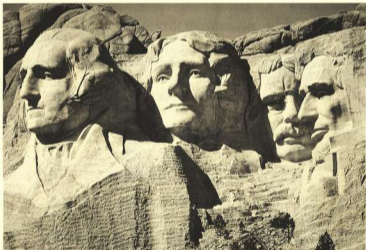

Our Nation Under God



TEACHER'S MANUAL

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CHAPTER INSTRUCTIONS

Chapter 1 *God Governs Everything*

Chapter 1 introduces the student to the concept of God's governance over all of Creation, and the means He has established to govern society. God has established a four-fold system of government by which society is to be organized and governed. This may seem to be a new idea to many, because we are so used to thinking of government solely in terms of political institutions. However, that was not always the case; as late as the beginning of the twentieth century, textbooks often referred to a multiplicity of governments.

Noah Webster, in his 1828 dictionary, displayed the reality of God's design for a multiplicity of governments by giving several definitions for *government*. You will note in the definitions below that Webster shows that the term *government* is appropriately applied to more than just the political realm; in these definitions he also applies the word to the individual and family.

GOVERNMENT, *noun*

1. Direction, regulation. These precepts will serve for the government of our conduct.
2. Control, restraint. Men are apt to neglect the government of their temper and passions.
3. The exercise of authority; direction and restraint exercised over the actions of men in communities, societies or states; the administration of public affairs, according to the established constitution, laws and usages, or by arbitrary edict. Prussia rose to importance under the government of Frederick II.
4. The exercise of authority by a parent or householder. Children are often ruined by a neglect of government in parents. "Let family government be like that of our heavenly Father, mild, gentle and affectionate." Kollock.
5. The system of polity in a state...; as a monarchical government, or a republican government.²

The primary point that you must get across to your student is that God created four basic forms of government: self, family, church, and civil. No one government is to dominate any other; each has its own proper sphere of influence and authority. Neglecting to properly carry out the requirements of each government or overextending one government into the realm of another is a failure to fulfill the plan of God.

LESSON PLANS

Week 1

1. Read pages 1–2, "God Rules the World."
2. Review the following Scripture passages: Genesis 1:1, Psalm 33:6, John 1:1–5, and Hebrews 11:3. Emphasize to the student that God has the right to establish the rules for the world because He has created the world, and it is His to do with as He thinks best.³

2. Noah Webster, *First Edition of an American Dictionary of the English Language*. (G. and C. Miriam Company, 1828; reprint ed., San Francisco: Foundation for American Christian Education, 1967).

3. "Does not the potter have power over the clay, from the same lump to make one vessel for honor and another for dishonor?" (Romans 9:21)

3. The student needs to understand from Romans 1:18–21 that all the people are accountable to God due to the fact of their knowledge of creation.
4. The student should memorize the four kinds of government.
5. Read pages 2–5, “Self-government—God’s Plan for Each Person.”
6. Review Genesis 3 about the Fall of Adam and Eve. Make sure that the student understands the nature of sin. A well-known definition of sin is: “Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of the law of God.”⁴
7. As the student reads about the Fall, make sure that he realizes that it not only affected Adam and Eve; it affected all people, because Adam represented all mankind. This concept, known as *original sin*, is important for the student to understand, because it shows the impossibility of people trying to be good enough to win God’s favor. This idea is seen in Romans 5:12 and I Corinthians 15:21–22.
8. The student should read the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:3–17, Deuteronomy 5:6–21) and Christ’s summary of the Law (Matthew 22:37–40).
9. The student should complete the exercise section on pages 3–4.

■ Exercise

1–5. *Answers will vary.*

10. Ask the student if he can please God by himself? Explain that it is impossible to be good enough for God, no matter how well we think we might be able to govern ourselves “... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”⁵
11. Discuss with the student that he can only become reconciled with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ. Have him read Ephesians 2:8, 9.
12. Only after the student understands his sin and need for reconciliation with God through the work of Jesus Christ alone can he understand the true nature and purpose of self-government. James 2:14–19 shows us that good works are to result from true faith. As Ephesians 2:10 puts it, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works....” The purpose of self-government can be summarized by the following: “Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and enjoy him forever.”⁶ The student can only be truly self-governed as he seeks to glorify God, but he cannot truly glorify God or enjoy Him in his own strength.
13. The student should look at the rules of baseball or some other sport.
14. The student must complete questions 1 and 2 on page 18.

Week 2

1. Read pages 5–10, “Family Government—God’s Plan for the Family.”
2. Read Genesis 1:26–28 and 2:21–24. You should begin by impressing on the student that God has ordained marriage and established the pattern for the family. To begin with, marriage is the foundation of the family. True families are not just any type of grouping of adults and children that may want to get together. The husband-wife relationship is the most basic relationship in the family, not the parent-child relationship.⁷

4. Westminster Shorter Catechism (WSC) 14.

5. Romans 3:18.

6. WSC 1.

7. Jay Adams, *Christion Living in the Home* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1972), p. 51.

3. Read Psalm 127 and 128. Stress that children are a blessing from God.
4. Have the student develop a chart or list detailing the various responsibilities of parents and children, using the following Scripture passages: Genesis 2:18, Exodus 20:12, Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Proverbs 1:8-9, Proverbs 31:10-31, Ephesians 5:22-6:4, Colossians 3:18-21, and 1 Peter 3:1, 7.
5. Have the student complete the activity on page 8 and the "picture album" on pages 9-10. If the student is in a one-parent home, have him draw a picture on page 9 of a favorite relative, church leader, or family friend in the place of the missing parent.

■ Activity

Answers will vary.

6. The student must complete question 3 on page 18.

Week 3

1. Read pages 10-12, "Government—God's Plan for the Church."
2. This lesson contains concepts which may be unknown to the student or at least difficult for him to understand. Therefore, you should review the following definitions with the student. Please note that these definitions may be more extensive than necessary for a second-grade student to understand, but may be helpful to you.

DEFINITIONS

- a. **church**—There are a variety of definitions for *church*, but the critical thing for the student to understand is that the church is not a building; it is the people of God. The rest of the definitions are related to this basic truth. However, there are more specific definitions which are important to understand, but which may be too complex for younger students.

The church has frequently been described as being either visible or invisible. The invisible church is the entire number of true believers that have ever been, are, and shall be gathered into the body of Christ.⁸ The visible church is made up of all those during all times and in all places who profess faith in Jesus Christ, along with their children.⁹ The invisible church and visible church overlap, but are not exactly the same thing, since the visible church contains people who have professed faith in Christ, but who may not have true faith.¹⁰ "There are not two churches ... but one church only, known perfectly to God and known imperfectly on earth."¹¹

More often, though, we think of *church* as referring to the members of the universal visible church that are "... organized in local and regional churches, confessing a common faith and submitting to a common form of government."¹²

- b. **elders**—Elders are the officers of the church who are responsible for the ministry of the Word of God and the rule of the Church. Elders who specialize in the teaching of the Word are called teaching elders or ministers, while elders who concentrate on governing the church are sometimes known as ruling elders.¹³

8. Westminster Larger Catechism (WLC) 64.

9. WLC 62.

10. 1 John 2:18-19.

11. "The Church," *The New Geneva Study Bible*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995), s.v. p. 1864.

12. *The Book of Church Order of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church*, 1995 ed., (Wilow Grove, PA: Committee on Christian Education, 1995), p. 4.

13. 1 Timothy 5:17.

- c. **pastors**—Pastors are teaching elders who are charged with tending the flock in local congregations. They conduct the public worship of God, preach the Word of God, administer the sacraments, and, with ruling elders, govern the church.¹⁴
 - d. **deacons**—Deacons administer the ministry of mercy to the church. This service is distinct from the rule of the church.
 - e. **sacraments**—The sacraments are ordinances of the visible church and are instituted by Christ. The sacraments of the New Testament are baptism and the Lord's Supper. These sacraments are to be administered under the oversight of the government of the church as part of the public worship of God by the congregation.
3. Read the Scriptural responsibilities and requirements for the officers of the church in Acts 6:1–7 and 20:17–38, 1 Timothy 3:1–13, Titus 1:5–9, and 1 Peter 5:1–4. Discuss these Scriptural principles.
 4. The student must complete the activity on page 12. If the student's church has more leaders than space is provided, he should just write as many names as there are spaces provided.

■ Activity

Answers will vary.

5. Review the by-laws, constitution, or church order document of a local congregation or denomination. Examine how the church governs itself.
6. The student must complete question 4 on page 18.

Week 4

1. Read pages 13–17, "Civil Government—God's Plan for the Nations" and "Four Governments Under God."
2. Review Genesis 9:1–7, Matthew 22:15–22, Romans 13:1–7, 1 Timothy 2:1–4, Titus 3:1–2, and 1 Peter 2:13–17. Discuss the purpose of civil government.
3. When discussing the nature of civil government, emphasize that this level of government is not a separate authority unto itself; it is under the authority of God. "God, the supreme Lord and King of all the world, has ordained civil magistrates, to be, under Him, over the people, for His own glory, and the public good: and, to this end, has armed them with the power of the sword, for the defense and encouragement of them that are good, and for the punishment of evil doers."¹⁵
4. Discuss the responsibilities of citizens to civil government in light of the Scripture passages listed above. The following is a good list of our citizenship duties: "It is the duty of people to pray for magistrates, to honor their persons, to pay them tribute or other dues, to obey their lawful commands, and to be subject to their authority, for conscience' sake."¹⁶
5. Are there ever any situations when we find it necessary to disobey civil government? Read Acts 4:18–31 and Acts 5:17–29, and discuss this question.
6. The student must complete the activity on page 16. The student should write the name of his municipality's mayor, board president, etc. If the student does not live within the boundaries of a particular city or town, he should write the name of his county's board president.

14. *The Book of Church Order*, p. 14.

15. *Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF)* 23:1.

16. *WCF* 23:4.

■ Activity

Answers will vary.

7. The student should fill-out the prayer list on page 17. We have provided the following list as a suggestion, but the student may develop a different list to reflect varying political structures in his area and the differing interests of the student.

PRAYER LIST

1. President of the United States
 2. state governor
 3. student's U. S. Representative
 4. the state's U.S. Senators
 5. Congress
 6. state legislature
 7. mayor or board president
 8. town council
 9. U. S. Supreme Court
 10. local police
8. The student must answer questions 5–6 on page 18.
 9. The student should review the entire chapter and all review questions before taking the chapter test.
 10. The student must take the test for chapter 1.

Chapter 1 Review—Page 18

1. God rules the world He made through four special governments.
2. Self-government lets a person follow God's Law without having to be forced.
3. Family government gives human beings the blessings of loving support and protection, as well as companionship and education.
4. Church government helps God-fearing people to strengthen their faith and to stand against Satan.
5. Civil government has been given the power to force people to live by the laws of God and to punish evildoers.
6. What Bible verse tells us to pray for our leaders? 1 Timothy 2:1–2