Jonathan Leeman’s *Political Church* in outline

1. Two authorities, two ages, two mandates.

*Two mandates*

* “The state is charged with rendering judgment, a purpose enunciated most clearly in Genesis 9:5-6 and Romans 13:1-7.” (375)
* “The local church is charged with declaring Christ’s absolute, legitimate, comprehensive and authorising rule over the nations and their leaders, pointing the way to justification and justice, affirming who and what belongs to his kingdom, and exemplifying the just and righteous kingdom life.” (375)

*Two ages*

* “The state possesses the power of temporal coercion.” (374)
* “The church possesses the power of eschatological declaration.” (375)

*Two authorities*

* “The local church and its members represent God’s rule according to a ‘deputy model’ of authorisation. Christ has deputised it to wear his name and speak on his behalf on a limited range of matters.” (374)
* “The state represents God’s rule according to a delegate model. Christ has delegated a measure of his authority to governments to fulfil a set of specific purposes according to his standards. But its decision and actions to not bear his reputation as closely as does the church.” (374)

1. One king, one judge, one justice

“Christ is the King of kings. He promises to judge all governments and their peoples. Every person, institution and conception of justice is either for him or against him. There is no such thing as religious neutrality, even in the public square.” (375)

1. A church’s twofold jurisdiction.

“The local church’s jurisdiction extends in one respect to its own members and in another respect to the nations. It disciples the former and evangelises the latter, using the words of King Jesus for both activities. Speaking God’s word from the pulpit and on the street is therefore political speech. The keys of the kingdom, put into use through baptism and the Lord’s Supper, should keep the line between these two layers of jurisdiction clear.” (375)

1. (The church is) A model of true politics

“The life of the church should, little by little, increasingly picture a true politics and a true worship. In its confessions and corporate life together, the church should offer a contrast society or counter-culture of righteousness, justice and love… The local church is where the nations join together as ‘one new man’” (375)

1. Evangelism as political engagement
2. Political engagement and representing Jesus as a delegate
3. Political engagement and representing Jesus as a deputy
4. Employing a joint/several distinction
5. The need for caution in deputising one’s political views
   1. “Does the issue at stake fall within the government’s authorisation to render justice?
   2. Does the law or practice in question explicitly contradict the rule of Christ (e.g. anti-conversion laws)
   3. Is the matter clear in Scripture or an implication of an implication?” (382)
6. A church’s primary deputised message to government
   1. The government’s authority comes from God
   2. The government’s authority is temporary
   3. The government must protect the survival of God’s people, the church
   4. The occupants of government will be judged for a failure on any of these points, as well as for any idolatrous excesses and injustices.

“To expand on the third point”… (383)

*Churches should pray for and work for government*

*Churches are and are not a political threat*

*Religious tolerance*

*Political success equal faithfulness*

*No such thing as a neutral legitimisation for government, justice or religious freedom.*