Q&A: A good reason for OBL catharsis?

A follow-up from a previous Q&A post.

Casper comments:

So those celebrating at Nuremburg when a guilty verdict was passed with the knowledge that the convicted was to be hanged were wrong?
And since we have the example of a separate theatre of war at the same time where no-one got justice and a few trials only took out low level war criminals and those who perpetrated massive crimes weren't held to account (by the same government celebrating Osama's death). Japan has a huge issue in the region still because they did not repent for their actions and were never punished.

There is good reason for the catharsis.

I think you should have done a better job between defining between Gospel and Governance and at the end of the day the Gospel is a path of violence for Christ and all who follow him so that statement doesn't really stick well since Countries and the Church are separate institutions.

Hi Casper,

I think the response I'm championing is a mixture of gladness and sadness: Gladness that justice can be done, some vindication is evident – a good foreshadowing of the eventual judgement on Christ's return. Sadness, because the judgement is not here in full and vindication can never be fully achieved in human hands, because the judgement itself is indicative of a broken world, and because I am not without sin myself.

Please note I am not advocating that the action against Osama was wrong. And I prefer the transparent justice of Nuremburg with the lesser forms elsewhere. My concern is about the triumphalism.

In terms of Gospel/Governance, the connection I'm grasping is eschatological: The non-violence of Christ is a demonstration of the post-judgement Kingdom of God made real and present by Christ through the violence of the cross and the vindication of the resurrection. It's application is found in forgiveness, and being a peace-maker insomuch as it depends on you etc. Romans 13 connects because the government authority is described as the agent of God and therefore prefigures the ultimate judgement of God by which the Kingdom of God is made manifest. It's application is in the right punishment of the evildoers in our midst. **The tension between these applications is exactly the now-and-not-yet tension that we have because we belong to the Kingdom of God inaugurated by Christ but not yet culminated at the judging of all things.** The Kingdom of peace has begun, the need for punishment remains until the day when all things are made right.

So the right response when we see punishment, such as what OBL has received, is eschatological – "All things will be judged, including me, so thanks be to God for his grace that in Christ I, even I, may pass through that terrible day." The right response is humility, and further dependence on Christ, not triumph.

W.