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Update on My Predictions for the 21st Century

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As we approach the end of the first quarter of 21st Century (yes, I know its hard to believe), perhaps its time to review some predictions I made back in 2017 concerning the rest of this century. In an article I wrote that year, I made five bold predictions (not prophecies - I do not claim to have that spiritual gift) about what intellectual and spiritual trends will transpire this century. That is, of course, if the Lord Jesus does not return, which I believe is always a possibility. However, I will not try to predict when that will take place since Jesus said no one knows the day or the hour (Matthew 24:36; 25:13; Mark 12:32). I am always wary of those who think they have all the biblical prophecies figured out and have it pinned down to a certain era of time.

Anyway, let's review my five predictions and see if I need to revise them or if they still stand.

Prediction #1: No Life Will Be Discovered Anywhere Else in the Solar-system or Galaxy Except on Earth.

Let's face it, there is a whole modern mythology built around the belief that life exists on other planets. Even many scientists are convinced that the universe is just too big for life not to have sprung up randomly somewhere else among all the billions of galaxies and stars now known to exist. In popular culture it is taken for granted especially in science fiction books and movies. We'll explore that more in the second prediction below.

Yes, NASA and other space agencies have sent numerous craft to probe other planets, asteroids,

and moons to look for evidence that life has ever existed on any of them. Recently a craft was launched to explore Europa, a moon of Jupiter, which some think could be favorable for life.

In any case. the truth is, and remains, that not one single shred of evidence has ever been found that life of any kind exists, or ever has existed, anywhere else in the universe except on Earth. Furthermore, all the many fine-tuned factors, and there are hundreds of them, necessary to sustain life have never been observed anywhere else in the universe. Our sun and even our Milky Way Galaxy are unique among those known to exist for harboring life, especially advanced forms of life.

The problem also is that the universe is so big that if life does exist anywhere else outside our solar system, we will never know. Even the nearest star systems are too far for us to communicate with or send spacecraft to explore.

Prediction #2: No Interstellar Travel Outside of Our Solar System Will Ever Be Possible.

And that brings us to the second prediction. A big part of the modern space mythology is that spacecraft in the future will fly around the galaxy from star system to star system and planet to planet as easily as jet planes now fly around the world. Anyone who is familiar basic physics and astronomy knows that those scenarios are essentially untenable. Two fundamental facts make this true. One is the enormous distances between star systems in the galaxy. The closest star system to our own is Proxima Centauri. It is 4.24

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light-years away. A light-year is 9.44 trillion km, or 5.88 trillion miles. That means if we could travel at the speed of light it would take more than four years to get to Proxima Centauri.

But that is the second fact. According to Einstein's Theory of Relativity, it is physically impossible for anything with mass to attain even close to the speed of light. Einstein showed that as a particle or an object with mass goes faster, its mass increases and its time dilates (slows down). As it approaches the speed of light, which never changes relative to any object (always 186,000 miles per second), greater amounts of energy are required to continue acceleration. According to Einstein's calculations, for it to go the speed of light would require an infinite amount of energy, and its mass would be infinite. Not only that, but its time would stop. "That's impossible!" you say. Exactly.

That's why interstellar space travel is regarded as impossible in the future. Even at realistically fast sub-light speeds, it would take thousands of years to travel from star system to star system. Nonetheless, the time dilation factor would make the time on a space ship go much slower than back on Earth. This is shown even on the relatively slow moving International Space Station. Every few years they have to adjust forward the on-board clocks by a second or so to catch with time on Earth.

Science fiction books, TV shows, and movies ignore those facts by creating "warp-drive," "hyperdrive," and "worm holes" that by-pass space-time physics and distances. But such concepts are no more than technological science fantasies designed to allow for the writers' stories to have existence. There are simply no technological

theories to suggest they can ever overcome the physical barriers to interstellar travel.

Prediction #3 Darwinian Evolution Will Be Discredited.

At the end of the 19th century, there were several scientific principles that were regarded as unquestionable in the minds of most, if not all, naturalistic intellectuals. They included Freudian psychology, Marxist economics, Newtonian physics, the eternity of the universe, and Darwinian evolution. All of those ideas have now been essentially discarded by the vast majority in the scientific world except for one: Darwinian evolution. But even that has had to reestablish its basis from simple adaptive natural selection to what is now called Neo-Darwinism. It postulates gradual changes by random positive cellular mutations over long periods of time.

However, in recent decades a growing number of scientists in the life sciences are finding it increasingly difficult to accept the Darwinian model for life development. These even include many who are atheists.

For one thing, many do not believe there has been near enough time for that process to have created new and higher levels of species by random chance culminating in humanity. Another problem for some is that scientists have never been able to observe the process taking place on a level beyond microbes. Nor have they been able to reproduce it in a laboratory (which would eliminate the random element completely).

Another key problem with evolutionary biology (which even Darwin admitted) was the origin of life itself. Scientists have never been able to find a viable explanation for how life began on this planet. They used to teach in high school biology classes (and probably still do) about the pri-

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mordial soup wherein certain chemicals were gathered in a warm pond and were hit by lightning forming biological compounds to make the first living cells. That theory is regarded as no longer viable, and most biologists must admit they simply do not know how life began. Even the simplest form of life has never been synthesized in a laboratory. But even if it were, it would involve massive amounts of purposeful actions by scientists, again completely removing any natural randomness for the process.

That's not even to mention the problems evolutionists have trying to explain the great leaps of complexity found in the geological record. For instance, they are befuddled by the sudden advances in life complexity during what is called the Cambrian Explosion and other strata.

So, my prediction remains the same. I believe that by the end of this century, or even sooner, the Darwinian and Neo-Darwinian theories of life evolution will join those other 19th Century concepts, once held sacred by the scientific community, in the trash heap of intellectual history.

Prediction #4: Atheism Will Become an Untenable Philosophy.

Perhaps my most daring prediction is that because of the continued knowledge gained by science, particularly in the areas of astronomy and biology, eventually Atheism and Naturalism will no longer be tenable worldviews in the future. The reason I say that is that as biologists discover how incredibly complex life is, even at its simplest forms, it will become obvious that it could not have happened by random chance and has to have had a Designer. Already we discussed the enormous problems Neo-Darwinian evolutionists are having trying to explain how it could possibly operate randomly and how it

absolutely fails to explain how life began.

Even more, in the field of astronomy, astronomers now have available amazing new tools to view the universe, such as the Webb Space Telescope. As they peer into the skies they are increasingly amazed how fine-tuned the laws of physics and all the heavenly bodies are in order to allow life to exist on our planet. Each year, they discover new facts that show how razor thin the fine-tuning is so we can live and thrive on Earth. Even a slight deviation in the laws of physics or how the planets and stars are aligned would make life impossible. Consider the following.

The Earth is exactly the right size and right distance from the sun, revolving around it every 365 1/4 days. It rotates on an axis that is tilted at precisely the right angle to allow for the seasonal changes. The Moon is exactly the right size and distance from the Earth to regulate the ocean tides necessary for sea life. The Earth's atmosphere contains the precise amounts of gases needed to sustain animal and plant life. The other planets in the solar system are located in exactly the right places to protect the Earth from asteroids and comets. The Earth is surrounded by just the right kind of magnetic field to shield it from deadly cosmic radiation beating down from the sun and space. The Earth is located in just the right spot in one of the Milky Way Galaxy's arms to allow for life to exist – not too close to the center nor too far out. The Milky Way itself is located in a cluster of galaxies that allow it to be the right size and shape for life to exist. The odds of all these, and hundreds of other, fine-tuned factors happening just by chance is beyond measure. It all points to a Grand Designer who put it all together so we can be here at this point in time.

As the century rolls on, more of these factors will be discovered. Atheists will find it increasingly difficult to hold on to their dogmatic naturalistic explanations. That's not to say they will all become Theists or Christians. But they will have to come to terms with what Christian scientist Stephen Meyer calls the "God Hypothesis" as being fully credible!

Prediction #5: Christianity Will Continue to Decline in Europe and North America. However, Evangelicalism Will Grow Vastly in South America and the Far East.

Now all that being said, I continue to be pessimistic about the state of Christianity in the West. The recent trends among mainline denominations in Europe, Canada, and the United States do not bode well for the future of those church bodies. It seems they have completely abandoned any pretense of scriptural authority. In matters of theology and personal morality, the Bible has been relegated far below the popular trends of secular society.

Despite the decline in the old western churches, I do believe Evangelicalism will continue to grow in other parts of the world. It remains the fastest growing religious movement in the world, especially in South America, Africa, and the Far East. Despite the harsh recurrent repression of the Chinese Communist Party, in recent years the growth of Christianity still continues in that land. Some estimate that China may already have the largest Christian population in the world.

So those are my updated predictions for the 21st century. I may need to revise them at some time in the future. They are not prophecies, so don't hold me to the standards of Deuteronomy 18. I very well can be wrong. I hope so about number five, and that there will be a Christian renewal in America. In any case, these are my thoughts and I probably will not live long enough to see how they pan out. Then again, maybe Jesus will return before I die.

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