

From The Flintstones To The Jetsons
How To Remain Relevant As A Pastor, Minister, & Preacher
In A World That Is Consistently Evolving

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Introduction:

The Flintstones were the modern Stone Age family. Residing in Bedrock, Fred Flintstone worked an unsatisfying quarry job, but returned home to lovely wife Wilma and eventually daughter Pebbles. Fred, a big fan of golf and bowling, also enjoyed bullying neighbor Barney Rubble, while Barney's saucy wife Betty was best friends with Wilma. During the show's run, Barney and Betty would adopt an unnaturally strong son, Bamm-Bamm, who would become friends with little Pebbles. "The Flintstones," heavily inspired by "The Honeymooners," convinced a generation of children that dinosaurs and humans occupied the planet at the same time.

First episode date: September 30, 1960

Final episode date: April 1, 1966

The Jetsons are a family residing in Orbit City.[10][11] The city's architecture is rendered in the Googie style, and all homes and businesses are raised high above the ground on adjustable columns. George Jetson lives with his family in the Skypad Apartments: his wife Jane is a homemaker, their teenage daughter Judy attends Orbit High School, and their son Elroy attends Little Dipper School. Housekeeping is seen to be done by a robot maid, Rosie, which handles chores not otherwise rendered trivial by the home's numerous push-button Space Age-envisioned conveniences. The family has a dog named Astro that talks with an initial consonant mutation in which every word begins with an "R", as if speaking with a growl; a similar effect would also be used for Scooby-Doo.

George Jetson's work week consists of an hour a day, two days a week.[12] His boss is Cosmo Spacely, the bombastic owner of Spacely Space Sprockets. Spacely has a competitor, Mr. Cogswell, owner of the rival company Cogswell Cogs (sometimes known as Cogswell's Cosmic Cogs). Jetson commutes to work in an aerocar with a transparent bubble top. Daily life is leisurely, assisted by numerous labor-saving devices, which occasionally break down with humorous results. Despite this, everyone complains of exhausting hard labor and difficulties living with the remaining inconveniences.

While the Flintstones lived in a world which was a comical version of the "stone age," with machines powered by birds and dinosaurs, the Jetsons live in a comical version of a century in the future,[3][4] with elaborate robotic contraptions, aliens, holograms, and whimsical inventions.[5][6] The original series comprised 24 episodes and aired on Sunday nights on ABC beginning September 23, 1962, with prime time reruns continuing through September 22, 1963. It debuted as the first program broadcast in color on ABC-TV.[7] (Only a handful of ABC-TV stations were capable of broadcasting in color in the early 1960s.) In contrast,

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The Flintstones, while always produced in color, was broadcast in black-and-white for its first two seasons.[8]¹

Why Only One Season?

Some say that the reason why The Jetsons only lasted for one season because the show aired in 1962 The Jetsons was produced and broadcast in color but back then, less than three percent of American households had a color television set and the world of The Jetsons looked flat and uninviting in black and white. This resulted in the animated series to be beaten off by other shows from other networks.

1. The Flintstones lasted longer because Americans were not accustomed to color televisions.
2. It's hard to get some people in church to see in "full color." Many people only want "black and white."
3. The Flintstones made more viewers comfortable because it reminded them of their history.
4. Many people prefer what is familiar.
5. The Jetsons challenged people to look into a world that didn't exist.
6. Innovation will often bring discomfort.
7. Both cartoons included men, women & children.
8. Cartoons from 50-60 years ago presented aspects of inclusion.
9. Have we modeled inclusion?
10. "Color" will always look uninviting to people who only see in "black & white."
11. Don't be discouraged when parishioners aren't "futuristic" in view! They don't have the "vision" for the Ministry, that's why God sent you!

Discussion:

I often remind our congregation that I'm a Flintstone and not a Jetson! I enjoy writing out checks in lieu of swiping my debit card. However, my preaching and teaching acumen are the opposite. I've come to understand that in order to lead a church with five active generations, I must stay relevant and prophetic in my pastoral leadership and ministry model.

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Jetsons

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- We have all witnessed the mandatory shifting that has taken place in churches due to the Coronavirus.
- We are all grappling with the questions: “When will things get back to normal?” Or “Will things ever be normal again?”
- We must realize that society changes every 5 years while ecclesial communities only change every 20 years.
- We must understand that the book of Acts was clear in describing characteristics of the “last days.”
- We must really exegete Acts 2:9-18 in order to understand what pneumatological “relevance” looks like.
- We must yield to the Holy Spirit’s priority of ministry that is:
 1. Global — Acts 2:9-11
 2. Gender Inclusive — Acts 2:17
 3. Multi-Generational — Acts 2:17
 4. Prophetic In Witness — Acts 2:18
- We must be able to serve the “present age” and **prepare** our congregations for the age to come.
- What about congregational longevity, succession **planning**, and strategic mapping? If we don’t plan for the futures of our churches, our churches won’t have a future.
- **This session will present talking points for how leaders can remain relevant in a world that is consistently evolving.**

Discussion Questions: How relevant are you? These questions may help you determine if you are “scratching where your people itch.”

1. Do you know what matters to the people in your congregation?
 2. Do you conduct quarterly surveys² to give your congregants a voice?
 3. Have you given thought to what your church does to address the needs of the community surrounding your church?
 4. Do you know the demographics of the people in your church and/or community?
 5. If your church disappeared, would the community around your church miss you?
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Conclusion: We Must Understand Both The Flintstones And The Jetsons

- Become **educated** on current events beyond the news reports.
- Know what **matters** to your congregation - their customs and sacred cows.
- **Reject** the temptation to become a “savior” who has all the bright ideas.
- Let the gifts of your **team** shine and know that some of your most relevant ideas may come from the people in your pews.
- Become a part of the **community** in which the church is located.
- Do not preach **sermons** focused solely on a current issue, but allow the Gospel to be the center of your sermon addressing the issue(s).
- Do not **preach** or teach something you do not believe for yourself.
- Remain open to changes/diverse ways of **seeing** things.
- Be willing to bring in help from others who are more **skilled** in an area than you.
- Make proper use of **social media** and **technology**.
- While attempting to be **relevant** do not stray too far away from your foundation.