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## Living in God's Two Kingdoms: A Biblical Vision for Christianity and Culture (Book Review)

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contemporary situations. He discusses how the provision and maintenance of public justice in complex societies require of the state that it foster and uphold the development and functioning of non-state social structures, recognizing that persons have callings and responsibilities that extend beyond those of citizenship. Here Chaplin gives extended attention to elucidating what only lies implicit or is insufficiently developed in Dooyeweerd's writings. He repeatedly shows that where difficulties seem to arise, these may often be resolved within the framework of Dooyeweerd's thinking (107, 178, 216).

The picture that emerges is one of an active state that facilitates much but that is not all-encompassing (226-35). The discussion is impressively wide-ranging, touching the U. S. Constitution on church and state (251-2) and the issues raised by the behavior of corporate capitalism (255-6). The eleventh chapter proceeds to discuss how all of this relates to civil society generally. It construes civil society as "that realm of social interactions embracing the dense networks of interlinkages [better, "interdependencies"] characteristic of a modern society" (283, cf. 285). These latter chapters are infor-

mative and richly suggestive for those seeking to confront the complexities of our times from a Christian-principled standpoint. The importance of the state's protective (290) and adjudicative (298) responsibilities is considered, even as Chaplin remains concerned about Dooyeweerd's reserve when it comes to a transformative function of the state (301). His was essentially a reformist outlook (303), arguably attributable to the strong "anti-revolutionary" orientation of the Kuyperian legacy.

In his "Epilogue" Chaplin argues that, as we move into a post-secular era, there has loomed up in western jurisdictions a need for coherent reflection on public justice and civil society issues that current political elites, and the interests and priorities that they represent, are unable and/or unwilling to provide. This inability or unwillingness explains Chaplin's preference for a more transformative approach. This book is not a *quick* read, but it is an immensely rewarding and instructive *careful* read. It is unquestionably *the* work in English on Dooyeweerd's thought in relation to public justice and civil society and is strongly recommended.

Van Drunen, David. *Living in God's Two Kingdoms: A Biblical Vision for Christianity and Culture*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2010. 208 pages. ISBN 978-1-4335-1404-3. Reviewed by Carl E. Zylstra, President, Dordt College.

For the past few years a mini-tempest has been brewing over the question of whether David Van Drunen, a legal and theological scholar currently teaching at Westminster Theological Seminary in California, may have finally landed the coup de grace that would put the neo-Kuyperian reformational project to rest once and for all. In fact, in an earlier volume expounding on his theory of the two kingdoms, Van Drunen himself asks critics to await this final volume on biblical ethics before judging the impact of his argument.

The positive aspect of this awaited volume is that it is now obvious that Van Drunen believes it is either his way or Kuyper's way—explicitly referring to the latter as "not biblical" (13). Unfortunately, there isn't likely to be much in this volume that will actually convince many neo-Kuyperians to give up their quest. Rather, they are likely just to get mad.

For instance, in his first book Van Drunen dismisses as self-evident silliness the attempt of a Christian college to infuse its student activities with biblical norms and the attempt of Christian professional agriculturalists to develop biblical norms for the care of their animals and for carrying out business practices (*Natural Law and the Two Kingdoms* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010], 4-5). This new volume shows that his criticism was not just an attempt to pick on a particular college (Dordt College) or a particular group of professionals (Dutch goat breeders). Rather, Van Drunen really does intend to dismiss as totally misguided the entire enterprise of Christian day school education, which at least one key wing of the Reformed tradition

has always considered essential to living out their faith. Moreover, Van Drunen's explicit rejection of the necessity of biblical norms for vocation and civic engagement makes clear his view that the last couple of centuries of (at least some traditions in) the Reformed homiletical exhortation to serve Christ's kingdom in both daily occupations and civic duty has amounted to little more than whistling in the wind.

The problem with Van Drunen's effort is that he seems to think he is telling the Reformed community something they didn't already know. But the Reformed community has been well aware of this difference of perspective among themselves for a century at least. For instance, Dordt College itself is located in a region of the country that has, for almost 100 years, experienced a very keen division over exactly these arenas of Christian education and biblically normed civic engagement. Indeed, in the Northwest Iowa area, still today one wing of the Reformed community views Christian schooling as so essential to living out their faith in Jesus Christ that parents are willing to hold down two jobs, conduct bake sales, and do without family vacations or homes at the lake in order to make this separate system of Christian day school education possible. Meanwhile, the other wing of the Reformed tradition continues to view such a commitment as optional quirkiness at best and un-American separatism at worst. Van Drunen doesn't seem to view such schools as unpatriotic, but he does make clear that he believes cultural engagement takes place better in a round of golf at a fine country club (25-26) than it does in the local Christian school gym.

Now the author may take exception to some of this characterization. He insists, for instance, that if parents want to educate their children in a Christian school, they should feel free to do so, provided the schools meet other apparently more important criteria such as academic achievement. However, Van Drunen misses (or dismisses) the point that has driven generations of parents to establish and maintain Christian day schools. The point of these dedicated Christian communities is their conviction that Christian perspective on all of life simply is never optional. Educating a child to look at the world through anything less than scripturally shaped lenses is considered a violation of the parents' responsibility to their child, to the Christian community to whom the child belongs, and to the kingdom of the Christ in whose name the child was baptized. They have always believed that any pedagogical deficiencies in the school should be corrected and any academic lapses should be made up as the child continues to grow. But to disobey the biblical command to train up a child in the way he or she should go simply never entered their Reformed minds.

Nor do matters get much better when Van Drunen turns his sights onto the notion of Christian communal obedience in engaging culture in the name of Christ, what Andy Crouch has recently called "culture making." Almost astoundingly in an avowedly "Reformed" book, Van Drunen specifically dismisses the continuing relevance of the cultural mandate (26). Van Drunen, however, is explicit that Christian communal actions end at the church door (26, 163), and that the dream of civic and vocational life infused by Christian principles as an outgrowth of principled Christian education is a personal option at best (163).

It should be admitted, however, that even for those Reformed Christians whose convictions Van Drunen's book derides, there are legitimate critiques. Indeed, I personally share his aversion to much of the language of "transformation," preferring instead to emphasize Christ's final words to us—that we know neither the time nor the hour when the Father will "restore the kingdom to Israel." And so, according to our Lord (Acts 1), the Christian community's task is to "witness" to the work of transformation that he and the Father will accomplish through the Spirit, whom they will send.

Yet that observation need not lead to his rather breathtaking (at least for someone who claims Reformed pedigree) perspective that the notion of cosmic redemption is somehow a nineteenth-century Reformed perversion. At times it seems as if Van Drunen, in this volume, has completely overlooked the classic Reformed texts such as

John 3.17, Colossians 1.17, and I Corinthians 15.58, with their inspiring vision of complete renewal of the cosmos in Jesus Christ and the subsequent call to live obediently already now in the light of that heavenly vision.

I do believe that Van Drunen has made the case that, at least in terms of soteriology as applied to the individual, he remains firmly within the Reformed camp. Yet it is not clear he would return the favor, given this volume's stunning opening pages, in which Van Drunen manages to poison the well against the neo-Kuyperians through an explicit and extended effort to paint a picture of guilt by association with two "bogeymen" of the conservative Reformed community: NT Wright and the emerging church movement.

Yet even if this "two kingdom" perspective can claim a Reformed veneer, it is certainly less clear whether Van Drunen's viewpoint would sustain a vital Reformed community such as the one that underwrites this journal. The college whose faculty produces this journal is committed to a vision of what our foundational documents describe as a "Christian college in which all of the student's intellectual, social, and imaginative activities are permeated by the spirit and teaching of Christianity." I suggest that, at least for those who share the insights that have given rise to Reformed institutions and full-orbed Christian communal engagement with all of vocation and culture, this volume is scarcely compelling.

In the end this volume really does little more than make clear that Reformed Christians disagree among themselves over demands on their obedience that the cosmic claims of Christ make in our lives together. But that was always obvious to anyone who has ever tried to make the case for Christian education and the communal cultural and civic engagement that results. There have always been those who do and those who don't take seriously that using the Scripture as our only norm for faith—and life—includes all of life.

Perhaps it really does come down to a choice. There may be those who truly believe that Christian discipleship arises, first of all, out of intellectual elaboration of the finer points of systematic theology, following a friendly round of golf. Yet, at least for institutions such as the one that publishes this journal, we can be grateful that there also continue to be communities of those who, while washing dishes after the most recent fund-raising supper for the local Christian school, find their greatest joy in singing while they work, "For there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but simply to trust *and obey*"—in each and every part of life.