

LETTER TEN

Occupy Until He Comes

Understanding the Times. Knowing What to Do.

Occupation is not passive waiting. It is active stewardship under the authority of the King.

A Statement That Would Not Let Me Go

More than twenty-five years ago, while Phoenix University of Theology was taking shape, I had almost daily conversations with a good friend and mentor. He envisioned a Christian university that would recognize the years of faithful service already invested by pastors, missionaries, bishops, and ministry leaders while giving them an opportunity to pursue accredited degrees. I was grateful that God allowed me to work beside him in bringing that vision to life.

During one series of conversations, we discussed the Second Coming, the tribulation, and the competing views of a pre-tribulation, mid-tribulation, or post-tribulation rapture. After considering the many interpretations, my friend made a simple observation: We can speculate about timelines and interpret the signs in different ways, but at the end of the day, we are commanded to occupy until He comes.

That statement stayed with me.

The university was successfully launched, and it was rewarding to build relationships with men and women of God whose names were well known and with many others who had served faithfully without recognition. During that season, I also wrote a book that was never published: *The Eleventh Hour - This Gospel of the Kingdom Shall Be Preached in All the World, and Then the End Shall Come.*

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come." - Matthew 24:14

Matthew 24:14 became another point of focus for me. It redirected my attention from what the world was doing to what Christ had commissioned His Ecclesia to do: proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom and make disciples of the nations. The central issue was not fascination with the Antichrist, the tribulation,

modern Israel, or a temple in Jerusalem. The central issue was the faithfulness of God's people to the mission of their King.

I am now grateful that the earlier book was not published, because much of my understanding of the eleventh hour has changed. Yet the call to occupy, preach the Gospel of the Kingdom, and disciple the nations has only grown stronger. That journey eventually contributed to the creation of Eleventh Hour Ministries and the 11th Hour War Room.

Regardless of what is happening in the world, the assignment remains: We are to conduct the King's business until He comes.

Understanding the Times - Knowing What to Do

In the days of David, the sons of Issachar were described as men "who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do" (1 Chronicles 12:32). They did not merely observe the times. They understood what those times required of them.

Many believers today are fascinated with signs, prophecy, and world events. Far fewer are asking the question that made the sons of Issachar so valuable: What should the people of God do in response?

Where are today's sons of Issachar - believers who understand the times and also know what they should do?

What we believe about the future affects how we engage the present. With so many voices discussing the Second Coming, Israel, wars, cultural decline, tribulation, and competing rapture positions, believers can become absorbed by every geopolitical development and natural event.

Having participated in sports throughout my life, one instruction was repeatedly drilled into me: Keep your eye on the ball.

Where is our focus?

Are we primarily focused on events in the world, or are we focused on the mission Christ entrusted to His Ecclesia? Understanding the times has value only when it leads us to faithful action.

Many first-century Jewish religious leaders possessed the Scriptures and knew the prophetic promises concerning the Messiah. Yet Jesus did not fit their expectations, and many failed to recognize the One for whom they claimed to be waiting.

If sincere and learned people could misunderstand prophecies concerning Christ's first appearing, is it beyond possibility that sincere believers today could also misunderstand prophetic events? Could our

expectations become so dominant that we fail to hear what Scripture is actually saying? These questions should not be dismissed lightly.

If we misunderstand prophecy, we may also misunderstand our assignment. If the future is viewed only through a framework of unavoidable decline, tribulation, rapture, and escape, then passivity can begin to appear spiritual. If everything must collapse, why build? Why invest? Why challenge darkness? Why disciple nations? Why occupy?

The Mission Has Never Changed

One of the greatest dangers facing the Ecclesia is allowing speculation about the future to overshadow its mission. While believers debate prophetic timelines, political movements, wars, and signs of the times, Christ's commission remains unchanged.

Before His ascension, Jesus made a remarkable declaration:

"All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth." - Matthew 28:18

This declaration is the foundation of everything that follows. Jesus did not claim partial authority. He did not say that authority might someday be given to Him. He declared that all authority in heaven and on earth had already been entrusted to Him. On the basis of that authority, He commissioned His disciples:

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you." - Matthew 28:19-20

Notice what Jesus did not command. He did not tell His followers to withdraw from the world, wait passively for rescue, or spend their lives decoding every prophetic event. He gave them a mission.

The Ecclesia was commissioned to proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom, make disciples, teach obedience to Christ, and represent the King among the nations. This assignment was not presented as temporary. It was not dependent upon favorable political conditions, nor was it suspended during difficult times.

Jesus concluded the commission with the promise, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." His promise of presence was given in the context of His mission.

Whenever we examine prophecy, history, or current events, we should therefore ask: How does this help us fulfill the mission Christ has given us? If our study of prophecy leads us away from discipleship, stewardship, and Kingdom engagement, then we have likely missed its purpose.

The purpose of understanding the times is not fascination, but faithful action.

The mission has never changed. The King possesses all authority. The nations are His inheritance. The Ecclesia remains His instrument. Our assignment is to make disciples and conduct the King's business until He comes.

Occupy Until I Come

In the Parable of the Minas, Jesus described a nobleman who traveled to a distant country to receive a kingdom and then return. Before leaving, he entrusted ten servants with ten minas and instructed them:

"Occupy till I come." - Luke 19:13, King James Version

More recent translations render the command as "Put this money to work until I come back" or "Engage in business until I come." The underlying idea is not passive possession but active stewardship.

When the nobleman returned with royal authority, he called his servants to account. One servant had produced ten additional minas and was entrusted with authority over ten cities. Another had produced five and was placed over five cities. A third servant returned the original mina wrapped in a cloth. He had not lost or squandered it. He had simply done nothing with it.

The parable uses commerce, but its lesson reaches far beyond economics. It concerns stewardship, responsibility, faithfulness, accountability, and Kingdom activity during the King's apparent absence.

To occupy does not mean political domination, coercion, or controlling society in Christ's name. It means faithfully representing the King, using what He has entrusted to us, and advancing His interests through truth, service, discipleship, stewardship, and love.

The King Already Possesses Authority

The nobleman went away to receive a kingdom and returned with the authority that belonged to him. In the same way, Jesus ascended to the Father as the victorious Son and declared that all authority in heaven and on earth was His.

The central question for the Ecclesia is not whether Christ is King. The question is whether His servants are faithfully conducting the King's business during His reign.

Every Servant Receives a Stewardship

Each servant in the parable received a stewardship, and each bore personal responsibility for what had been entrusted to him. The issue was not simply what the servants possessed, but what they did with it.

The same principle applies today. Every believer has received gifts, opportunities, resources, influence, knowledge, relationships, and a sphere of responsibility within the Kingdom of God. Not all are called to the same tasks, and not all will produce the same results, but all are called to faithfulness.

The Father is the owner of all things. The Son is the appointed heir, and the nations are His inheritance. Through the indwelling Holy Spirit, the Ecclesia has been empowered to represent the Kingdom in the earth. We are not merely servants but sons and daughters, "heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ" (Romans 8:17). Sonship does not remove responsibility; it deepens it.

No servant was given permission to do nothing. Likewise, Christ expects His people to steward their lives, gifts, and opportunities in service to His purposes until He calls them to account.

Faithful Servants Produce Increase

The faithful servants did not merely preserve what they had received. They put it to work and produced increase. Their master's interests advanced because of their faithfulness.

Christ has entrusted His people with the Gospel of the Kingdom, the authority of His name, the power of the Holy Spirit, spiritual gifts, relationships, opportunities, influence, and material resources. These were not given merely to be protected. They were entrusted to us for Kingdom purposes.

Disciples are to make disciples. Truth is to be proclaimed. Gifts are to serve others. Resources are to be invested wisely. Lives are to be transformed. Families and communities are to experience the influence of Christ's Kingdom.

The goal is not worldly success or growth for its own sake. Kingdom increase is measured by faithfulness, obedience, fruitfulness, love, justice, service, and lives brought under the gracious lordship of Jesus Christ.

The Inactive Servant

The third servant presents a sobering contrast. He did not waste the mina. He preserved it, avoided risk, and waited for the king's return. His failure was inactivity.

In many ways, this servant reflects a mindset that can take root among believers. If we believe the world belongs permanently to Satan, that conditions must inevitably worsen, that the Ecclesia can do little to influence history, and that our only remaining hope is removal from the earth, inactivity may begin to appear reasonable.

Yet the king did not commend preservation without action. He rebuked the servant for failing to use what had been entrusted to him. The problem was not merely what the servant believed about the king. It was how that belief shaped his conduct while the king was away.

Instead of engaging in the king's business, he withdrew from it. Instead of producing fruit, he settled for preservation. Instead of occupying, he waited.

This is the consequence of not occupying until He comes.

The King's Expectation Is Clear

The King expects His servants to be actively engaged in His business. He expects stewardship, faithfulness, fruitfulness, and increase. He expects His servants to occupy.

This brings us back to the sons of Issachar. Their value was not simply that they recognized the times, but that they understood the appropriate response. Understanding without action accomplishes little. Discernment must lead to obedience.

Jesus answers the same question in Luke 19. What should His servants do while awaiting His return? They should engage in His business, faithfully steward what has been entrusted to them, and produce increase for His Kingdom.

Understand the times. Know what to do. Occupy until He comes.

What Does Occupation Look Like Today?

If Christ has received the Kingdom, if all authority belongs to Him, and if His servants are commanded to occupy, then the obvious question is: What does occupation look like today?

Occupation begins with walking in a manner worthy of our calling (Ephesians 4:1; Colossians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 2:12). This does not mean that we must become fully mature before God can use us. As the Lord transforms us, we participate in the transformation of others. We learn to live as citizens of the Kingdom by faithfully representing the King wherever He has placed us.

Our identity must shape our conduct. We are God's people, Christ's ambassadors, fellow heirs with the King, a royal priesthood, and living stones within His spiritual house. Occupation is not merely something we do; it is the outward expression of who we are becoming in Christ.

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Make Disciples

Occupation means making disciples. The Kingdom advances through spiritual reproduction - believers helping others become mature followers of Jesus who can then disciple others.

"Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." - 1 Corinthians 11:1

The Great Commission was never limited to securing decisions or producing converts. Jesus commanded His followers to make disciples and teach them to obey everything He commanded. The mission is not merely to prepare people for heaven, but to pray and labor for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Serve Within Every Sphere

Occupation extends beyond the walls of a church building. It reaches into families, education, business, government, communities, media, the environment, and every sphere of human activity. Wherever Christ has placed His people, His character and Kingdom should be faithfully represented.

Every believer has relationships, opportunities, resources, experience, and influence that can be used in service to the King. The question is not simply, "Where is God sending me?" It may be, "Why has God placed me where I am?"

Act With Courage

Occupation requires courage because faithfulness often demands action when retreat appears easier. It is easier to predict defeat than to labor faithfully. It is easier to wait for deliverance than to accept responsibility. Yet Christ did not call His Ecclesia to surrender the field. He called His people to represent His Kingdom, steward His gifts, disciple the nations, and conduct His business until He comes.

Our responsibility is faithfulness. The results belong to God.

Resist Distraction

Perhaps one of the greatest challenges facing the Ecclesia is distraction. We can become so consumed with political events, economic uncertainty, prophetic speculation, and cultural conflict that we lose sight of the mission Christ has placed before us.

The issue is not merely prophetic accuracy. The issue is faithfulness to our calling. Mission flows from identity. If we do not know who we are, we will not understand what we have been entrusted to do.

If the Ecclesia has misunderstood the Second Coming, the tribulation, the millennium, Satan's little season, or the rapture, that misunderstanding will affect how we live. It will influence whether we wait passively

to be rescued or rise to our assignment, whether we surrender the nations to darkness or faithfully disciple them under the authority of Christ.

From Conversion to Discipleship and Release

Scofield's end-times framework profoundly influenced my early surrender to the Lord. Because I believed the end was imminent, my primary concern became leading people to Christ and helping them pray a prayer of salvation. I wanted to get people through the door, but I had not yet grasped the responsibility of discipling them.

As years passed and the expected end did not unfold as I had been taught, my understanding of the mission changed. My focus expanded from salvation alone to salvation, discipleship, and release.

Lead people to Christ. Help them understand who they are in Christ and who Christ is in them. Teach them to study Scripture, seek the Father, and walk with the Holy Spirit. Then release them to go and do the same with others.

The issue is not merely prophetic accuracy. The issue is obedience. If Jesus possesses all authority and His commission still stands, then the Ecclesia must recover its identity, understand the times, and know what to do.

Review and Summary

The sons of Issachar were distinguished because they understood the times and knew what Israel ought to do. Their value was not merely in discernment but in their response. Understanding without action accomplishes nothing. Discernment must lead to faithful obedience.

Throughout this letter, we have considered a simple but important truth: What we believe about the future determines how we engage the present. If our prophetic understanding causes us to retreat, withdraw, or wait passively for rescue, then we have misunderstood our assignment. Christ did not call His people to escape their responsibility within history. He called them to faithfully represent His Kingdom within it.

From Genesis to the Great Commission, God's purpose for His people demonstrates a consistent pattern of stewardship. Humanity was commissioned to exercise faithful dominion over creation. Noah and his family were called to be fruitful after the flood. The servants in the Parable of the Minas were commanded to put the King's resources to work. The disciples were commissioned to make disciples of the nations.

The message is clear. The King possesses His Kingdom. All authority in heaven and on earth belongs to Him. The nations are His inheritance. The Holy Spirit has been given to empower His people. The Ecclesia has been entrusted with the Gospel of the Kingdom and commissioned to make disciples.

Therefore, our responsibility is not endless speculation about prophetic timelines or geopolitical developments. Understanding the times is important, but the greater question remains: What should God's people do?

- Walk in a manner worthy of our calling.
- Live from our identity in Christ.
- Make disciples and teach obedience to Jesus.
- Steward faithfully what has been entrusted to us.
- Serve within every sphere where God has placed us.
- Advance the interests of the King through truth, love, justice, and service.
- Conduct the King's business until He comes.

The issue is not merely understanding the future. It is understanding our assignment. The Ecclesia is called to understand the times, embrace its identity, disciple the nations, and faithfully conduct the King's business until He comes.

We are not called to dominate people or impose the Kingdom through force. We are called to represent the King, serve others, proclaim truth, make disciples, steward His gifts, and demonstrate what life under the lordship of Jesus Christ looks like.

Occupation is not passive waiting. It is active stewardship under the authority of the King.

To occupy is to conduct the King's business until the King returns.

If we understand the times but fail to fulfill our mission, what have we truly gained?

The challenge before the Ecclesia is not simply to recognize the signs of the times. It is to remain faithful, make disciples, produce Kingdom fruit, and occupy until He comes.



<https://eleventhhourministries.com/>

The letter does not end here. Continue the journey as we learn to think biblically, live courageously, and faithfully represent Christ's Kingdom in every sphere of life. Enter the War Room at 11thHourWarRoom.org

