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Preview Response

ON POLITICS, ELECTIONS AND FLOURISHING

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1. On politics and flourishing: I think the nearest general social surveys get to flourishing is 'life satisfaction', which is measured in social surveys, but not in political surveys. In the latter, we ask about satisfaction with democracy, but the measurement of all this is highly complex. We don't always measure what we think we are, even at the best of times, and with concepts that are very precisely defined (which definitely cannot always be said to be true of "flourishing"!)

And as for what kind of electoral system might be seen as "circumstantial flourishing" in politics, there's a lot of argument about proportional systems leading to 'better' outcomes, like satisfaction with democracy, greater representation of ideological positions, more consensus etc. But those goals are, of course, normative and somewhat contested.

I would say that low turnout is considered unhealthy, as a rule, but high turnout via compulsory voting doesn't make a system healthy, and higher turnout can arise due to higher polarisation (when there's more at stake), which I think is also rightly seen as unhealthy (particularly when it is combined with polarisation of factual understanding, as we have now).

2. If I think about 'righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit', the last part seems to be central to the first three, and neither of the three can be achieved without the other. As such, they're not distinct, but conjunctively causal. And the paper presents themselves as being distinct. Maybe, then, a Christian worldview speaks of causation in ways the others can't.

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