

WHEN ENGINES FAIL

The late Ian Pitt-Watson, a professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, told the story of an elderly Scottish couple who had never flown before, but who decided they were going to visit their children in New York and see their grandchildren for the first time.

They were on a charter flight in a Lockheed TriStar. About halfway out over the Atlantic, the pilot's voice came over the intercom: "This is your captain speaking. Ladies and gentlemen, I feel I ought to let you know that one of our three engines has failed. There is, of course, no need for alarm. This plane is entirely airworthy flying on two engines, but I regret to say we will be one hour late in arriving in New York."

Half an hour later, inevitably, with the desperate calm that is reserved by air pilots and astronauts for conditions of extreme emergency, the pilot of the TriStar spoke again: "This is your captain speaking. I regret that we have lost the second of our engines. But I would like to reassure you that we have every expectation of making a normal and safe landing at JFK Airport. We shall, however, be three hours late in arriving."

At this, Grandma turned to Grandpa with a hint of irritation in her voice and said, "My dear, if that third engine goes, we shall be up here all night."

We chuckle at the story, but it is illustrative of a tendency of human nature. We often tend to see things as we wish them to be instead of recognizing the cold, hard facts associated with a dilemma.

Truth is an irreducible minimum.

These are the things you shall do: Speak each man the truth to his neighbor; give judgment in your gates for truth, justice, and peace (Zechariah 8:16).

– Beecher Hunter