

GOD'S GOOD NEWS ABOUT POLITICS

Session 1: Starting Points

The starting point for my political framework or perspectives is....

PASSAGE: GENESIS 1:26-31 (NRSVue)

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make humans in our image, according to our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over the cattle and over all the wild animals of the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

²⁷ So God created humans in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." ²⁹ God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the air and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. ³¹ God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good.

My observations from the passage:

Other notes:



GOD'S GOOD NEWS ABOUT POLITICS

Session 2: Choosing Jesus as King

Have you ever allowed Jesus to challenge your beliefs and practices? Right now, who would you say is King on the throne of your life?

PASSAGE: 1 SAMUEL 8:10-22 (NRSVue)

¹⁰So Samuel reported all the words of the Lord to the people who were asking him for a king. ¹¹He said, "These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots, ¹²and he will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties and some to plow his ground and to reap his harvest and to make his implements of war and the equipment of his chariots. ¹³He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. ¹⁴He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive orchards and give them to his courtiers. ¹⁵He will take one-tenth of your grain and of your vineyards and give it to his officers and his courtiers. ¹⁶He will take your male and female slaves and the best of your cattle and donkeys and put them to his work. ¹⁷He will take one-tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves. ¹⁸And on that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the Lord will not answer you on that day." ¹⁹But the people refused to listen to the voice of Samuel; they said, "No! We are determined to have a king over us, ²⁰so that we also may be like other nations and that our king may govern us and go out before us and fight our battles." ²¹When Samuel heard all the words of the people, he repeated them in the ears of the Lord. ²²The Lord said to Samuel, "Listen to their voice and set a king over them."

My observations from the passage:

Other notes:



GOD'S GOOD NEWS ABOUT POLITICS

Session 3: Choosing the Kingdom of God

Jesus was tempted with provision (bread), power, and protection. Which of these is the most tempting to you?

PASSAGE: LUKE 4:1-13 (NRSVue)

¹The Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, ²where for forty days he was tested by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over he was famished. ³The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread." ⁴Jesus answered him, "It is written¹, 'One does not live by bread alone.' " ⁵Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. ⁶And the devil said to him, "To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. ⁷If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours." ⁸Jesus answered him, "It is written², 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.' ⁹Then the devil led him to Jerusalem and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, ¹⁰for it is written³, 'He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,' ¹¹and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.' ¹²Jesus answered him, "It is said⁴, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' " ¹³When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time.

My observations from the passage:

Other notes:



GOD'S GOOD NEWS ABOUT POLITICS

Session 4: Sharing the Shalom of God's Kingdom

How can you serve your neighbors in need around you and what policies can you support that support their flourishing?

PASSAGE: JEREMIAH 29:4-14 (NRSVue)

⁴ Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: ⁵ Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. ⁶ Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. ⁷ But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. ⁸ For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Do not let the prophets and the diviners who are among you deceive you, and do not listen to your dreams that you dream, ⁹ for it is a lie that they are prophesying to you in my name; I did not send them, says the Lord. ¹⁰ For thus says the Lord: Only when Babylon's seventy years are completed will I visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. ¹¹ For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. ¹² Then when you call upon me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. ¹³ When you search for me, you will find me; if you seek me with all your heart, ¹⁴ I will let you find me, says the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, says the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.

My observations from the passage:

Other notes:



GOD'S GOOD NEWS ABOUT POLITICS

Session 5: God's Good News About Politics for You

What is God's Good News about politics to you and your community?

PASSAGE: PHILIPPIANS 1:27, 2:3-11 (NRSVue)

²⁷ Only, live your life [Greek: *politeuomai*] in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel [...] ^{2,3} Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. ⁵ Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, ⁷ but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, ⁸ he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death— even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God also highly exalted him and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

My observations from the passage:

Other notes:

