

A Word of Prophecy — Entropy

Pastor Jim Critcher

Entropy

Matter tends toward disorder and uncertainty.

The further that we drift away from the sustaining force of God, the greater the disorder.

For entropy to be disrupted, there must be an outside intervention. Pastor Jim believes that the intervention that is about to be witnessed on a global scale is unlike anything seen before.

But God will intervene when humanity breaks things beyond repair. And in those moments, we must be ready for God to be God.

Isaiah 45:7

I form the light and create darkness,
I bring prosperity and create disaster;
I, [YHWH], do all these things.

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Is 45:7.

Four Questions

As a church, we have been in a moment of disillusionment and disappointment because we lost the opportunity to buy the building. And our human emotions are real, we must deal with and process through the disquiet in our souls. And now is also the time for God to work.

Question 1: Why?

When it comes to prophecy, whether it's a building in Seattle, or a six year old child who is dying, we must be careful not to superimpose our desires and emotions over what God's word actually is. When we say, "God said...", it's completely different from "I want..."

John 9

As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?"

"Neither this man nor his parents sinned," said Jesus, "but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. "Go," he told him, "wash in the Pool of Siloam" (this word means "Sent"). So the man went and washed, and came home seeing.

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Jn 9:1–7.

The temptation for us to attribute our walk with God to a simple cause-and-effect pattern is nothing new. The disciples still wanted to see if sin led to physical defect.

But Jesus' answer is disconcerting: God can set up moments for him to step into, moments that often have years of suffering as lead up.



And the why question almost often presupposes that God is not as good as he says he is; maybe he's a liar, or is holding something back from us.

The American culture continually informs us that we have rights to know, know anything we want, and rights to what we want in general. And when it comes to us arguing our rights with Jesus, be prepared for disappointment.

Sometimes what God is doing in our lives is none of our business because we wouldn't understand if God told us.

If we try to opine God's motives and character behind our terrible circumstances, it will lead us to wrong conclusions. If we then base our response to negative circumstances off the wrong conclusions, then the negativity of our circumstances will be magnified.

Question 2: When?

When will this pandemic end?

Every single "nationally recognized" prophet that prophesied the end of the pandemic got it wrong. They were superimposing their impatience and frustration on their prophecies.

God is most often a God of delay. And we often rebuke the devil in the delay. But many times God is behind the delay, not the devil. God says "wait," and we hear "no." But just like the three year old when told "wait for a cookie," hears, "you are withholding from me! If you really loved me, you'd give me the cookie now!"

The disciples still asked when a lot:

Acts 1:6-8

Then they gathered around him and asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Ac 1:6–8.

Question 3: What Do We Do Now?

How then do we live in the moments we find ourselves, in disappointment and change?

Lament

We are taught to prosper well, but we're not taught how to suffer well in the Western Church. Around the world, church affiliations can cost Christians their lives. As part of their new member orientation, they are taught how to suffer.



It's okay to lament when our trajectory is not onward and upward and bigger, better, faster, strong. Lament is not a failure of faith or an accusation against God, but a statement to God that says, "I'm struggling in this moment with this moment."

Our culture is afraid of grief, but not just because it's afraid of death... our culture is afraid because it seems to be afraid of the fear itself, frightened that grief will lead to collapse forever... — NT Wright

Jesus wept at the grave of his friend Lazarus. Jesus lamented.

Leave What Was

This is hard for us. Because we like what we know. It's hard to leave. The Israelites were freed from slavery and after 3 days in the desert, they complained about the good food they had while in slavery.

Learn to Live Where We Are

This is the ethic of the exile:

This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says to all those I carried into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: “Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease. Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.” Yes, this is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: “Do not let the prophets and diviners among you deceive you. Do not listen to the dreams you encourage them to have. They are prophesying lies to you in my name. I have not sent them,” declares the Lord.

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Je 29:4–9.

Jesus is the resurrection life, and he gave that life to the church. If that life doesn't come through the church, then it certainly won't come out of Washington DC.

This is why it is said:

“Wake up, sleeper,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, **because the days are evil**. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Eph 5:14–20.

Question 4: Where Are You God?

Where are we finding the requisite grace to live in these moments of turmoil? Jesus said he will never leave us or forsake us.

The enemy says, “he has forgotten about you.”

Truly you are a God who has been hiding himself,
the God and Savior of Israel.

The New International Version (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), Is 45:15.

It’s like when parents are playing hide and seek with their kids. The joy and effort in trying to find the father is worth the search.

Pastor Jim spoke of a time where God was hidden from him. After about six weeks, God showed up to him again and Pastor Jim asked:

“Where did you go?” — Wrong question, says God.

Next time God leaves, we don’t wait until he comes back. We go find him.

“Seek me, while I can be found.” It is relatively easy to find God right now, but it will not get easier. Persecution is coming. Being a Christian will not get simpler. Can we find God right now?

Lord, teach us to lament without accusing you, and to believe in your goodness. We don’t need to understand your ways, but help us to trust that your ways are good and that we can trust you.