

# Late at the Right Time

BY MICHAEL FUENTES



I was waiting for my chauffeur ride to the airport when I got a message that my driver was still ten minutes away from my hotel. Because I didn't want to wait outside in the cold, I went back in to the hotel lobby to sit on a sofa and charge my phone.

More than thirty minutes passed, and I went outside again, wondering what had happened to my ride. Then I got a message saying that the driver had arrived at the airport.

I was confused. I had less than two hours until my flight, but I was still at the hotel. I messaged my chauffeur on WhatsApp and got a call with an equally confused voice on the other end.

My driver had come to my hotel, picked up someone claiming to be his passenger, and dropped them off at the same airport I was going to. I asked him, "So...what do we do?" He said he'd call management to see what could be done. I went back inside to wait again, wondering what in the world had just happened and whether I would still be able to catch my flight.

Silently I prayed to the Lord. I thought I had done everything I could to prepare. I was ready, and this mix-up didn't make sense. Did somebody with my name get in the car thinking it was theirs? Did the

driver go to the wrong hotel? Was it a case of mistaken identity? Whatever the answer, I had been waiting for about an hour now and my flight departure was looming closer!

After ten long minutes the driver called me in a frantic tone telling me that he was on his way and would be sure to pick me up this time. I prayed again. If I missed my flight, I would be stuck on the opposite side of the world from my country, and I had no money to book another ticket. I didn't want the chauffeur to have to buy me one. I only had an hour before my boarding time, and I didn't even know how far away the airport was.

The driver arrived, rushing to greet me and grab my bag. As we settled into the warm car, he asked me, "When is your flight?"

Calmly I responded, "In less than an hour."

"Oh no," he murmured and stepped on the gas.

As the car sped toward the airport, the driver asked me if I was also a pastor at the conference that had been taking place. I said no, but that I do have a bachelor's degree in Theology. He asked why I wasn't a pastor; I joked that in the Philippines, you needed a wife to be a pastor and even if my grades were at the top, I didn't think I could get a wife anyway!

He shared with me the importance of having a partner that can understand the hardships of being in ministry as well as being equally committed to the Lord. He also mentioned how the entire family needed to be on the same page in missions.

Suddenly he said, "I want to be a minister." This statement caught me off guard, and I asked him to clarify it. He told me that he has been having this burden on his heart to go into ministry, but he has a family and a full-time job. The need to make ends meet as well as other personal problems were difficult, but the conviction to serve the Lord in ministry was strong.

I asked, "When do you start?"

He replied, "I enrolled for online classes last night. It's a flexible program so I can still keep on working my day job." Then he began to ask me for tips, what to do, what to expect, and how to study.

After giving a few practical pointers, I described something I've been doing recently.

"When you study, remember your calling. The lessons can seem boring or hard, easy or pointless. If you don't focus on why you started, it doesn't matter how you finish. It will just be another job. The call to ministry is a different profession. It needs faith and a strong relationship with God in both good and bad times."

He told me his interest in the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) and asked me for suggestions on how to study.

"Read the gospels, then go back to Genesis," I told him. "Read it all. The entire book. Then look for Jesus."

He shot me a confused look, "Genesis? And the gospels?"

I gave him an example about how Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice, highlighting the parallels between Isaac and Jesus. I asked him, "Now think about the cross. What do you think the Father was feeling when Jesus was hanging on the cross?"

His mouth dropped and eyes widened. "WHAT? Wait! I get it! I see it! Wow!" His excitement was so genuine, I was afraid he was going to let go of the steering wheel!

He wanted more so I told him about Moses and Joseph, giving him hints as to their correlation in Jesus' life. He couldn't believe what he was hearing, "Yeah! Yeah! I see it!" With every story I mentioned, his amazement grew.

As we approached the airport, I told him to pull over so I could pray for him. I encouraged him to keep listening to God as his teacher for all truth, no matter who would be teaching his classes and what university he would be enrolled in. God knows our hearts, and He knows when a seeker is sincere. When God is teaching, He will guide us into all truth.

As I walked into the airport I was amazed at that entire ride and the conversation we had had. Here was a man, who had been praying for encouragement and guidance the night before, and here I was, fashionably late at just the right time.

And I made my flight.

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# World Church Prayer Requests

OCTOBER 25 — 31, 2024

- **Barbados:** Pray for the Hope and Healing evangelistic series to be conducted by President Hall in Barbados. The series starts October 26 and will continue for three weeks. Pray that there will be a revival within the church and that many souls will be converted.
- **Montserrat:** Pray for the Pathfinders of the 2024 Congress as they proclaim and share God's Word with their community October 25-27.
- **United States:** Pray for the First Seventh-Day Adventist and the Kenyon Memorial SDA Churches as they partner together for evangelistic meetings in October and November. Pray that there will be a spiritual revival as they work together and support each other.
- **Rwanda:** Pray for those affected by the Marburg virus outbreak. Pray that God will stop its spread and send His comfort to those who have lost loved ones.
- **Trinidad:** Pray for the Homework Centre, an evangelistic tool to reach the young people of the community. Pray that those involved will be dedicated to God's service.
- **United Kingdom:** Pray for the Evesham Seventh-day Adventist Church, a new church plant dedicated to be a light to their community and representation of the Lord. Pray that God will provide the means, strength, and wisdom to serve Him well.