is to serve and protect the people." Section 4 clarifies further the duties of a Philippine government: "Maintenance of peace and order, the protection of life, liberty, and property and the promotion of the general welfare." These Constitutional principles of the Philippine state and government are laudable. But does the government maintain peace and order, protect life, liberty and property in that order, and promote the general welfare? The evidence seems otherwise. The Government has safeguarded the property of the elites and foreign capitalists at the expense of the lives of poor and marginalized Filipinos. The government, therefore, must exert great effort to fulfill its divine mandate to maintain the moral basis for it to govern. Moral evaluation of the performance of a political leader must be gauged by whether he defends the poor and defenseless.

Secondly, the mandate to do justice requires that the State pursues a policy of broadening the distribution of powers and responsibilities. Nobody can deny the temptation of those in power to arrogate upon to themselves a greater degree of control. Protestants recognized the need to have a system of checks and balances in running the affairs of the State.[31] According to Reinhold Niebuhr “Man's capacity for justice makes democracy possible, but man's inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary.”[32] Democratization is so far the effective mechanism to guard against the misuse of power and to encourage citizens’ participation in decision-making.

In the Philippine situation there is an urgent need to distribute political power. This can be done through grassroots participation in planning and decision-making. Instead of planning government from the top downwards or the center outward, political participation needs to strengthened at the local community. Government agencies entrusted to deal with such social issues as land reform, protection of the environment, and public health must involve those sectors most directly affected. The diffusion of government powers can minimize graft and corruption in the government bureaucracy.

In addition, a system of accountability for government officials can also serve to minimize corruption and abuse of power. Accountability of public servants means that the

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Niguidula, ed. *Uccp Statements and Resolutions (1948-1990)* (Quezon City: United Church of Christ in the Philippines, 1990).

[31] Thus he suggests that *"to be safer and more bearable for a number to exercise government, so that they may help one another, teach and admonish one another; and if one asserts himself unfairly, there may be a number of censors and masters to restrain his willfulness.” Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, IV, 20. 8.* McNeill, xxii f.

[32] Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*, 2nd ed. (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960 (1944)).xiii

power to govern is not absolute but rather entrusted. Accountability of public officials entails disclosure of their public expenditures and sources of funds, policies and public contract entered into, and other acts executed by them. The current Administration should prioritize the passage of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act pending in Congress. Through a system of transparency and accountability the people can assess the performance of public officials.

Thirdly, the diffusion and distribution of power entails the empowerment of people. Often government officials make it appear that they are consulting the common people when in truth much of the so called consultations are controlled by the political elite and fail to provide opportunities for genuine dialogue with the marginalized of society. The poor and marginalized are left out in the "cold."

Since the State is God's gift to humanity, there is a moral imperative for the State to provide a public space for people to effectively exercise their power through all kinds of people's assemblies, councils, associations, and citizen's bodies. Furthermore, the formation of these various community and people's organizations can safeguard the State from groups or individuals attempting to monopolize its power and use it for their own selfish interests. The care of the State is too important to be left completely in the hands of those who actually govern. People's participation is integral with social justice and democracy.

The Philippine State as God's instrument of justice and civil order is, therefore, required to empower the people and other sectors so as to compete with the dominant elites in influencing and charting the social policies of the Philippine government. This entails the formation of different power blocks or countervailing centers in Philippine society. The formation of various people's groups and political organizations is necessary in dealing with various social problems confronting the Philippine society. There is the imperative to form farmer and peasant organizations, labor unions, sectoral organizations, community organizations, and non-government organizations. The failure to recognize this imperative reveals an erroneous understanding of the forces of evil working in human society. Cognizant of the complexities of the social issues, the solutions require the active participation of the community or sectors greatly affected and paying a heavier social cost. In other words, given the realities of injustice and oppression in Philippine society, the struggle for justice necessitates organizing people for power.[33]

Thus the Church and the political order are not in competition. Separate in theory, Church and state nevertheless relate, interact, and co-operate in practice. Derived from, and responsible to, one source in the divine goodwill, yet distinct, the one should not attempt to dominate the other but rather should reciprocally require the one of the other, the fulfilment of their respective obligations to mutual and complementary collaboration. "As the magistrate ought by punishment and physical restraint to cleanse the church of offences, so the minister of the Word in turn ought to help the magistrate in order that not

[33] Henry B. Aguilan, *Diwang Buhay: Living Thoughts on the Concept and Meaning of Development* (Philippines: Quezon City, 1988).

so many may sin. Their functions ought to be so joined that each serves to help, not hinder, the other."[34]

Based upon the insights of the Protestant two kingdoms doctrine, Churches have a twofold political duty. First of all, Christians have the duty to cooperate with the State specifically in areas which promote social justice. Christians are called by God to show relative consent to political authorities. Since the State is under God's sovereignty Christians ought to show respect to political authorities. Christians freely give their consent and support programs and policies of the State as long as these programs are based on justice and for the welfare of the citizens. Thus, relationship between the Church and the State must be understood not as subservience, but rather in term of just partnership and principled collaboration.

This notion of collaborative efforts with the State entails a proper understanding of the working of the politico-legal system. Churches and Christians ought to seriously study laws, programs and government agencies which they can support and extend principled partnership to ensure that justice is served. Before engaging in any collaborative efforts with the government, church leaders and members need to be fully informed about social and political issues and how government functions at all levels, what services are available, and how individually and collectively they may best become involved.

The more informed the Churches are the better they can maintain their freedom and autonomy. But information depends largely on the capacity to gather it. Government has the tendency to be unduly secretive and insufficiently concerned about communicating what it is doing. Here churches have a vital role to fulfill, not only for their own members, but also for the public at large. With their available resources they can gather the much needed information and share the information to guide the general public. Access to public information is vital in the pursuit of justice. Before one cannot participate in the affairs of the State one must know what one is participating in.

Philippine Churches can also show their support to the government and at the same time maintaining their freedom through pioneering community services. Churches are able to go to places where government agencies are not welcome and there they can initiate services, at least at the initial stage. Further to this, the churches are called upon to have especial concern for the impoverished, under-privilege and whose rights are violated. Churches are to support programs of government that would advance the interests of the marginalized sectors.

The second task of the Churches is the task of exercising vigilance against the blasphemous use of State power by those entrusted with it. Churches can provide the critical dimension which is necessary for the preservation of the State as God's instrument of earthly justice in the Philippines. Since Christians have free consciences they could exercise critical judgment on government programs and policies. They would not readily accept policies and programs espouse by the government as binding and absolute. The Church, therefore, has the mandate to call into question the policies and programs of the State when it deviates from its divine ordinance. In the Protestant tradition, the Church

[34] Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV, xi, 3.

can neither remain silent nor usurp the function of the State. The Church can and must remind the State of its mandates. For it is the nature and mission of the Church in human society to proclaim the Word of God which saves and judges human existence. The Church must continually challenge the State to be faithful to very mandates on which it is founded. This task has been practiced by the United Church of Christ in the Philippines as reflected in many of the resolutions approved by its General Assembly through the years.[35]

Furthermore, Protestant Churches are morally obliged to support the formation of community and sectoral organizations in the pursuit of justice and political participation to maintain vigilance. Churches must work with movements and groups involved in genuine land reformed, peace and human rights advocacy, environmental protections, community-based health program, and Basic Christian communities. This implies their being aligned with peasant's movements, labor unions, urban poor organizations and other sectoral groups struggling for social justice.

In addition Churches can encourage their members to join these groups and other civic groups, sectoral groups and cause-oriented organizations. It must be noted that the local churches are in a position to identify and motivate those who are capable of rendering a wide range of public service. There is a wealth of talent, much of it hidden and unrecognized in the congregations. By encouraging people to organize and participate in decision-making in the government, the Churches and the people are exercising a critical vigilance relative to the use of power by government officials.

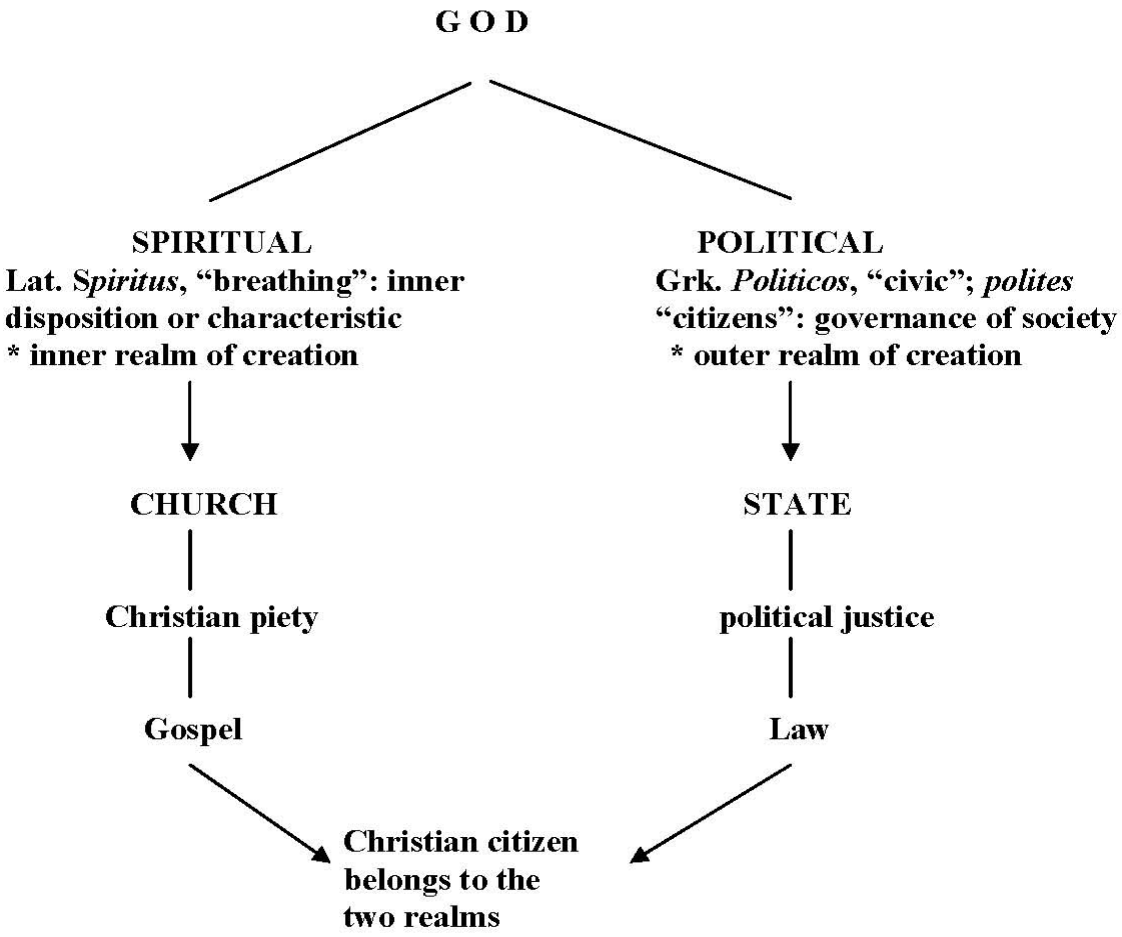
CONCLUSION

To sum up, according to the Protestant two kingdoms doctrine God has ordained the State to be an instrument of justice. The political order exists for the good of Christians as for all who are subject to its authority. The state, therefore, has a positive role to play in the process of the redemption of the common life. The State, however, could be turned from its divine-mandates of justice into an apparatus of oppression and death. It is a challenge, therefore, to the Protestant Churches to safeguard a good government. The Church's prophetic role in relation to the state also includes the duty to recall the state to its commitment to defend and promote the interests of the poor and the weak against exploitation by the rich and powerful.

[35] Niguidula, ed.

DIAGRAM [36]

PROTESTANT TWO KINGDOMS DOCTRINE



[36] Everett Mendoza, "The Role of the State in God's Political Economy," (n.d.).; see also Jurgen Moltmann, "Luther's Doctrine of the Two Kingdoms and Its Use Today," in *On Human Dignity: Political Theology and Ethics* (Fortress Press, 1983).

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