



Problematic Predictions

June 26, 2022

Luke 9:51-62 (MSG)

Connect

- Name some of the great cultural predictions that have come true throughout history and also some of the great prediction flops. Is there any rhyme or reason as to why some came to pass and some did not? Discuss.
- Name something you predicted would happen and it actually came to pass as you imagined. Name another time when your prediction fell flat and didn't even come close to happening.

Engage

- Read *Luke 9:51-62*. This passage can be a bit to take in as Jesus seemingly comes off as insensitive to some matters that are important to those who want to follow him. Why do you think this is and how does it make you feel? To what similar circumstances could you relate to these realities today?
- What is the right balance between being a faithful planner for the future and staying fully engaged in the present moment? Why does that seem like the right balance to you?
- A writer shared about airplanes in the March 1904 issue of *Popular Science Monthly*: “*The machines will eventually be fast, they will be used in sport, but they are not to be thought of as commercial carriers.*” Today, around the globe, there are roughly 100,000 flights that take off and land every day. How does this speak to our understanding (or lack thereof) of what is possible? How would you relate this understanding to our life together as the Church?
- “*We can't build the kingdom by our own efforts,*” writes biblical scholar N.T Wright. “*But we can build for the kingdom. Every act of justice, every word of truth, every creation of genuine beauty, every act of self-sacrificial love, will be reaffirmed [in the kingdom of God].*” How does this speak into the choices you are making in your life (and walk of faith) today?
- Writer Barbara Kingsolver says of our unwillingness (or inability) to see the troubles of the future: “*The writing has been on the wall for some years now, but we are a nation illiterate in the language of the wall. The writing just gets bigger.*” What do you see as the “writing on the wall” for the Church? What are we missing? What are we to do about it?

Next Steps

- We strike the balance of planning for the future and not taking for granted that today could be all we have. Consider this week how you strike a balance of these two ideas. Set aside some time to simply soak in the moment without the moment being critical to next steps of something down the road. Create some additional space to plan forward in a way that keeps your focus on Jesus and not looking backward. Note how both practices shape your outlook in healthy ways.

Pray

“We spend so much time, Lord, trying to predict the future even as you remind us that no one knows the day or hour ahead of us and what it will bring. Help us to be faithful and responsible in our planning, even as we ask for your help to keep us living in the present – the only moment we are promised for now. Amen.”