Dear Brethren In Christ,

In reflecting deeply on some matters concerning shared faith in Christ, I feel compelled to share what's been on my heart. I trust this message reaches you in good spirits and with an openness to examine the scriptures with me, as we should always do. Over the years, I've greatly valued discussions about the Word of God and a willingness to explore difficult and sometimes contentious issues. It is in this same spirit of fellowship that I write.

After much study and prayer, I have come to realize that some of the teachings I once held, particularly in regard to eschatology, were not as aligned with scripture as I had thought. Specifically, I've come to embrace a more covenantal view of scripture, one that I believe is deeply rooted in a careful and faithful interpretation of God's Word. My concern is for truth, and I wish to express this not as an imposition of my views, but as an encouragement to seek the truth as revealed by the Holy Spirit, for it is He who guides us into all truth (John 16:13).

One theme that I've grown increasingly unpersuaded by is the belief in a singular "Antichrist" figure who will make a covenant with Israel in the last days. The term "antichrist" only appears in five places in the New Testament, all in the epistles of John (1 John 2:18, 1 John 2:22, 1 John 4:3, 2 John 1:7). In these passages, John speaks of "antichrists" in the plural, and these are described as anyone who denies Christ or rejects His incarnation. Nowhere in scripture is the term used to describe a single future figure. This challenges a popular interpretation, and I believe we must be careful not to add to God's Word or read ideas into it that aren't there (Proverbs 30:6).

In my earlier years, I held strongly to the pre-tribulation rapture view, a doctrine closely tied to dispensationalism and

Scofield futurist doctrine. Like many, I accepted this teaching because it was widespread and often presented as the orthodox view. However, just because a teaching is popular and embraced by the majority doesn't mean it is necessarily true. Scripture warns us about following the crowd without discernment. As it says in Exodus 23:2, ***"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil…"*** Likewise, Matthew 7:13-14 reminds us that the way of truth is often narrow, and few find it: ***"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."***

What prompted my change in perspective was a deeper study of scripture. I realized that much of what I believed was based on interpretations that read ideas into the text (eisegesis), rather than drawing meaning out of the text itself (exegesis). Take, for example, Matthew 24:34, where Jesus says, ***"Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled."*** I now understand this to be referring to the events of the first century, including the destruction of the temple in 70 A.D., rather than a distant future tribulation.

In addition, consider Matthew 21:18-19, where Jesus curses the barren fig tree. This was not merely a symbolic act, but a profound declaration that the old covenant system, represented by the fig tree, was passing away. Jesus' lament over Jerusalem in Matthew 23:37-38—***"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate"***—flows directly into His prophecy in Matthew 24, indicating the culmination of the old covenant and its judgment in the events of 70 A.D. rather than something far off in the future.

It has become clear to me that many teachings prevalent in the modern church may not align with scripture as closely as they appear. As Paul admonished the Galatians in Galatians 3:1, ***"O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not***

obey the truth…?" I believe that, like the Galatians, many of us have been influenced by teachings that divert us from the truth found in the Word. We must remember the warning of Colossians 2:8, which says, ***"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ."***

I also want to be clear that I have no desire to create division or impose my views on anyone. My prayer is that the sentiment echoed in Galatians 4:16—"***Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?"***—would never enter into our fellowship. It is not my intent to suggest that differing views should lead to discord, nor am I implying that my convictions must become yours. I believe we can maintain our unity in Christ while encouraging one another to seek out the truth as revealed in scripture.

As I reflect on these matters, I am reminded of the boldness of Peter and John in Acts 4:20, who declared, ***"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."*** I, too, feel a conviction to speak openly about the truths I've come to understand through the study of scripture. Like them, I cannot remain silent about what the Holy Spirit has revealed through God's Word, even when it may challenge widely accepted teachings. It is not out of pride or a desire to argue, but out of a deep concern for truth and a responsibility to share it.

I share all of this to encourage us all to seek truth more deeply. As Proverbs 27:17 reminds us, ***"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."*** My hope is that we can continue to challenge one another in love, always pointing back to scripture, the ultimate source of truth.

I respect those who hold different views, and I do not claim to have all the answers. But I do believe it's important to question what we've been taught, especially when the Holy Spirit brings conviction. 1 Thessalonians 5:21 advises us,

“***Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”*** My prayer is that we will be open to the Spirit’s leading as we continue to grow in our understanding of God’s Word. As Jesus promised in John 8:32, ***“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”***

Thank you for taking the time to read this. I look forward to continuing our discussions and encouraging one another in the faith as we seek the truth in love.

In Christ,
