

The Statesman Is Able to Envision Our Nations as They Are Intended

Our Creator paints a wonderful picture of what to us mortals seems like an unattainable picture. He vividly describes the future of His Kingdom on this earth when He, through Jesus, will reign on the earth. That reign will be characterized by prosperity, justice and righteousness among other things:

The dominion will be vast, and its prosperity will never end. He will reign on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish and sustain it with justice and righteousness from now on and forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will accomplish this (Isaiah 9:7).

Perfect justice will be fulfilled throughout the earth. Our evil enemy, who seduces us to commit evil acts, will be stopped, thereby allowing righteousness to prosper unhindered by human greed. Hence, evil deeds will cease to be inflicted by humans upon humans. Sharing and generosity will replace selfishness and hoarding. Wars will no longer exist. The groanings of creation from human mismanagement will be no longer.

Is this so unrealistic and out of reach that it should be dismissed as unworthy of consideration? I am convinced **NO**. Although, we live in a world of humans driven by their selfish motivations, I am convinced a proper understanding of God's reign in His Kingdom can give us a picture of what could be achieved with the help of our Creator, and which we could work toward.

Importantly, I am convinced that reflecting on the Kingdom of God with Jesus' earthly reign causes the Statesman to gain a picture of the world as our Creator intended it to be and to work toward elements of achieving that during this current era.

When William Wilberforce envisioned a world where humans had equal dignity regardless of race or social status, I am convinced it was because he had a picture in his mind of what life would be like when God took over and reigned over His Kingdom – where each person experienced the dignity of being created in the image of God. I believe this picture is what Martin Luther King had in his mind when he declared "I have a dream." Rather than being a dream, I believe it was a picture of God's Kingdom and of His intent for His creation. I believe that this picture is what Nelson Mandela had in mind when he dedicated his life to personal sacrifice so that the injustice of apartheid could be put away.

The dream or the picture was never perfectly achieved. Nevertheless, each of these visionaries moved us toward that picture. I am convinced that the Statesman can greatly benefit from studying that picture. That picture certainly represents our Creator's desire for His creation, consisting of blessings which the fallen nature of mankind seeks to deprive us.

I am convinced that those we consider Statesmen have worked to improve our world based on a picture of the Kingdom of God under our Creator's reign. Furthermore, I am convinced the one who would be a Statesman can greatly benefit by studying what the Kingdom of God will be like and asking God how elements of that Kingdom can be approached during this age of imperfection. I am convinced that the Statesman does not plan based on what can be seen but upon what can be envisioned while looking intently

at the Kingdom of God. In fact, I personally dream of leaders looking at the Kingdom of God and committing to come as close as humanly possible to achieving that today.

There are several elements for implementing this: Looking at the Kingdom of God, studying it from God's Word, envisioning it being implemented in one's nation, and then the steps toward bringing it about. Let us consider the following elements:

Envisioning. Seek to understand the picture God describes of His Kingdom:

Set your mind on the things above, not on the things on earth (Colossians 3:2).

Certainly Wilberforce, King, and Mandela had their detractors who viewed them as unrealistic idealists. Nevertheless, they saw something their detractors were unable to see.

Approaching the seemingly impossible. On one occasion, Jesus, in another context, expressed:

With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible (Matthew 19:26).

Surely, relying on the supernatural power of God to change hearts and circumstances can be expected to make a difference. God, speaking through one of His servants, reinforced this:

I can do all things through Him who strengthens me (Philippians 4:13).

Instilling righteousness into the larger community. Note that the key ingredient of Jesus' reign will be righteousness, and any effort toward achieving the vision His reign inspires must include efforts toward increasing righteousness, as the critical foundation. This is frequently referred to as spiritual awakening, where individuals are challenged to embrace the righteousness of Jesus and allow His righteousness to manifest itself through members of our community. This involves a critical mass embracing Jesus as Savior from our sins. The process of that spreading of righteousness was described by Jesus in a parable:

You are the light of the world ... let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:14-16),

thereby embracing the righteousness Jesus offers. The reality is that such spiritual awakenings largely underpinned what was achieved by Wilberforce and Mandela. Let us not as mere mortals imagine that we alone can change our nations into righteous communities in our own ability.

Beginning with us. We must embrace the righteousness that Jesus offers us:

I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me (John 14:6).

And we do that through accepting Jesus' sacrificial payment for our sins:

He made the One who did not know sin to be sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21).

The result of this transformation for our lives and all recruited through that spiritual awakening is:

For we are His creation, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time so that we should walk in them (Ephesians 2:10).

Motivating others to participate with us. Let us caution ourselves that any efforts during the current era must take into account that man's fallen, sinful nature will hinder our efforts. And it is important to understand that our Creator uses imperfect instruments – humans who have a sin nature but who can have those sins forgiven through our availing ourselves of the forgiveness based upon our repentance and Jesus' sacrificial work on our behalf on the Cross and His resurrection.

I am convinced the more clearly we can see the Kingdom of God, the closer we can come to establishing the world, with well-being for our people, that our Creator intended. And in the process, we can display the leadership of a Statesman.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE STATESMAN

Can I envision God's Kingdom as a picture of what my society might be able to achieve with the help of God's righteousness in my fellow human beings?

Have I led the way in creating the foundation that would allow my society to move toward the righteousness that would allow us to attempt to experience the righteousness which will underlie Jesus' reign on the earth by embracing Jesus as my Savior?