

Racial Reconciliation (Part 3): Jesus & Human Politics

- Discussion with a Sister about her fear of the future of our country...Her fear of what comforts, rights, and freedoms might be lost for her children...

“When do we take a stand...when do we fight back and say enough is enough?”

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Capitalism vs Socialism○ Conservative vs Liberal○ Republican vs Democrat○ Law & Anarchy○ Who’s in the White House... | } | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Confused the Conversation○ Distorted the Truth○ Distracted from Our Mission○ Misdirected Solutions○ Yet, Begs the Question of Our Involvement |
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“What is a Christian’s responsibility in politics...how are we supposed to walk this out?”

First, Consider Jesus’ Approach to Human Politics

- **Jesus Felt the Intense Pressure of the Politics of Oppression**

- 700+ Years of political struggle and injustice
 - Murdered, Sold into Slavery, Severely Taxed, Continually Harassed
- Zealots (and most) were waiting for a *Messiah* who would expel Rome as the oppressor and give freedom and power back to the Jews
 - (Apostle: Simon the Zealot; **Luke 6:15**)
 - When He was born, He was seen as a political threat (**Matthew 2**)
- Disciples Misunderstanding of the Nature of Jesus’ Mission
 - Vying for Political Favor & Power (**Matthew 21:20-28**)
 - **Acts 1:6** “Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?”

- **Jesus Didn’t Fall Into the “Trap” of Human Politics**

Matthew 22:15-22

¹⁵Then the Pharisees went and plotted together **how they might trap Him** in what He said. ¹⁶And they *sent their disciples to Him, along with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any. ¹⁷Tell us then, **What do You think? Is it lawful to give a poll-tax to Caesar, or not?”** ¹⁸But **Jesus perceived their malice**, and said, “Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites? ¹⁹Show Me the coin *used* for the poll-tax.” And they brought Him a denarius. ²⁰And He *said to them, “Whose likeness and inscription is this?” ²¹They *said to Him, “Caesar’s.” Then He *said to them, **“Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s; and to God the things that are God’s.”** ²²And hearing *this*, they were amazed, and leaving Him, they went away.

- **Jesus didn’t take the bait of human politics...**
 - He saw it as a **Malicious “Trap”** –
 - It Confused, Distorted, Distracted, Misdirected...
- **(Human) Politics:** *“the activities associated with the governance of a country or other area, especially the **debate or conflict among individuals or parties having or hoping to achieve or hold on to power.**”*

James 4:1-5

What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you? ²You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. ³And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.⁴You adulterers! Don't you realize that friendship with the world makes you an enemy of God? I say it again: If you want to be a friend of the world, you make yourself an enemy of God.

- Jesus refocused on the mission & purpose inherent in one's relationship with God
- **Jesus Didn't See Human Politics as the Solution**

John 18:36

Jesus answered, **“My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting** so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.”

- Human politics are not the solution;
- Nor are their methods the methods of the Kingdom of God
 - They may be a tool, but they are most certainly not the answer
- **And Yet so many modern Christians (like their Jewish predecessors) see the “salvation of society” through the means of human politics...an earthly messiah?**
 - **I see and hear so much passion voiced on human politics**
 - Capitalism vs Socialism; Law vs Anarchy
 - Conservative vs Liberal; Republican vs Democrat
 - Who's in the White House...
 - **Do you really deep down believe that Jesus was a republican, or a democrat, or a conservative or a liberal, a capitalist...?**
 - Did God create us in His image...or are we recreating Him in ours?
 - **But often these same voices seem barely, if ever, able to muster the courage to share the Good News (Gospel of Jesus Christ) with their Unbelieving Neighbors or Friends...**
 - Can you see our Confused, Distorted, Distracted, and Misdirected Trust in the wrong source?

Citizens of Another Kingdom

- This Prevalent Concept of Another Kingdom
 - The Prophets Constantly Point to Another and Eternal Kingdom (**Daniel 2:44; 7:13-14**)
- **Matthew 3:2** “Repent of your sins and turn to God, for **the Kingdom of Heaven is near.**”
- **Eph. 2:19** “You are fellow **citizens** with the saints, and are of God's household...”
- **Philippians 3:20** “For our **citizenship is in heaven...**”
- **Hebrews 11:9-10** By faith Abraham lived as an **alien in the land** of promise, **as in a foreign land**, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; for he was **looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.**
- “*In this world but not of this world*” is a common paraphrase of **John 17:16**
 - *This is NOT a Destination...but as starting place*

(Next Week) **Kingdom Politics: A Radical Change in Purpose, Focus, and Method**