

Faithful Politics: Week 9 – Disappointment & Proximate Justice

I. Introduction

- A. Discussion: How have you been disappointed politically this week?

- B. Remember the SIN of injustice—serious, inescapable, and not permanent

II. Here Comes the King . . .

Luke 4:16–21¹⁶ Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read,¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

¹⁸ “The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. ²¹ He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

A. What’s the good news?

- 1. Isaiah 52:7 How beautiful on the mountains / are the feet of those who bring good news, / who proclaim peace, / who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, / who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

B. Gospel of the kingdom

- 1. Luke 4:43 “I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the other towns also, because that is why I was sent.”

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III. . . . But Not Quite Yet

A. D-Day but not V-Day

Isaiah 61:1–2b

The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
2 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,

1. Luke 17:20–21 Once, on being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The coming of the kingdom of God is not something that can be observed,²¹ nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is in your midst.”
2. Luke 20:34–35 Contrast between what people do in this age in marriage, but then “those who are considered worthy of taking part in the age to come and in the resurrection from the dead” will not marry.

B. We can’t be triumphalists

C. We can’t be pessimists

D. We should be ambiguists

1. Romans 8:16–18¹⁶ The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order

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that we may also share in his glory. ¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

2. 2 Corinthians 4:7-12 ⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. ⁸ We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹ persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. ¹⁰ We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. ¹¹ For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may also be revealed in our mortal body. ¹² So then, death is at work in us, but life is at work in you.

- E. Discussion: Do you tend toward a more triumphalist or pessimistic attitude/perspective when it comes to salvation? How can you make sure you stay in the tension of the already-not yet?

IV. Proximate Justice

- A. Definition (Steven Garber): Something is better than nothing.
- B. Zechariah 4:8-10 ⁸ Then the word of the Lord came to me: ⁹ "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; his hands will also complete it. Then you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me to you. ¹⁰ "Who dares despise the day of small things, since the seven eyes of the Lord that range throughout the earth will rejoice when they see the chosen capstone in the hand of Zerubbabel?"
 1. Steven Garber: "I vote but always with a torn heart."
 2. Bono: "I'm a musician. I write songs. I just hope that when the day is done, I'll have torn a little corner off the darkness."