

WEAVER STUDY GUIDES

State's Rights

Study Guide

Civil Government

John Weaver

Weaver Bible College

A lesson-by-lesson companion for reading, discussion, and written responses.

Downloadable classroom edition | 8.5 x 11 inches

Name / group

Date

Contents

Lesson 1: State's Rights - Part One 3

Major Themes 3

Key Arguments 4

Scripture References 5

Discussion Questions 6

Applications 8

Personal Application and Notes 9

Lesson 2: State's Rights - Part Two 10

Major Themes 10

Key Arguments 11

Scripture References 12

Discussion Questions 14

Applications 16

Personal Application and Notes 17

Online Lecture Resources 18

Using this guide

Read the corresponding chapter, then work through the themes, arguments, and Scripture references.

Write your responses before discussing the questions with others. Use the application pages to identify a practical next step.

The study material is retained from the existing lecture study guides. Added writing prompts provide space for your own response.

Print at Actual Size / 100% on US Letter paper. Single-sided and double-sided printing are both suitable. Lessons begin on the next available page; no blank pages are inserted.

Reading assignments refer to the September 30, 2026 edition of the companion book. Online lecture links and QR codes are collected at the end.

LESSON 1

State's Rights

Part One

March 04, 2007

Read Chapter 1 in the companion book, pages 5-24.

Major Themes

Sovereignty of the States

The original 13 states were sovereign, independent entities that voluntarily created a limited federal government.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes the Articles of Confederation: 'Each state retains its sovereignty, freedom, and independence...' and the Treaty of Paris acknowledging 13 separate sovereign states.

Federal Government as Servant, Not Master

The federal government was created by the states to serve as their agent with limited, delegated powers.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'The federal government did not create the states. The states created the federal government.'

Right of Nullification and Interposition

States have the right to nullify unconstitutional federal laws and interpose to protect their citizens.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Jefferson's Kentucky Resolutions and South Carolina's Ordinance of Nullification declaring tariffs 'null, void, and no law.'

Loss of States' Rights Leads to Tyranny

The erosion of states' rights has transformed the U.S. from a constitutional republic into a centralized despotism.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes James Henley Thornwell: 'If they prevail... we shall have a central despotism with the notion of the states forever abolished.'

Biblical Worldview of Government

Christians must view government through the lens of Scripture, which defines the proper roles and limits of civil authority.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'We need to have a biblical view... of government... God speaks on every one of these subjects.'

Ignorance of History and Scripture

Modern Americans are ignorant of their history, heritage, and the Bible, making them susceptible to tyranny.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'We are ignorant of our history, we're ignorant of our heritage, and we're ignorant of our Bibles.'

Key Arguments

The federal government is not a party to the constitutional compact

The Constitution is a compact among sovereign states; the federal government is their creation, not a party with authority to define its own powers.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Calhoun: 'The error is in the assumption that the general or the federal government is a party to the constitutional compact.'

States have the right to judge constitutional infractions

Because states are the parties to the compact, each state has an equal right to judge whether the federal government has violated the Constitution.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Jefferson: 'Each party has an equal right to judge for itself as well of infractions as the mode and measures of redress.'

The 10th Amendment reserves powers to the states

The Constitution delegates only limited powers to the federal government; all other powers remain with the states or the people.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes the 10th Amendment: 'The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution... are reserved to the states respectively or to the people.'

States' rights are the bulwark of liberty

The preservation of state sovereignty is essential to protecting individual liberties against federal overreach.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Jefferson: 'The true bulwarks of our liberty in this country are our state governments.'

The servant has become the master

The federal government has usurped power and now acts as master over the states, reversing the intended order.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Ecclesiastes 10:7: 'I have seen servants upon horses and princes walking as servants upon the earth.'

Scripture References

Romans 13:1-4

Weaver reads this passage as the biblical starting point for discussing civil government and submission to authorities.

Ecclesiastes 10:7

Weaver uses this verse to illustrate the reversal of roles where the federal government (servant) now rules over the states (princes).

Psalms 82

Weaver briefly references this psalm as a judgment against unjust magistrates and a world turned upside down.

Jeremiah 6

Weaver alludes to the call to return to the old paths and righteous ways.

Study notes

Discussion Questions

1. How does the historical understanding of states as sovereign entities challenge the modern view of federal supremacy?

Consider: Weaver argues that the states created the federal government, not the other way around.

2. What are the practical implications of the claim that the federal government is not a party to the constitutional compact?

Consider: Weaver quotes Calhoun's argument that the states alone are parties to the compact.

3. In what ways have we seen the 'servant become the master' in our current political system?

Consider: Weaver uses Ecclesiastes 10:7 to illustrate the reversal of roles.

4. How should Christians balance submission to governing authorities (Romans 13) with the right to resist tyranny?

Consider: Weaver reads Romans 13 but also advocates for states' rights to nullify unconstitutional acts.

5. What role does ignorance of history and Scripture play in the loss of liberty?

Consider: Weaver states that ignorance has allowed the people to be 'bamboozled.'

Applications

Study history and the Constitution

Weaver urges listeners to learn their true history and read the Constitution to understand their rights.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'Most of us have never read the Constitution... Some of you never even read your Bible all the way through one time.'

Develop a biblical worldview of government

Christians must view civil government through the lens of Scripture, recognizing God's design for limited authority.

Lecture support: Weaver emphasizes: 'We need to have a biblical view... of government.'

Reject dependency on government

Weaver calls for a return to personal responsibility and a biblical work ethic instead of relying on government provision.

Lecture support: Weaver states: 'We need to go back to... the biblical work ethic. And learn to take care of ourselves and our family.'

Hold state legislators accountable

Weaver argues that state officials must have the backbone to stand against federal overreach.

Lecture support: Weaver says: 'Our state legislators do not have the backbone... to stand on their own two feet and look at the federal government and say, You are our servant.'

Study notes

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

LESSON 2

State's Rights

Part Two

March 13, 2007

Read Chapter 2 in the companion book, pages 25-44.

Major Themes

Limited Government

God ordained civil government solely as a ministry of justice, limiting its authority to punishing evil and protecting the righteous.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'the only authority that God gave civil government is the authority to execute justice' and cites Romans 13:3-4.

Individual Rights as the Basis of States' Rights

Rights originate from God and belong to individuals; states' rights are corporate expressions of these individual rights.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'it is the people who were created by God. It was the people who were given these rights, and it's the people who came together and formed the states.'

Tyranny as Rebellion Against God

Any government that exceeds its God-given limits and oppresses the people is in rebellion against God and ceases to fulfill its ordained purpose.

Lecture support: Weaver argues, 'any and all tyrannical, oppressive and wicked governments that seek to enslave and bind and destroy the people are in rebellion against God.'

Civil Rulers as God's Servants

Romans 13 describes civil rulers as deacons (servants) and ministers of God, accountable to execute His righteousness, not autonomous authorities.

Lecture support: Weaver points out the Greek words *diakonos* and *leitourgos* in Romans 13:4,6, emphasizing rulers are servants and public worshipers of God.

Faith and Virtue as Prerequisites for Liberty

National freedom depends on personal faith in Christ and the resulting virtue; without Christianity, liberty degenerates into tyranny.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes George Washington and Benjamin Rush, and cites 2 Peter 1:5 to show that virtue is added to faith, and liberty requires virtue.

Key Arguments

Government's Authority is Limited by God

God only authorized civil government to execute justice; any expansion beyond that is usurpation and tyranny.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'God has limited civil government to a ministry of justice... that it might punish the wicked, and... protect the righteous.'

The Constitution Limits the Federal Government, Not the People

The U.S. Constitution is a limited powers document designed to restrict the federal government, not the states or individuals.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'the Constitution of the United States was not written to limit the people or the states. It was written to limit the federal government.'

Usurpation is Treasonable

When government exceeds its constitutional limits, it commits treasonable usurpation against the people, as Alexander Hamilton argued.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Hamilton: 'such public servants who defy the constitution, it would be a treasonable usurpation upon the power and the majesty of the people.'

The Bible Does Not Teach Unlimited Submission

Passages like 1 Peter 2:13 refer to submission to forms of government that execute justice, not blind obedience to every law.

Lecture support: Weaver explains the Greek word *ktisis* means 'form of government,' and the context limits submission to governments that punish evil and praise good.

Personal Bondage Prevents Understanding of Liberty

Those enslaved to sin cannot grasp or pursue national liberty; spiritual freedom must precede political freedom.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'the man who is under personal bondage has no concept of national liberty and freedom.'

Loss of Faith Leads to Loss of Virtue and Freedom

America's departure from Christianity has eroded virtue, resulting in the loss of liberty and the rise of tyranny.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'when we lost our faith, we lost our virtue... And when you lose your virtue, you lose your freedom.'

Scripture References

Romans 13:1-4

Primary text for the lecture, establishing civil government as ordained by God for justice.

Deuteronomy 29:29

Cited to show that history is the unfolding of God's secret will.

Psalms 75:6-7

God is the sovereign who raises up and puts down rulers.

Isaiah 10

God uses tyrants as instruments of chastisement, though tyranny is not His ordained norm.

Psalms 82

God's judgment against judges who pervert justice.

Psalms 2:1-4

Kings and rulers rebel against God's restraints, but God laughs at their defiance.

Hosea 5:10

Princes who remove boundaries face God's wrath.

2 Chronicles 19:6

Judges are to judge for the Lord, exacting His righteousness.

1 Peter 2:13-14

Submission to every form of government that punishes evil and praises good, not unlimited obedience.

2 Peter 1:5

Faith must be supplemented with virtue, which is essential for liberty.

John 8:34

Whoever commits sin is a slave to sin, explaining personal bondage.

Leviticus 26

Blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience.

Deuteronomy 28

Blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience.

Study notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Discussion Questions

1. How does viewing history as 'God's eternal decrees coming to pass in time' affect the way we interpret current political events?

Consider: Weaver's opening statement about history's theological significance.

2. In what practical ways can we distinguish between a government acting within its God-ordained ministry of justice and one that is usurping authority?

Consider: Discussion of limited government and the purpose of civil authority.

3. How should Christians respond when government exceeds its constitutional and biblical limits?

Consider: Weaver's argument that usurpation is treasonable and the Founders' example of denying the principle.

4. What does it mean for civil rulers to be 'God's deacons' and 'exactors of righteousness,' and how should that shape our expectations of them?

Consider: Exegesis of Romans 13:4 and the Greek terms for minister and revenger.

5. Why is personal spiritual freedom a prerequisite for understanding and maintaining political liberty?

Consider: Weaver's point that a slave to sin cannot conceive of national freedom.

6. What steps can individuals and churches take to restore faith and virtue as the foundation of liberty in our nation?

Consider: Conclusion emphasizing the need to return to the Word of God for freedom.

Applications

Recognize Government's Limited Role

Understand that civil government is only authorized to execute justice, not to control education, welfare, or religion.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'God never ordained government to be an educational ministry. He never ordained government to be a welfare ministry.'

Guard Against Usurpation

Be vigilant to identify and resist governmental overreach, following the Founders' example of denying unconstitutional principles early.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Madison: 'They saw all the consequences in principle and avoided the consequences by denying the principle.'

Submit to Godly Authority, Not Tyranny

Submission to government is conditional on its adherence to God's justice; we are not required to obey wicked commands.

Lecture support: Weaver explains 1 Peter 2:13-14 limits submission to governments that punish evil and praise good.

Pursue Personal Freedom in Christ

True liberty begins with freedom from sin through Jesus Christ; without this, political freedom is unattainable.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'There is no man who can be free apart from Jesus Christ.'

Cultivate Faith and Virtue

Add virtue to faith through obedience to God's Word, as national liberty depends on the virtue of the people.

Lecture support: Weaver cites 2 Peter 1:5 and Washington's Farewell Address linking virtue to liberty.

Return to Biblical Standards

Restore the Bible as the standard for personal, familial, ecclesiastical, and national life to regain freedom.

Lecture support: Weaver concludes, 'we must come back to the Word of God. And submit to it.'

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

Online Lecture Resources

Scan a code or select the lecture link in the PDF. The original lecture identifiers and destinations are preserved.

Lesson 1: State's Rights - Part One

Lecture JW00891

[Open the formatted lecture online](https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW00891&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted)



https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW00891&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted

Lesson 2: State's Rights - Part Two

Lecture JW00889

[Open the formatted lecture online](https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW00889&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted)



https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW00889&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted

Source information

Study material: existing Major Themes, Key Arguments, Scripture References, Discussion Questions, and Applications from the corresponding Weaver Bible College lecture records. Original lecture titles and provenance are retained in those source records.

Layout upgraded September 30, 2026. Original manuscripts, study-guide data, and previous PDFs have not been changed.