



The Delay of the Second Coming of Jesus

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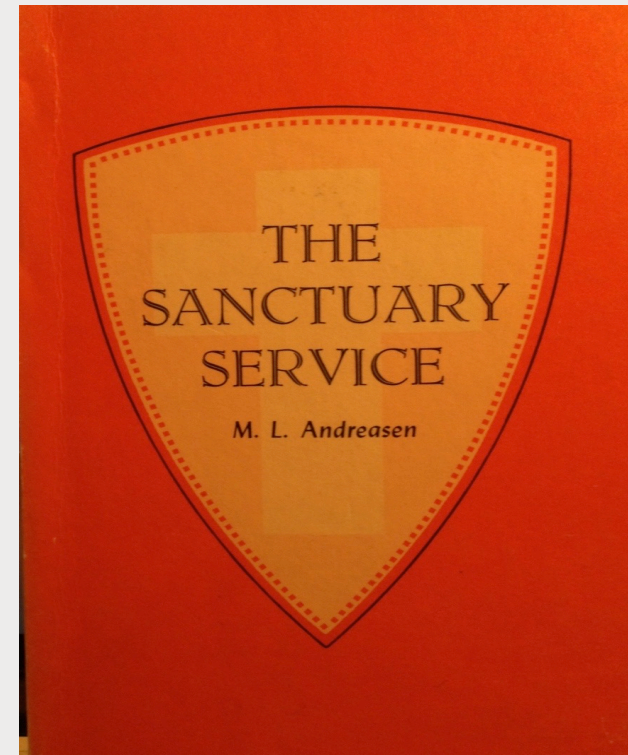
John 14:1-3

“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”

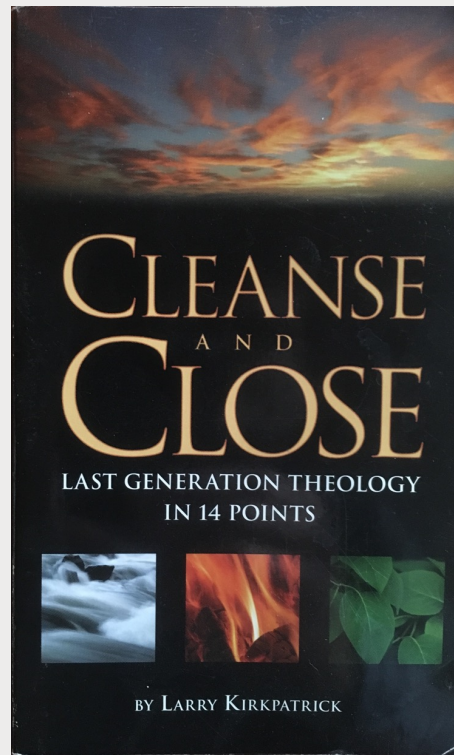
For centuries, believers in Jesus have been waiting for his return.

Why has there been a delay?

M. L. Andreasen



Key Components of *Last Generation Theology*



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Human nature: concupiscence (inherited sinful tendencies) is not sin; only willful wrong behavior is sin. Therefore, concupiscence does not deprive someone of salvation. (Pelagian and semi-Pelagian concept)

Jesus' human nature: Jesus had a nature identical to ours, including concupiscence (inherited sinful tendencies). By the grace of God, He was able to overcome all temptations, he gave humanity the right example to follow. (semi-Pelagianism; semi-Arianism)

Perfection: Since Jesus overcame all temptations (from within [concupiscence] and from without), true believers will follow his example and overcome sin as He overcame. If they don't, they will not be saved, or be part of that last generation. (semi-Pelagianism)

End of time scenario: at the end of time, the 144,000 will be a group of believers who will live their lives just like Jesus did and exhibit the same sinless behavior he did. (Pelagianism)

Vindication of the character of God: this sinless perfection of the saints at the end of time will vindicate the character of God before the universe (beyond giving glory to God).

Delay of the second coming of Christ: until this manifestation of the sinless lives of true believers happens, the second coming of Christ will be delayed. The end of the great controversy is contingent on this human achievements. (Pelagianism)

Unfortunate consequences:

Fear of God

Emphasis on personal efforts

Little or no assurance of salvation

Guilt, Lack of Forgiveness

Is God waiting for a perfect and sinless generation of believers at the end of time before Jesus can return?

Why the Delay?

2 Peter 3:4 ESV

They will say, “Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation.”

2 Peter 3:8-13 ESV

⁸ But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. ⁹ **The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness**, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. ¹⁰ But **the day of the Lord will come like a thief**, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

¹¹ Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹² waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! ¹³ But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

2 Peter 3:11-13 ESV

¹¹ Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, ¹² **waiting for and hastening** [**hastening to, or to be eager for**] the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! ¹³ But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

- **Waiting**: prosdokōntas [προσδοκῶντας]

- **Hastening**: speudontas [σπεύδοντας]

- *Elsewhere in the NT this verb means to be eager for something, or to quickly go to somewhere*

Jesus said there would be a delay.

The Olivet discourse – Matthew 24-25

- Signs of Christ's Return (24:1-35)
- Christ's Second Coming (24:29-35)
- Invitation to Perpetual Vigilance (24:36 - 25:46)
 - “No one knows the hour” (24:36-42)
 - Parable of the Householder and Thief (24:43-44)*
 - Parable of the Faithful and Unfaithful Servants (24:45-51)*
 - Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids (25:1-13)*
 - Parable of the Talents (25:14-30)*
 - Parable of the Sheep and the Goats (25:31-46)*

What is Jesus inviting his disciples to do during the delay?

1. “Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.” (24:42)
 - *To be vigilant and faithful.*
2. “Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” (24:44)
 - *To live a life of expectation.*

What is Jesus inviting his disciples to do during the delay?

3. “The faithful and wise servant ... gives them their food at the proper time.” (24:45)
 - *To live faithfully and consistently in service of others.*
4. “Some virgins are wise, some are not.” (25:2)
 - *To be spiritually prepared – preparation cannot be transferred.*

What is Jesus inviting his disciples to do during the delay?

5. Each one is given some talents from the Master (25:14-15)
 - *Not everyone is expected to perform at the same level of competency, but all are expected to do their best as faithful servants.*
 - *Fear should not hinder us from being faithful.*
 - *Be a good servants in small and great gifts.*
6. “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.” (25:40)
 - *Those who inherit the kingdom of God are those who are faithful in disinterested and benevolent service to others.*

The teaching of Jesus about the delay and how to live our lives during this delay is not focusing on our own selves or on our own sins and shortcomings.

Jesus asked his faithful servants to serve faithfully in whatever area of activity they are asked to serve. The focus is on others.

2 Peter 3:8-13 ESV

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¹¹ Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, **what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,** ¹² **waiting for and hastening [to] the coming of the day of God,** because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! ¹³ But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

Unfortunately, **Last Generation Theology** is focusing so much on personal human achievements that people become focused about themselves, their personal sins, mistakes, and errors.

This focus on self is not what Jesus invited his disciples to focus on. In fact, even our best service to God is tainted by sin and selfishness and cannot be of any value unless it be purified by the blood of Jesus' sacrifice.

“The religious services, the prayers, the praise, the penitent confession of sin ascend from **true** believers . . . to the heavenly sanctuary. . . . But passing through the corrupt channels of humanity, they are so defiled that unless purified by blood, they can never be of value with God.” (Manuscript 50, 1900, in *Selected Messages*, 1:344)

“What efforts are we putting forth as the believers of unpopular truth, in self-denial, in self-sacrifice? **We can never equal the Pattern**, because it is infinite goodness practiced in His human nature, [yet] we should make determined efforts with all the powers of our being to follow His example. ... We are entrusted with the grace of God, and our commission is to resemble Him, making it our first business and calling to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.” (*Manuscript Releases*, 16:299)

“The Lord Jesus imparts all the powers, all the grace, all the penitence, all the inclination, all the pardon of sins, in presenting His righteousness for man to grasp by living faith—which is also the gift of God. If you would gather together everything that is good and holy and noble and lovely in man and then present the subject to the angels of God as acting a part in the salvation of the human soul or in merit, the proposition would be rejected as **treason**. ... Christ for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. **And any works that man can render to God will be far less than nothingness**. My requests are made acceptable only because they are laid upon Christ’s righteousness. The idea of doing anything to merit the grace of pardon is fallacy from beginning to end. ... Man can achieve no praiseworthy exploits that give him any glory.” (Manuscript 36, 1890, in *Faith and Works*, 24)

“For all of us have become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment
[“rags,” KJV]; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our
iniquities, like the wind, take us away.” Isaiah 64:6
NASB

God has never revealed the exact date when Jesus will come again. He only promised that the Second Coming will come “suddenly.”

The Second Coming will happen when God decides it to happen.

The Second Coming is not dependent upon our perfection or sinlessness, and Jesus did not invite his disciples to focus on ourself while waiting for his coming, but to focus on others.