WEAVER STUDY GUIDES

The Desire For Power

Study Guide

Civil Government

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

Downloadable classroom edition | 8.5 x 11 inches

Name / group

Date

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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 October 9, 2026 opening-heading corrected edition of the companion book. Online lecture links and QR codes are collected at the end.

LESSON 1

The Desire For Power #1

July 21, 2002

Read Chapter 1 in the companion book, pages 5-23 (October 9, 2026 opening-heading corrected edition).

Major Themes

God's Sovereignty Over Power

All power belongs to God; human authority is delegated and accountable to Him.

Lecture support: Psalm 62:11: 'Power belongeth unto God.' Romans 13:1: 'the powers that be are ordained of God.'

The Corruption of Delegated Power

Fallen man abuses power, seeking to usurp God's authority and control others.

Lecture support: Psalm 62:3-4 describes rulers who 'imagine mischief' and 'delight in lies.' Lord Acton's dictum: 'power corrupts.'

The Desire for Power as Root Sin

The lust for power is a fundamental sin leading to conflict and rebellion against God.

Lecture support: Genesis 3:5 temptation: 'ye shall be as gods.' Psalm 2: rulers conspire against God to break His bands.

Historical Revisionism of the Civil War

The popular narrative that the Civil War was fought to free slaves is a myth; the true cause was a power struggle.

Lecture support: Lincoln initially fought to preserve the Union; Emancipation Proclamation freed no slaves. The war was about control.

Constitutional Compromises as Power Balances

The Constitution's slavery-related clauses were political compromises to balance power between North and South.

Lecture support: Three-Fifths Clause, Bicameral Congress, and Senate appointment by states were designed to prevent Northern domination.

Northern Opposition to Slavery as Political Containment

Northern efforts to restrict slavery in territories were aimed at limiting Southern political influence, not moral concern for blacks.

Lecture support: Senator Rufus King and others admitted the Three-Fifths Clause gave disproportionate power. Wilmot Proviso aimed to keep blacks out.

Proposed Amendments Prove War Was Not About Slavery

The Crittenden and Corwin Amendments, which would have permanently protected slavery, were passed or proposed, showing slavery was not the issue.

Lecture support: Corwin Amendment passed House and Senate, signed by President, and proposed as 13th Amendment by Lincoln.

The Ongoing Battle for Power

The struggle for power continues today as fallen men seek to create their own utopias, usurping God's authority.

Lecture support: The more things change, the more they remain the same. Power belongs to God and must be exercised within His limits.

Key Arguments

All power is delegated by God

Human authority is not inherent but given by God, and those who hold it are accountable to Him.

Lecture support: Psalm 62:11; Romans 13:1; Daniel 2:21, 37. 'Promotion cometh neither from the east... but God is the judge.'

Fallen man inevitably abuses power

Sinful humans are power-hungry and seek to control others, ultimately trying to replace God.

Lecture support: Psalm 62:3-4; Psalm 2:1-3; Genesis 3:5. 'Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely' applies to sinners.

The Civil War was a power struggle, not a moral crusade

The North's actions, including proposed constitutional amendments to protect slavery, prove the war was about control, not emancipation.

Lecture support: Lincoln's initial war aim was preserving the Union. The Corwin Amendment would have forbidden Congress from abolishing slavery.

The Three-Fifths Clause was a political compromise

The clause was designed to balance representation between North and South, not to dehumanize slaves.

Lecture support: It counted slaves for population to give the South more House seats, offsetting Northern population advantage.

Northern opposition to slavery expansion was racially motivated

Northern politicians sought to keep blacks out of territories to preserve them for white settlers, not to end slavery.

Lecture support: Congressman David Wilmot: 'The Negro race already occupy enough of this fair continent... keep what remains for ourselves.'

The South seceded over loss of political power

Southern leaders threatened disunion when they perceived an irreversible loss of influence in the federal government.

Lecture support: Robert Toombs in 1850: 'if by your legislation you seek to drive us from the territories... I am for disunion.'

Constitutional amendments offered to protect slavery were rejected

The South rejected permanent constitutional guarantees for slavery because the real issue was political control, not slavery itself.

Lecture support: Crittenden Resolutions and Corwin Amendment passed Congress but were not ratified by enough states; South had already seceded.

The abuse of delegated authority continues today

Modern political struggles are still about power and control, as fallen men seek to usurp God's authority.

Lecture support: The more things change, the more they remain the same. Power belongs to God and must be exercised within His limits.

Scripture References

Psalm 62:1-12

The entire Psalm is read, emphasizing God as the source of salvation and power.

Psalm 62:11

Key verse: 'God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.'

Psalm 75:6-7

Promotion comes from God; He puts down one and sets up another.

Romans 13:1

The powers that be are ordained of God.

Daniel 2:21

God changes times and seasons, removes kings and sets up kings.

Daniel 2:37

God gave Nebuchadnezzar his kingdom, power, strength, and glory.

Psalm 62:3-4

Describes the abuse of power: imagining mischief, delighting in lies, blessing with mouth but cursing inwardly.

Psalm 37:35

David saw the wicked in great power, spreading like a green bay tree.

Psalm 2:1-3

Kings and rulers take counsel against the Lord and His anointed, seeking to break their bands.

Genesis 3:5

The serpent's temptation: 'ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.'

1 Timothy 6:10

The love of money is the root of all evil; money represents power.

Discussion Questions

1. How does understanding that all power belongs to God change the way we view human authority?

Consider: Based on Psalm 62:11 and the concept of delegated authority.

2. In what ways do we see the abuse of delegated authority in our own lives or society?

Consider: From the description of fallen man's corruption of power in Psalm 62:3-4.

3. Why is the desire for power considered a root sin, and how does it manifest today?

Consider: Connection to Genesis 3:5 and the temptation to be like God.

4. How does the historical evidence presented challenge the common narrative about the Civil War?

Consider: The argument that the war was about power, not slavery, supported by the Corwin Amendment.

5. What can we learn from the constitutional compromises about balancing power in a fallen world?

Consider: The design of the Bicameral Congress and Three-Fifths Clause as power-balancing measures.

6. How should Christians respond when they see power being abused or usurped?

Consider: Application of the principle that power belongs to God and must be exercised within His limits.

7. What does it mean to 'play God' in our personal lives, and how can we guard against it?

Consider: The tendency of fallen man to seek to determine good and evil for himself.

8. How does the love of money relate to the desire for power, according to 1 Timothy 6:10?

Consider: Money as a means to gain power, control, and manipulation.

Applications

Recognize God as the ultimate source of all authority

Acknowledge that any power or authority we have is delegated by God and must be exercised in submission to Him.

Lecture support: Psalm 62:11; Romans 13:1. 'Power belongeth unto God.'

Guard against the corruption of power

Be aware of the sinful tendency to abuse authority for selfish ends and seek to serve rather than control.

Lecture support: Psalm 62:3-4 describes rulers who 'imagine mischief' and 'delight in lies.'

Resist the temptation to 'play God'

Avoid the sin of determining good and evil for ourselves, instead submitting to God's revealed will.

Lecture support: Genesis 3:5 temptation: 'ye shall be as gods.'

Exercise delegated authority within God-given limits

Like the sea, our authority has boundaries set by God; we must not overstep them.

Lecture support: God says to all delegated authorities, 'Hitherto shalt thou come, and no further.'

Trust in God's sovereignty over human affairs

Since God removes and sets up kings, we can trust His control over political and social powers.

Lecture support: Daniel 2:21: 'he removeth kings, and setteth up kings.'

Be discerning about historical narratives

Question politically correct histories and seek truth, recognizing that power struggles often underlie conflicts.

Lecture support: The myth that the Civil War was fought to free slaves is contradicted by historical evidence.

Avoid the love of money as a root of evil

Recognize that the pursuit of wealth is often a pursuit of power, which can lead to manipulation and control.

Lecture support: 1 Timothy 6:10: 'the love of money is the root of all evil.'

Seek wisdom to navigate current power struggles

Pray for understanding and wisdom to act rightly in a world where fallen men continually seek to usurp God's authority.

Lecture support: Closing prayer: 'Give us wisdom to know what to do in this day and time.'

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

The Desire For Power #2

July 28, 2002

Read Chapter 2 in the companion book, pages 25-48 (October 9, 2026 opening-heading corrected edition).

Major Themes

Total Depravity and Human Inability

Fallen humans are incapable of changing their sinful nature or doing good apart from God's grace.

Lecture support: Weaver expounds Jeremiah 13:23 and Romans 8:7-8 to show that sinners cannot change themselves, just as a leopard cannot change its spots.

The Corrupting Nature of Power

Sinful rulers become more corrupt as they gain power, and governments run by fallen men inevitably become tyrannical.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'The more power a sinner gets, the more corrupt he becomes,' and illustrates this with Lincoln's dictatorial actions.

Historical Repetition of Tyranny

The unconstitutional acts of Lincoln are being repeated by the Bush administration, demonstrating that 'the more things change, the more they remain the same.'

Lecture support: Weaver compares Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus and spy networks to Bush's enemy combatant detentions and Operation TIPS.

War as a Tool for Government Expansion

Governments use war, real or phony, to permanently expand their power, increase taxes, and suppress liberty.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes Randolph Bourne, 'War is the health of the state,' and cites wars on poverty, drugs, and terrorism as examples.

The Illusion of Political Solutions

Both major political parties are corrupt and incapable of bringing true change; salvation is not in government but in Christ alone.

Lecture support: Weaver says there is 'not a dime's worth of difference' between Republicans and Democrats, and that 'our salvation is not in government.'

The Necessity of Grace for Change

True transformation of individuals and society comes only through the grace of God and faith in Jesus Christ.

Lecture support: Weaver concludes, 'Change comes through grace and through faith in Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ alone.'

Key Arguments

Sinners cannot change themselves

Just as a leopard cannot change its spots, those accustomed to doing evil cannot do good. This is total inability rooted in total depravity.

Lecture support: Weaver cites Jeremiah 13:23 and Romans 8:7-8, emphasizing that the carnal mind is enmity against God and cannot be subject to God's law.

Lincoln was a dictator who destroyed the Constitution

Lincoln suspended habeas corpus, imprisoned thousands without trial, censored the press, and created war powers out of thin air, transforming the republic into an empire.

Lecture support: Weaver lists 11 reasons for arrest under Lincoln and quotes historians who call him a dictator, such as Clinton Rossiter and James Ford Rhodes.

Bush is repeating Lincoln's tyranny

The Bush administration claims power to detain citizens indefinitely as enemy combatants, promotes domestic spying, and seeks to erode Posse Comitatus, mirroring Lincoln's actions.

Lecture support: Weaver reads from articles about the Hamdi case, Operation TIPS, and discussions on revising Posse Comitatus, directly comparing them to Lincoln's policies.

War permanently expands government power

During war, governments expand powers, and after war they never return to pre-war size. Phony wars like the war on drugs serve the same purpose.

Lecture support: Weaver explains that the war on illiteracy led to government-controlled education, and the war on poverty led to a government-controlled economy.

The Civil War denied the American Revolution

By forcing the South to remain in the Union, Lincoln denied the revolutionary right of self-determination, which was the basis for American independence from England.

Lecture support: Weaver quotes William Appleman Williams and the London Times, which stated that the Union was upheld 'like any other empire, by force of arms.'

Political parties are equally corrupt

Both Republicans and Democrats have abandoned the Constitution and the Word of God, and neither offers a solution to tyranny.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'there's not a dime's worth of difference between either one of them. Both of them are absolutely corrupt.'

Scripture References

Jeremiah 13:23

Weaver uses this verse to establish the principle that sinners cannot change their nature, just as a leopard cannot change its spots.

Jeremiah 22:21

God says that Israel's manner from youth has been to disobey His voice, illustrating habitual sinfulness.

Romans 8:7-8

The carnal mind is enmity against God and cannot be subject to His law; those in the flesh cannot please God. This supports total depravity and inability.

Acts 15:18

Known unto God are all His works from the beginning, supporting the linear view of history with a definite beginning and end.

Study notes

Discussion Questions

1. How does the doctrine of total depravity affect our expectations for political leaders and governments?

Consider: Weaver argues that sinful rulers cannot change and become more corrupt with power, based on Romans 8:7-8.

2. In what ways did Lincoln's actions during the Civil War set precedents for modern executive power?

Consider: Weaver details Lincoln's suspension of habeas corpus, military arrests, and suppression of dissent.

3. Is there a legitimate biblical basis for comparing modern government programs to biblical warnings about tyranny?

Consider: Weaver compares Operation TIPS to Lincoln's spy networks and quotes Scripture on human inability.

4. How should Christians respond when government expands its power in the name of security?

Consider: Weaver discusses the erosion of Posse Comitatus and the creation of the Department of Homeland Security.

5. What does it mean that 'war is the health of the state,' and how have phony wars been used to increase government control?

Consider: Weaver explains that wars, real or fabricated, permanently expand government power and reduce liberty.

6. How can we maintain a biblical hope for societal change without placing our trust in political parties?

Consider: Weaver concludes that salvation is only in Christ and calls for a government based on God's Word.

Applications

Recognize human inability and depend on God's grace

Acknowledge that neither individuals nor governments can change their sinful nature apart from the grace of God in Christ.

Lecture support: Weaver states, 'Change comes through grace and through faith in Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ alone.'

Be vigilant against governmental overreach

Citizens should watch their government to ensure it does not exceed constitutional limits, rather than spying on each other.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'If any spying is to be done, it ought to be the citizens of this country eyeballing our government to make sure that it does not exceed its constitutional limits.'

Do not trust in political parties for salvation

Both major parties are corrupt and have abandoned God's Word; true hope is not in elections but in Christ's return.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'Our salvation is not in government. Our salvation is only in the grace of God.'

Learn from history to avoid repeating sins

Christians should study history to recognize patterns of tyranny and not be 'silly' or 'stupid' in allowing wickedness to continue.

Lecture support: Weaver says, 'One thing we learn from history is that we don't learn from history... because we make the same mistakes, commit the same sins.'

Resist the erosion of liberty in the name of security

Programs like Operation TIPS and the weakening of Posse Comitatus should be opposed as steps toward a police state.

Lecture support: Weaver warns that the TIPS program will turn Americans into 'government snoops' and lead to a 'gargantuan police state.'

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: The Desire For Power #1

Lecture JW01073

Open the formatted lecture online

https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01073&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted

Lesson 2: The Desire For Power #2

Lecture JW01072

Open the formatted lecture online

https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW01072&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted

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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.