SETTING DATES FOR JESUS' RETURN IS WRONG

Text: Matthew 24:36-44

Introduction: This is one of those chapters that deal mainly with the end time events. The return of Jesus is a major event in the Bible and for the Christian's hope. Another preacher predicted that this event would happen on September 6, 1994. Most of us can remember the prediction of September 1988 and 1989. The Bible clearly tells us that setting dates for the return of Jesus and the end of the world is wrong.

I. THE FACT OF DATE SETTING

A. The Scriptures
   1. The Bible does tell us of some things that will come to pass before Jesus returns for His people.
   2. Study II Timothy 3:1-13. Read these verses and pick up the daily newspaper and notice the similarity.
   3. The signs can point us to a general and maybe even specific time. No dates, but close to the return.

B. The students
   1. End time events are some of the most interesting subjects. Some men give their lives in studying this subject.
   2. They try to fit everything together to the point that they think they have it figured out.
   3. Some it is so plain. The Word is so plain. It becomes so plain to them that they set a time and even a date. This is contrary to God's Word.

C. The silliness
   1. Date setting goes against Bible teaching.
   2. No man and not even an angel knows when the Lord will return. V38
   3. Those who said September of 1988 and 1989 was the time appear foolish and they did go against plain Bible teaching.

II. THE FOOLISHNESS OF DATE SETTING

A. The Word
   1. God's Word teaches us that no man or angel knows the time when the Lord will return.
   2. How can anyone believe they know more than the Word of God?
   3. No one can know. Only the Father knows. When it is time, He will instruct the Son who will return according to the Father's will.

B. The will
   1. Some want to understand God and His Word so much. They think they have figured it all out.
   2. Man has been upon the earth about 6,000 years. We have a history of the human race from Adam until the birth of Jesus. Study the genealogies recorded in Matt. 1 and Luke 2.
   3. Some believe the 1,000 years will start at the end of the 6,000 year history of mankind. They look to the year 2,000. The Roman calendar is off close to 25 years according to some.

C. The winning
   1. It is very interesting and mind catching to hear someone set a date.
   2. It gets people's attention and they enjoy listening to a speaker who talks about it.
   3. There are a lot of showmen even in the religious world. You can win a crowd over even among God's people by talking about the return and setting dates.

III. THE FAULT OF DATE SETTING

A. The scoffing
   1. Peter said some would come and scoff at the idea of the return of Jesus. I Peter 3:3,4
   2. To scoff means to ridicule or make fun of. It is funny to a lot of people.
   3. Noah warned his generation for 120 years the end was coming. It probably was funny until the water started coming down and there was no place to hide.

B. The sensitivity
   1. When others keep setting dates, people will become insensitive to the message and the truth.
2. When I was in the seventh grade, someone predicted the end of the world. It nearly scared me to death.
3. The day came and things continued on. Each time we hear of a date being set, it can make even the Lord's own people insensitive. WE HAVE HEARD THAT BEFORE and things continue on.

C. The seriousness
   1. They hear all of the date settings and date setters.
   2. They prove to be unreliable in their claims and preaching.
   3. The world hears God's man preach the return of Jesus from the scriptures and they doubt and even deny the truth.

IV. THE FAITH AND DATE SETTING
A. The believing
   1. Do not allow your faith to be destroyed by a date setter!
   3. The Word teaches us no man or angel knows when the Lord doth come.

B. The becoming
   1. Jesus tells us to live a certain way because He will return.
   2. We are to watch and wait for the appearing of the Son of man.
   3. When dates are set people will live sinfully until it is near the time of the return and they will get things right with the Lord.
   4. Live as though it could be any time because it could be any time.

C. The being ready
   1. Watch because you don't know when the Lord will return.
   2. Be ready for the return of Jesus. Be saved and serving.
   3. We must live each day in readiness. We don't know when He will return. So live that you are ready.

V. THE FRUIT AND DATE SETTING
A. The watching
   1. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Titus 2:13
   2. When we are watching for the return of Jesus, we will live the way Titus 2:12 teaches us to live.
   3. Are we really watching for the return of Jesus? Do we think He will return today?

B. The waiting
   1. "Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not." Luke 12:40
   2. Paul said that we are to love the appearing of the Lord. II Tim. 4:8
   3. We are to long for the Lord's return and expect to see Him very soon.

C. The walking
   1. "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." I Thess. 5:23
   2. "That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ."
   3. We are to walk in the light as He is in the light because it won't be very long until the Lord returns for His holy people.

RUN WHILE YOU CAN
Text: I Timothy 6:11,12

Introduction:
A. Our Christian life is often compared to a battle. V12
   1. Here we are commanded to fight the good fight of faith.
   2. II Timothy 2:3,4 instructs us to endure this battle with hardness.
   3. It also instructs us that victory will not be won if we entangle ourselves in the affairs of this world.
   4. In other words a Christian cannot act as the world does and live their faith.
B. In our battle to live for Christ there are times we must flee from the enemies' face. V11
   1. Sin is our enemy.
   2. The reasons for fleeing are listed below.

I. SIN IS A POWERFUL FORCE.
A. Sin is anything which breaks, contradicts or abuses the law of God. I John 3:4
   1. God has established a universal law of right and good for all men.
   2. Being our Creator, He has the divine right to demand our allegiance to it.
   3. He has provided penalty for transgression and a means of forgiveness.
      a. Jesus is our means of forgiveness.
      b. Reject Him and be condemned.
B. Sin is powerful because it comes about by man's weakness. James 1:13-15
   1. It is more dangerous than L.S.D.
      a. These same initials describe the process to sin.
      b. L.S.D. kills and so does sin.
   2. A man is tempted when drawn away of his own lust-carnal weakness. Example: Bait before a fish.
   3. When lust conceives, or gives life to temptation, sin exist.
      a. There must be an inviting atmosphere for life to form. Example: womb
      b. When sin occurs man actually invites temptation instead of fighting.
   4. The end result is spiritual death.

II. TO AVOID FORBIDDEN FRUIT, STAY OUT OF THE DEVIL'S ORCHARD.
A. Adam and Eve could have avoided the downfall of man by staying away from the forbidden tree.
   1. They didn't.
   2. They talked with Satan. He is too crafty for us.
B. An alcoholic, or one with weakness for drink should not go to a bar for a coke.
C. The gambler should not go to the race track to see the horses, nor take a vacation in Vegas.
D. The gossip should not be found in a large group talking about someone.
   1. Most gossips are unaware they are such.
   2. But more homes and churches are disturbed by those who distribute and receive information than otherwise.
   3. "Don't tell anyone I told you" is the introduction to gossip.

E. The impressionable teen should not follow a crowd. It generally leads to evil.

III. RUNNING IS HONORABLE IF SIN IS THE ENEMY.
   A. Never tackle sin in your own strength. Example: It is like the Briar rabbit that tried to beat the tar baby.
   B. Christian flee every unrighteous situation. II Timothy 2:22; I Cor. 6:18; 10:14
   C. Running may not be fashionable in regular battle, but it will spare your soul in spiritual battle from shame. How?
      1. To be saved one must repent-flee sin.
      2. To be saved one must believe-flee to Christ.
      3. To be clean one must separate-flee sin.

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GUIDELINES FOR CHURCH MEMBERS (R)
Text: I Corinthians 10:31

Introduction:
   A. The ESTABLISHED fact.
      1. If you're going to get anywhere you must get involved.
      2. If you're going to accomplish anything you must get involved.
   B. The ENCOURAGING fact - God has promised that He will take note of everything that we do in His name according to the truth. Hebrews 6:10
   C. The ENLIGHTENMENT - GOOD CHURCH MEMBERS ARE:

I. RECEIVERS!
   A. Receive His Word.
      1. Note the different messages contained in His Word.
         a. Message of COMMAND.
         b. Message of COURAGE.
         c. Message of CHALLENGE.
         d. Message of COMFORT.
         e. Message of CHASTISEMENT.
      2. Note the varied responses that could be made.
   B. Receive His Man. Matthew 10:40
   C. Receive His Blessings.

II. RECONCILIERS! II Corinthians 5:19
   A. They seek to bring people to Christ.
      1. Matthew 3:18-20
      2. The main job of every church member.
      3. Reach out to others.
      4. Illustration - the Fire department.

B. They seek to establish and maintain Christian unity among the saints. (Peacemakers - reconcilers.)

III. REFRENSRS! I Corinthians 16:18
   A. They ENCOURAGE.
   B. They EXCITE.
      1. When a fellow church member sees you coming - are they refreshed by your presence or repelled.
      2. Through our actions we develop a character that radiates something to others.
   C. The EXAMPLES.
      1. Thelma Hollman.
      2. Sonny Graham.
      3. Riley Dale.

IV. REJOICERS! Philippians 4:43
V. REVEALTERS! Galatians 1:16
   A. Revealer of the GOSPEL message.
      1. Pardon Aspect. I Cor. 15:1
      2. Practical Aspect. Rom. 6:1
   B. Revealer of GOD'S GRACE.
   C. Revealer of GUIDING principles.

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THE WAY TO REVIVAL
Text: Psalm 85:6-13

I. ADMISSION V,8,9
A. We are not our own. I Cor. 6:19,20
1. We asked for redemption and forgiveness.
2. We accepted the ransom price paid. I Peter 1:18,19
B. We need encouragement. Psalm 9:13,14
1. We become disenchanted.
   a. Too hard to be Christian.
   b. Too lonely being Christian.
   c. Unappreciated for Christian deeds.
2. We lose sight of why we serve God. I Cor. 3:9-15
   a. Love for God and godliness
   b. Love of people’s eternal soul
C. We want to be blessed. Matthew 25:21
1. We do care what others think.
2. We want others to be pleased with us.

II. SUBMISSION V10,11
A. To the will of God
   1. That we follow the Holy Spirit’s leadership.
   2. That we hide His Word in our hearts.
B. To the authority of the local New Testament Church
   1. A body that Jesus established and gave authority.
   2. As a member who is to be more concerned for others.
C. To the needs of those around us
   1. A godly example
   2. A voice proclaiming hope in Jesus

III. CONVICTION V12,13
A. Of sin James 4:17
   1. Acts of commission
   2. Acts of omission
B. Of love I John 4:21
   1. For God
   2. For God’s people
C. Of need
   1. To minister to others
   2. To be useful / usable

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D. “Thank you, Lord, for saving my soul—thank you, Lord, for making me whole—thank you, Lord, for giving to me thy great salvation so rich and free.”

TO BE TRULY THANKFUL:
I. WE MUST MAKE SOMETHING (a joyful noise) V1
A. Singing—praise
B. Shouting—that comes from victory
C. Laughter—that springs from the spiritual man.
D. Talk—that tells of Jesus or builds up.
E. Prayer—that is seasoned from beginning to end with thanksgiving.

II. WE MUST DO SOMETHING (serve the Lord with gladness). V2
A. Some serve Him out of guilt.
B. Some serve Him out of habit.
C. Some serve Him out of fear.
D. Some don’t serve Him at all.
E. Serve Him out of love with gladness.

III. WE MUST KNOW SOMETHING (that the Lord is God) V3
A. Know that He hath made us.
B. Know that we are not self-made (without me ye can do nothing).
C. Know that we are His people.

IV. WE MUST ENTER SOMETHING (into His gates with thanksgiving). V4
A. We need to enter church this way.
B. We need to enter work this way.
C. We need to enter each day this way.

V. WE NEED TO SAY SOMETHING (the Lord is good). V5
A. God’s mercy is extended to you today.
B. I thank God for having enough mercy to save me.

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GOD STANDS IN THE SHADOWS

Introduction: Henry Ward Beecher – “If one should give me a dish of sand, and tell me there were particles of iron in it, I might look for them with my eyes, and search for them with my clumsy fingers, and be unable to detect them, but let me take a magnet and sweep through it, and how would it draw to itself the almost invisible particles by the mere power of attraction.

The unthankful heart, like my finger in the sand, discovers no mercies, but let the thankful heart sweep through the day, and as the magnet finds the iron, so it will find, in every hour, some heavenly blessings, only the iron of God’s sand is gold!

A. We miss the true blessing of God because we forget to be thankful.
B. How quickly we turn our minds from the heavenly to the earthly!
C. How easy it is to be down cast and discouraged when we see with human eyes and think with human minds.

He could fill their hearts with hope
He could banish the night
He could take every sinful wrong
Wash and cleanse and make it right!

But folks are just too busy
Trying to solve things in their own way
To even stop and listen
To what the Lord would say.

“Come unto me all ye laden
Confess your sins and leave them there
For I give joy and hope eternal
To replace your guilt and despair.”

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SHALL WE CONTINUE IN SIN?

Text: Romans 6:1,2

Introduction:
A. Paul explains the meaning of baptism in chapter 6.
B. The Bible teaches the eternal security of the believer, but not the continuance of the believer in the practice of sin. I John 39
C. It is not consistent with the new nature to continue in sin. Just because grace abounds where sin abounds does not mean we should sin so grace can abound.
D. Shall we continue in sin?

I. SHALL WE CONTINUE IN SIN, WHEN WE KNOW IT’S ORIGIN?
A. Sin began in heaven, the place of the holy and pure. Sin began in rebellion against God. Isaiah 14:12-15
B. There was rebellion in heaven led by the Devil.
C. Sin is a terrible monster, a dreadful and deadly disease and because of sin a curse is placed upon the human race.
D. The first expression of sin among Adam’s race was in the garden of Eden. Gen. 3
E. Shall we continue in sin knowing that Satan the deceiver, liar, dragon, beast, agitator, and hater of mankind was the author of it?

II. SHALL WE CONTINUE IN SIN, WHEN WE KNOW IT’S HISTORY?
A. Sin began in heaven, but its history is dark and dreadful.
B. For Adam it was a dreadful time.
   1. The ground was cursed for man’s sake.
   2. He would have to earn his living by the sweat of his brow.
   3. The woman would have pain in child bearing.
   4. He and Eve were cast out of the garden.
   5. They had to die physically.
C. The history of sin has been dark through the ages.
   1. For David, the loss of a baby, the death of his sons and the public humiliation of his wives by his own kin.
   2. For Lot, the destruction of cities in which three daughters were killed, the turning of his wife into a pillar of salt, the fathering of children by his own daughters.
   3. Achan lost his entire family and his own life.
   4. Ananias and Sapphira were killed because of sin.
   5. The list is endless.

III. SHALL WE CONTINUE IN SIN, WHEN WE KNOW IT’S TREND?
A. It’s trend is and always has been, downward.
   1. Lot went down to Sodom and Gomorrah.
   2. Abraham went down into Egypt.
B. Countries have fallen because of sin.
   1. Israel time and time again.
   2. The Roman Empire fell because of inward sin.
   3. If America falls it will be because of sin.
C. In the child of God, sin starts small then snowballs.

IV. SHALL WE CONTINUE IN SIN, WHEN WE KNOW IT’S RESULTS?
A. Broken homes and ruined lives.

B. Death, physical and spiritual. Romans 6:23 James taught death to be the result of sin.
C. Lost rewards, unhappiness, discontentment, sorrow, pain...

V. SHALL WE CONTINUE IN SIN, WHEN WE RECOGNIZE IT IN OUR OWN LIVES?
A. When we know we are failing to do something which God wants us to do?
   1. Profession of faith, baptism, church membership.
   2. Witnessing, visitation, contacting others for Christ.
   3. Doing good, giving of ourselves and our means.
   4. Using talents for God.
   5. Faithfulness in all areas.
   6. "To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it not, to him it is sin." James 4:17
B. When we are doing something we know is wrong, will we continue in it?
   1. Gossip, lying, malicious talk.
   2. Stealing, cheating.
   3. Adultery, fornication, homosexuality, immorality of any kind.
   4. Drinking, drug abuse...
C. Shall we continue in sin in view of God’s Word? Hebrews 10:26,27

VI. SHALL WE CONTINUE IN SIN, WHEN WE KNOW IT’S REMEDY?
A. Isaiah 1:18 says "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."
B. Lost soul will you continue in sin when God says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Matt. 11:28 "The Spirit and the bride say, Come, and let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. 22:17
C. Child of God, will you continue in sin when God says to you, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." I John 2:1,2

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DANGERS OF THE LAST DAYS

Text: I John 2:12-29

Introduction: It seems we are living in a time described in II Timothy 3:1-7 as the last days. These days are revealed to be dangerous times. It is a time when Christ will be rejected, the church will be refused and the Christian will be reproved.

NOTICE:

I. MANY WILL DENY THE CHRIST. I John 2:22
A. Will deny His virgin birth.
B. Will deny His saving blood.
C. Will deny His sacred book.
D. Will deny His wonderful blessings.
II. MANY WILL DESERT THE CHURCH. I John 2:19
Many will leave because of the:
A. Preaching of the Gospel.
B. Practicing of the truth.
C. Paying of the tithes.
D. Problems of the Devil.

III. MANY WILL DECEIVE THE CHRISTIAN. I John 2:26
A. Devil wants the Christian's testimony.
B. Devil wants the Christian's time.
C. Devil wants the Christian's triumph.
D. Devil wants the Christian's talents.
E. Devil wants the Christian's tithes.

IV. MANY WILL DESPISE THE CROSS. I John 2:25
Colossians 1:20
A. Despise the symbol of the cross.
B. Despise the sacrifice of the cross.
C. Despise the singing of the cross.

Conclusion: As we face these last days, let each of us let our lights shine bright for Jesus.

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JESUS LIVES!
Text: Revelation 1:18; John 14:19; Romans 8:11

Introduction:
A. Jesus died for you and me!
   1. He died as our substitute. Isa. 53:6
   2. He died God's sacrificial Lamb to take away our sin.
   3. He died a sinner's death. II Cor. 5:21; John 1:29
   4. He died a God satisfying death. Isa. 53:11
B. Jesus isn't dead today!
   1. He is alive at the right hand of God's throne in Heaven.
   2. He is alive in the soul of the believer.
   3. He is alive in His church!

I. JESUS LIVES WITH POWER OVER SIN AND DEATH.
A. Revelation 1:18
B. Matthew 28:18
C. He has POWER to FORGIVE sins. Mark 2:10; Luke 7:48
D. He has POWER to SAVE to the uttermost all who come to God by Him.
   1. John 6:37
   2. Hebrews 7:25
   3. This is the believer's confidence! II Timothy 1:12
E. He has POWER OVER DEATH! He holds the keys! Rev. 1:18; John 11:25,26; 11:42,43; I Thess. 4:16
F. In grace He can deliver you from sin's penalty and dominion! Rom. 5:20; Eph. 2:8; Rom. 6:14; I John 4:4; I Cor. 10:13

II. JESUS LIVES AS OUR PROPITIATION FOR SINS!
A. "The means of appeasing" Thayer
B. "Expiating" Thayer (To make atonement or satisfaction of an offense) Winston
C. I John 2:1,2; Hebrews 10:12

III. JESUS LIVES PRAYING FOR YOU AND ME!
A. Romans 8:34
B. Hebrews 7:25
C. As our Attorney, Jesus answers every CHARGE AGAINST US. I John 2:2
D. Jesus prays for OUR DELIVERANCE from the evil. John 17:15
E. Jesus prays for OUR SANCTIFICATION. John 17:17
F. Jesus prays for us before we fall. Luke 22:31,32
   1. If we fail, He is still there praying for us! John 2:2
   2. If we fail, He is still there UPHOLDING US! Psalm 37:24

IV. JESUS LIVES EVER PRESENT IN AND WITH THE BELIEVER!
A. Psalm 23:4 He is with us all the way and as we come near the valley-grips us!
B. Hebrews 13:5
C. John 14:18
D. Paul's testimony - II Timothy 4:14-17
E. Stephen's experience - Acts 7:55
F. John's experience - Rev. 1:9,18; 4:1

V. JESUS LIVES PREPARING A PLACE FOR HIS OWN!
A. John 14:1-3
B. I Cor. 2:9; Isaiah 64:4
C. I Peter 1:4
D. Rev. 21:1-4; 10; 11; 23-27

VI. JESUS LIVES PROMISING TO RETURN TO RECEIVE, REWARD, AND REMAKE US!
A. John 14:3
B. Matthew 16:27; Philippians 3:20,21

This is one of the sermons in the book RIGHT SERMONS BY WRIGHT. It is a 86 page book that has 34 sermons in it by D.B. Wright. All of the sermons are about exalting Jesus. We are having to make copies of this book at Office Max. Send in for your copy today and help us with the copying expenses.
GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT
Text: Ephesians 4:30; I Thessalonians 5:19
Definition: Grieve - LUPEO means to cause pain, grief or distress. Quench - SBENNUMI - means to quench like fire, hindering the normal operation - as the Spirit.

I. HOW TO AVOID GRIEVING THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD.
Eph. 4:22-30
A. Put off the life style of the old man, V22
   1. This is corrupt according to deceitful lusts.
B. Be renewed. Put on the new man. Vs.23,24
   1. The new man is created after God in true holiness.
C. Be angry and sin not. V26
   1. Do not give place to the Devil. V27
   2. Do not steal. V28
   3. Do not speak evil. V29
      a. Seek to edify others.

II. THE CHRISTIAN IS SEALED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.
A. Avoid grieving the Spirit.
   1. Put away bitterness.
   2. Put away wrath.
   3. Put away anger.
   4. Put away clamor.
   5. Put away evil speaking.
   6. Put away all malice.
B. The positive side, pleasing God. V32
   1. Be kind one to another.
   2. Be forgiving one to another.
   3. Remember, God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.

III. QUENCHING THE SPIRIT. I Thessalonians 5:19
A. When we render evil for evil. V15
B. When we fail to rejoice in the Lord. V16
C. When we fail to pray. V17
D. When we fail to be thankful. V18
E. When we despise the Word. V20
F. When we fail to test all things and stand for what is taught in the Word. V21
G. When we are careless in our conduct.

IV. GOD WILL SANCTIFY YOU AND PRESERVE YOU BLAMELESS UNTO THE COMING OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, V23

V. THE SIN AGAINST THE HOLY SPIRIT. Matthew 12:22-32
A. They accused Christ of working miracles in the power of Satan. V24
   1. He did it by the power of God, V28
B. Some dangerous statements of today against the Holy Spirit.
   2. Denying the inspiration of the Scriptures. II Peter 1:20,21
   3. Denying the conviction for sin. John 16:9
   4. Denying the Holy Spirit indwells the church. Ephesians 2:21,22

HANDLE CONFLICTS WITH CARE

Despite the best of intentions conflicts will arise in most friendships and small groups. In such times, you find out who your real friends are. Conflicts are neutral; it's how you react that makes—or breaks—the friendship. Here are some pointers for handling conflicts constructively:

1. Give others the benefit of the doubt. Rather than always looking for a hidden agenda, trust people to keep their word and live up to their agreements.

2. Double check your own attitude. Assert your opinion and don't be defensive, but do defend the other person's right to speak his mind and hold an opinion different from yours.

3. Separate people from the problem. Go soft on people, yet hard on issues—that is love people more than opinions.

4. Invent creative options for mutual gain. Go for a win-win solution to the conflict by broadening the range of options and agreeing on objective criteria or principles by which you will decide what is best.

5. Compromise on matters of taste or personal preference. Don't be determined to have your way about everything. This only produces a situation where everyone loses.

6. Stand firm with integrity, however, on matters of principle or moral values, do not bargain over a solid principle. The relationship will become stronger in the end. You don't help someone by overlooking wrong doing.

CONFRONTATION AND CARE

A balance between confrontation on issues and care for people will strengthen and lengthen any relationship. We are given some examples in Scripture of people who model this tough love.

1. By the prophet Nathan with the adulterous David. II Samuel 11:12
2. By Jesus with Peter who had denied his Lord three times. John 21:15-19
3. By Paul with Peter who refused fellowship with some Gentiles when some Jews arrived at a church fellowship. Gal. 2:11-16

This need for honest confronting of issues with genuine caring for people is a lost art in our generation, but it is the only way to keep Christian relationships strong.

Remember that the Bible commands both the one who has been offended and the one who did the offending to seek reconciliation. Here's how that is accomplished.
Acknowledge whatever actions and attitudes on your part led to the break in the relationship. Admit the hurt and consequences to the people involved, as well as remorse over the offense itself. One other thing must be mentioned. Repentance or a turning away from the offending actions and attitudes is necessary. Otherwise reconciliation cannot be achieved.

You get the point. Christian relationships are not for the faint-hearted, but those who go the extra mile and show biblical love will reap the rewards. Restoring a brother or sister may be the toughest job a Christian has to do. However, one who has proved to be faithful at those critical, teachable moments will make or break a Christian life.

**GRUDGE-HOLDING TACTICS**

OK, so you don't deck people who hurt you. You don't practice tit for tat strategies, either. Not so fast! Retaliation often takes a more subtle form. The best way to ensure true forgiveness is to be aware of the sly ways people don't forgive.

1. **Withdrawal**-We deprive those who hurt us of our company, avoiding them and excluding them from our plans.
2. **Criticism without constructive advice**-We complain and nag the people who offend us until they are as hurt as we think we are.
3. **Constructive Criticism**-While helpful criticism encourages and corrects, even good advice becomes poisoned when its motivated by disappointment and resentment.
4. **Gossip**-We make negative reports about our brother or sister in Christ, driving a wedge between them and fellow believers.
5. **Self-appointed Martyrdom**-Using our real or imagined injury, we manipulate people into feeling sorry for poor, innocent us.

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**JESUS IS LORD**

*Text: Colossians 1:13-18*

**Introduction:**

A. Lordship involves giving Jesus the number one place in your life.
B. This message deals with four aspects involved in making Christ the Lord of your life.

I. **THE FACT THAT JESUS IS LORD WHETHER WE WANT HIM TO BE ARE NOT.**

A. Jesus is the Creator of all things. V16-18
B. Have you ever considered how little of your life you really control?
   1. Did you decide when you would be born?
   2. Or who your parents would be?
   3. Or even what country you would be born in?
   4. Did you decide the color of your skin? Your eyes? Your hair?
   5. Did you decide your intelligence or your gifts and talents?
   6. What about your height?
   7. Or your looks, are you good looking or plain?

C. The Bible suggests that you control only a small part of your life. (YOUR WILL)
   1. Lordship involves surrendering your will to Christ.
   2. Lordship means Jesus is Lord of all of you, not just part.

D. Remember that Jesus has control over most things that concern you, whether you like it or not.

II. **LET'S LOOK AT SOME REASONS WE DON'T WANT TO ACKNOWLEDGE HIM AS LORD.**

A. Though every person has his own reasons not to acknowledge Jesus as Lord, some come up more frequent.
B. He may ask us to do something that we do not want to do.
   1. Of course, He will. When you make Him Lord of your life you can count on Him asking you to do things you would rather not do.
   2. Abraham did not want to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice.
   3. Moses did not want to go before Pharaoh.
   4. Jesus did not want to go to the cross. Nobody likes to deny himself.
   5. This is what Lordship is all about.
   6. A disciple is one who says no to what he wants and yes to Jesus.
   7. When Jesus is Lord of your life, every area is under His jurisdiction, your thoughts, your actions, your plans, your time, and your life goal.

C. We might think we know what is best for us.
   1. Remember a child left alone would kill himself. He might eat the wrong thing, or grab hold of a sharp knife.
   2. We hire policemen to watch over us to make sure that we don't do anything wrong. Yet we say we know what is best for us.

D. We are not sure that God has our best interest at heart.
   1. If God wanted to make it hard on us, He could.
   2. Jesus does want to get involved in your life.

III. **WHAT IT MEANS TO ACKNOWLEDGE HIM AS LORD.**

A. It is seen in the prayer he taught His disciples. Matthew 6:9-15
   1. Notice that the prayer begins OUR FATHER. The disciple is trying to make his life all that God would have it be.
   2. Hallowed be thy name. Jesus prayed that the Father's name would be hallowed not his. Lordship means surrendering your name.

IV. **WHY DOES JESUS WANT TO BE OUR LORD?**

A. His willingness to be our Lord reveals His desire to get involved in our lives so He can tell us when it is safe to move ahead.
B. Would we not be extremely foolish to turn down such an offer?

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