

## **Letter One: Understanding the 11th Hour**

It is my conviction that what we believe about the future will ultimately determine how we engage the future. Christians do not all share the same understanding of prophetic events, the Kingdom of God, or the nature of the End Times. Views differ regarding the Second Coming of Christ, the tribulation, the man of sin, Israel's role in prophecy, Jerusalem and the Temple, Satan's "Little Season," and many other related subjects.

Yet despite these differences, I believe many of us share a common mission: to advance the Kingdom of God and strengthen the ecclesia of Jesus Christ in both spiritual and practical ways. We are called not merely to observe the world around us, but to engage it—redirecting resources, influence, wisdom, and effort toward the advancement of the gospel of Jesus Christ in word, demonstration, power, and truth.

For this reason, these letters present an alternative perspective to modern Dispensational theology and futurist interpretations of Scripture. My purpose is not to attack individuals, denominations, or sincere believers, but to encourage a thoughtful re-examination of assumptions many of us have inherited regarding prophecy, the Kingdom, and the mission of the ecclesia in the earth.

Over time, I have come to believe that certain theological frameworks have unintentionally conditioned many believers toward withdrawal, pessimism, and expectation of escape rather than Kingdom engagement, inheritance, discipleship, and occupation until He comes. Whether one ultimately agrees or disagrees with these conclusions, I simply ask the reader to consider the Scriptures carefully, honestly, and prayerfully.

My own journey into these subjects has been deeply personal. Much of my life and spiritual background was shaped within dispensational teaching and futurist expectations. What follows is not written from a posture of superiority or certainty in all things, but from the perspective of a disciple of Jesus Christ seeking truth, understanding, and faithfulness to the Word of God.

The encounters, convictions, and transformative moments I have experienced with my Lord and Savior are deeply real to me and have profoundly shaped this journey. With humility and sincerity, I offer these writings as the reflections of one continuing to learn, grow, and seek the wisdom and truth of Christ.

### **Personal Testimony**

Over fifty years ago, while halfway through reading *The Late Great Planet Earth* by Hal Lindsey, I surrendered my life fully to Jesus Christ. My conversion was radical. In a moment

of wholehearted surrender, everything changed. I began seeing the world through completely different eyes, overwhelmed by the love, peace, and reality of God's presence. For me, it was nothing short of miraculous.

Almost immediately, I began sharing the message of salvation with everyone around me—friends, classmates, teammates, and even strangers. Within weeks, nearly half of our university baseball team had surrendered their lives to Jesus. Before long, twenty-five to thirty college students were gathering in our home every Sunday night to study Scripture and grow in their understanding of Christ. Together we worked through *A Handbook for Christian Maturity* by Bill Bright, learning the foundations of the Christian life and discipleship.

At the same time, I became deeply immersed in the study of biblical prophecy and the End Times. Like many believers during the height of the Jesus Movement, I was captivated by dispensational teaching and futurist eschatology. I studied the writings of C. I. Scofield, J. Dwight Pentecost, Hal Lindsey, and later Tim LaHaye. I had the charts, the timelines, the prophetic systems, and the passion to tell others that Jesus was coming soon. The rebirth of Israel in 1948 was viewed as the restarting of the prophetic clock, and many of us sincerely believed we were the generation that would witness His imminent return.

Those years were filled with tremendous excitement and spiritual zeal. During the early 1970s, we witnessed hundreds of college students, friends, and families surrender their lives to Christ. The gospel was spreading rapidly through campuses, churches, sports teams, homes, beaches, and coffee houses. The Jesus Movement was exploding across the nation through ministries such as Chuck Smith, Lonnie Frisbee, and the growing Calvary Chapel movement. It was an exhilarating time to be alive as a believer.

A few years later, in the mid-1970s, I experienced another profound transformation through an encounter with the Holy Spirit. After weeks of earnestly seeking Him, the Holy Spirit became vividly real in my life. I began praying for people and witnessing God heal them. I saw people delivered from demonic oppression and watched lives transformed by the power of God. Worship became deeply personal and alive. The Holy Spirit was no longer merely theological to me—He became experiential, present, and active.

But over time, something unexpected happened. Jesus did not return according to the prophetic timelines we had confidently proclaimed. Many dispensational teachers insisted Christ would return within a biblical generation following Israel's statehood in 1948. Some defined that generation as forty years; others later expanded it to seventy. Yet the anticipated events never materialized.

That realization planted an important question in my heart: *Perhaps we do not have everything figured out.*

If we had misunderstood the timing, what else might we have misunderstood?

That question never diminished my love for Jesus or my devotion to Him. He remained my Lord, my Savior, and my Commander in Chief. But it did cause me to step back and begin reevaluating assumptions I had long accepted without question. For a season, I largely set eschatology aside and focused my attention on advancing the Kingdom of God and serving His people.

During the early 1980s, one particular passage became foundational in my life:

**“Upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.” — Matthew 16:18**

That verse settled something deeply within me. If Jesus Himself was committed to building His church, then my responsibility was to join Him in that mission.

Not long afterward, I answered the call into pastoral ministry. Pastoring was a dream fulfilled. I loved preaching the Word of God, caring for people, and battling spiritual darkness through prayer and ministry. Though pastoral ministry carried tremendous challenges, I genuinely loved serving the people of God.

Within a few years, however, our church became involved in an emerging church movement that emphasized apostles, prophets, and strong hierarchical authority structures. Initially, it felt exciting and visionary. We believed we were participating in a restoration of first-century Christianity and that together we would help transform the world through church planting and Kingdom expansion.

But over time, the movement became increasingly authoritarian and spiritually oppressive. Submission to leadership became elevated almost to unquestioned obedience. What began as spiritual passion gradually evolved into unhealthy control and heavy-handed authority.

Then, in the midst of that difficult season, our church experienced a remarkable visitation of the Holy Spirit. For years we had prayed earnestly for God to move among us, and suddenly His presence became overwhelmingly real. Week after week, the Holy Spirit filled our gatherings with profound love, conviction, healing, tenderness, and power.

It was during one of those encounters that my life changed again.

While lying prostrate on the floor of my office, overwhelmed by the presence of God, the Lord brought Matthew 28:18–20 powerfully to my heart:

**“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...”**

In that moment, something became unmistakably clear to me. I realized that much of my energy, time, and focus had been spent trying to build the church institutionally, while Jesus had commissioned His ecclesia to make disciples of nations. The call of the ecclesia was not merely to build organizations, but to disciple nations under the authority and reign of Christ so that He would build His church.

That revelation dramatically reshaped my understanding of ministry, the Kingdom, and the mission of the ecclesia.

Eventually, I confronted the unhealthy leadership structures within the movement. After years of faithful service and submission, I was labeled rebellious, accused of having an authority problem, and ultimately removed from ministry leadership. It was painful, humiliating, and deeply wounding—not only for me, but for my family as well.

Yet through that painful season, God remained faithful.

I eventually returned to the business world and spent several years rebuilding both practically and spiritually. During that time, my family and I carefully reevaluated many of the assumptions we had inherited regarding the church, leadership, the ecclesia, and the mission of God in the earth.

Years later, I became involved in the founding of Phoenix University of Theology, serving first as Registrar and later as Vice Provost. Through relationships with pastors, bishops, and Christian leaders from around the country and internationally, I gained a broader perspective on the diversity, strengths, and struggles within the body of Christ.

In recent years, after processing decades of ministry, leadership, church culture, theological study, and personal experience, I have increasingly come to believe that dispensational theology has unintentionally weakened the ecclesia’s sense of Kingdom mission and engagement in the earth.

These letters are not written to attack or condemn my brothers and sisters in Christ. Rather, they are offered as a sincere appeal—a watchman’s call to prayerfully reconsider what Scripture teaches regarding the Kingdom of God, the mission of the ecclesia, the End Times, and our role in the earth.

One more clarification or definition that is significant and often overlooked took place. The term church replacing ecclesia or congregation started forming in the 1500s. The Geneva Bible increasingly used “church”. Bishops Bible reinforced ‘church’ and the King James Bible institutionalized “church” as God’s people.

What is significant about this change, was the perception of a building rather than the body of Christ, the ecclesia (assemble / congregation). ‘Church’ became “Synagogue for all practical purposes moving the ecclesia from a new wineskin model to an old wineskin model. The church became a building rather than the ecclesia, congregation or assemble.

My desire is not merely that believers endure the days ahead, but that the ecclesia flourish—advancing the Kingdom of God faithfully, courageously, and victoriously in the earth until He comes.