

PREFACE

The Halfway Point

“LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am.”

— Psalm 39:4

“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.”

— Psalm 90:12

There is a particular kind of clarity that arrives at the halfway point of life. You find yourself pursuing what you feel would bring you fulfillment, only to find that one-half of your life has passed. You look back over the footprints in the sand and recognize that all you have accomplished seems futile, much like footprints being whisked away by the wind or washed away by the tide. We are stewards of our time on earth because it is finite and yet we spend a considerable amount of that time toiling for those that minimize the value of our time. In exchange, we collect something that has no intrinsic value, so that we can project the accumulation of that worthless value and rank ourselves based on the ascension.

Youthful pursuits offer more certainty and confidence because your endeavors have not been fully tested by the weight of actual living. There is more clarity as you age because it offers insight that carries the gravity and weight of life for a person who has seen how most of the stories end.

The clarity of the halfway point is the clarity of someone who has lived long enough to recognize the patterns but is still young enough to do something about them. Who has accumulated enough loss to take time seriously but still has enough time to spend it differently. Who can look backward far enough to understand where they came from and forward far enough to understand that what comes next is not guaranteed and is not as far away as it once appeared.

I am Generation X and I am at that point.

And what I see from here — looking backward at the years already spent and forward at the years that remain — has made it impossible for me to be quiet about what I have learned on my journey.

I have arrived at the halfway point of my life. Time feels a little different now than it did at when I was twenty-five. Faster. More specific. More weighted with the understanding that each day is not a rehearsal for the real living that is coming later. It is the real living. It is happening right now. And it is finite in a way that I was structurally incapable of fully appreciating, in my youth.

I have watched people I love live and die within this system. I have watched the years go by, the way years do — quickly, quietly, without asking permission, without waiting for you to be ready. I have watched the promises and dreams deferred and the gifts suppressed and the communities scattered and the families diminished and the ladder climbed, and climbed, and climbed until the climbers were too old or too sick or too depleted to climb anymore.

And I have asked myself the question that the halfway point demands: What am I going to do with what remains? How am I going to impact my community and the lives of my children.

Not what am I going to accumulate. Not what position am I going to reach. Not what number am I going to achieve in the account that has no intrinsic value and will not follow me past my last breath.

What am I going to build?

What am I going to leave behind that is worth leaving?

What will my children find when they arrive at their own halfway point and look back at the ground their father walked on?

Humanity is a relay race. The whole point is that what one generation builds, the next generation receives. The baton — the accumulated wisdom, the community structures, the cleared land, the planted seeds, the demonstrated possibility of a different way of living — passes from hand to hand across generations. Each runner's job is not to complete the whole race but to run their leg faithfully and pass the baton forward.

But somehow, we have managed to remain stationary. Not because the runners are not running — everyone is running, frantically, exhaustingly, harder than any generation in human history. But the running has been redirected. Instead of running forward, we are running in circles. On a track defined by the money system. A track that leads back to the same place every time. When you're running in circles, you are running nowhere — like a hamster wheel.

This book is my attempt to name what I have witnessed, to trace the source of the circling, and to point toward the door marked “enough,” to the exit that was always there. The system has spent generations teaching us not to see the obstacle course or the track, it has successfully shifted our gaze to focus on the other runners.

This book is the beginning of what I want to leave behind.

It is the argument I need my children to have, and their children and their children's children. The framework I need the community to build on. The question I need the faithful to stop deferring.

It is the testimony of a witness who has seen enough.

And who is, finally, saying so.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

I have an economics degree but I am not an economist. I am not a theologian with letters after my name. I am a living witness.

I have watched people I love trade their lives for a promise that was never fully kept. I stood at graves far too soon and sat with grief that had no good reason for existing at the age at which it arrived. I have watched communities empty and families scatter and churches lose their way and politics become a performance that serves everything except the people it supposedly represents.

I have also witnessed another way. In small moments and deliberate communities and in the stubborn persistence of people who refused to organize their lives around the pursuit of something that could not satisfy them. I have seen what happens when people share what they have, stay close to each other, and decide that enough is actually enough.

This book is my attempt to name what I have witnessed — both the theft and the possibility — and to ask the question that I cannot stop asking:

If Heaven promises everything the money system was supposed to deliver and never did — **rest, abundance, community, time, love, freedom from fear** — then why are we waiting to build it?

The Kingdom is at hand.

It always has been.

We just keep being told to wait.

