

God wins the German Elections '05

(a political commentary by Wolfgang Simson; Sept. 19th, 2005)

The German people are unified like never before in the fact that they are not unified. Germany is now – after the 19th Sept. 2005 elections, a country full of strong words – but void of a strong political party or a strong man – or a strong woman. The nation looks like a Dutch field of tulips – carefully trimmed to the same level, where no tulip is allowed to tower even slightly above the others. No politician grants the other the slightest advantage. The Media is full of contradictory and mutually exclusive political programmes, and everything is garnished with childish leadership-hassles, personality issues and translucent ego trips. Everyone against everyone else. Just like during the biblical time of the judges, where everyone did as he pleased. A situation that reminds me very much of the present-day Body of Christ...

No one who is a personal follower of Jesus Christ and who is not satisfied in nominal and cheap superficial sacramentalisation of life as an insurance against any harm in this or the next world will be really surprised by this historic political stalemate. When the overwhelming majority of a nation democratically (democratic: the people rule) deselected the sovereign God out of everyday life, the people themselves become “the sovereign”, become God. Such a God-less democracy will only lead into chaos, a state of the union that only demons would relish. “The sovereign has spoken – and we will respect that!”, says Free Democrat leader and “Christian”, Guido Westerwelle, and perfectly echos this humanistic credo.

The Bible knows four different forms of government. In order of their preference they are

- 1. God is King.** Before this ever happened, the idea is democratically rejected by the people of Israel in favor of a King “like all nations around us”.
- 2. A good King** (like David)
- 3. A bad King** (like Ahab or Nebucadnezar)
- 4. Democracy**, possibly the worst form of government according to the Bible. This is where no one really rules; the people are in control of themselves – for an extremely high price: inbuilt mediocracy, constant compromise and enslaved to one’s own strong opinions and ever opinionated leaders. This ushers in the empire of ever changing political opinions, opportunists and their esoteric political concepts, and the constant discussing, fighting and polite bickering that some call “the political process” ultimately leads to a preprogrammed ungovernability. And this, in turn, makes room for a mammon and media-driven climate that “makes the world go round”. Does this sound like freedom to you?

The Germans, admittedly, have an inbuilt aversion against empires. We love “freedom”, which many like to call “democratic freedom”. But empires are our destiny, so a new and intelligent book (“Imperien”) by German Professor Herfried Münkler. And, so the Bible, empires are part of the way we subjects of God have been created. Freedom is not that we can do whatever we *want*, but the ability to do as we *should*. As **liberty** is a state of independence from a former oppressive rule, true **freedom** is when we step into our destiny and space within God’s economy. The greatest freedom does never happen in cheap independence, casting off all ropes, rules and restrictions. It happens in two ways: 1) in a costly and close tie to the true emperor and king, Jesus Christ, and 2) as we take up our proper and ordained place in God’s kingdom. Historically, whenever the people voted themselves, it led into chaos – or a fear-dominated neutrality or a nationalistic ego trip. The people of Israel voted Saul to be their King – not God. The democratic majority rejected the visions of Joshua and Kaleb – in favor of a more secure employment in Egypt – an allowance of garlic and onion included. As if more enslavement to work for any Pharaoh would usher in more freedom. Remember the result? All died. And even Jesus had to listen to the cries of the massaging mobilisers of the public opinions of his day: “We don’t want him to rule over us!”. And God patiently played with it for a while: in a historic move he released the enthusiastic freedom-lovers to themselves: “he gave them over to a debased mind, to do things which are not fitting” (Rom 1:28).

At the very core of what Germany experiences today - like many other nations also – is a **leadership vacuum of historic dimensions**. It is exactly like in Church-as-we-know-it. There are hardly any personalities who can command a significant following, or are even legally mandated by the majority to lead ahead in any given city, region or nation. The electorate itself is hopelessly fragmented into sub-

fragmented groups splintered away from whatever party - or mother-church - thinkable. In other words: the electorate is everything - but sovereign. But this is exactly how we move in one giant step after the other towards a deep cry that at this point is neither thinkable nor able to command any political majority. It is not the joke one of my German acquaintances made while watching the post-election debates on TV: "We want our Kaiser Wilhelm back!", but close enough. It is the cry: "If not someone takes a bold lead now, we drown!" Historically, this has already happened to traditional Protestantism, and is now happening in the political arena, too. Wherever people rebel against God and his ordinances, things come to a standstill, and museums emerge – or a stalemate. But in every human being there is this cry for God and the kind of leadership he would choose: for God-ordained apostolic and prophetic leaders who carry his mandate, and lead the people into the future. But people like Moses, David or Paul have not been – nor will they ever be – elected by the people in a democratic way. And for them to truly lead we have to ask God for a miracle: **the new and quite supernatural ability to follow.** Democrats and fragmented Christians alike have to lay down their colors and party books and become humans earnestly crying out to God for leadership. I said cry, not ask or whisper. That we've done. And the good news is, that God has his Cabinet and his program ready in his drawer. But are we ready to fit in his agenda? Even, as unimaginable as it seems, if it requires leadership that does not carry my name? Everything moves quickly towards his agenda for the future. And history takes a leap, specially, if we humans – and that includes us Germans – scratch our head in bewilderment, watching our own systems defeat themselves, and being unsure what on earth to do. Because that's a pregnant moment to stop looking around on earth – and look upward, where God has answers that are beyond democratic rulebooks. That's why I think the true winner of the German elections is not a German, but God. As for me and my house, that's reason enough to open a bottle of Champagne yesterday.