I. The Problem Presented.

A. The call of the strong angel fills heaven and earth and under the earth.

B. The Proclamation made: Who is worthy?

C. God holds the book for someone to retrieve it. See Ezekiel 2:9-10

D. The search fails.

E. John saw the greatness of God and the failure of all mankind to respond.

II. The Person Found Worthy.

A. From the throne itself one steps forward.

B. He is the lamb and the lion of the tribe of Judah. It is Jesus himself.

Note His Journey:

1. Manger to Gethsemane
2. Calvary to the tomb
3. Death, burial to glory

C. Filled with all power (7 horns) and wisdom (7 eyes) Jesus steps forth. Isaiah 11:1

D. He lone has conquered sin and death.

E. He has conquered this evil and the evil one himself.

III. The Purpose Revealed.
A. See vs. 9-10  
B. The dramatic moment had arrived.  
C. The seals of this book are to be broken revealing the end judgment of God upon men.  
D. The seals must be broken before the book can be opened.  
E. This signals the beginning of the end. See Mathew 24

IV. The Praise of Heaven.  
A. They praise Him for his sacrifice.  
B. They praise Him for redeeming fallen man.  
C. They praise Him for universal salvation.  
D. They praise Him for giving men the gift of royalty. See verse 10 Kings and priests.  
E. They praise Him for his blessings. Mediator - Eternal home.

Conclusion:  
A. Let each one of bow in utter humility and dependency upon God.  
B. The Savior has prevailed.  
C. Believers are secure in His hand.  
D. He sets in motion God’s judgment on evil men.

E. Remember His promise: In my father's house are many mansions.

Pastor Carl Fitzgerald  
Grace MBC Spring, Tx.

SETTING DATES FOR JESUS’ RETURN IS WRONG  
Matthew 24:36-44  
Mark 13:32

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. To 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 the angels know when the Lord will return. V.36

3. Those who said September of 1988 and 1989 was the time appeared 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 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 seeing 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!
2. Believe God’s Word above any preacher. God’s Word is truth.
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, unrebukable, 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.

Bro. Charles Swilling
Conroe, Tx.

WHAT’S AT THE END OF THIS AGE?
Luke 17:26-30; I Thess. 4:13-17

I. Introduction:

1. These passages refer to the second coming of Jesus. Luke describes in detail the conditions of this world when the KING OF GLORY, JESUS CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS returns to take His own unto Himself.

2. These verses in Luke’s message declares the power and the glory of His coming. They tell us the answers to some of this life’s problems, they also reveal God’s message of encouragement and warning.

   a. ENCOURAGEMENT to His children, “I will come” and I will take you unto Myself, out of this sin cursed life.

   b. WARNING to the saved and unsaved, “Be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh.”
3. Many fail to see the reason for preaching, studying, the second coming of Jesus saying, “What has this to do with the salvation of the soul?”
4. It is important for it effects all men. Every person will have an interest in the coming of Jesus Christ. The saved will have rewards of eternal glory, the unsaved, the full impact of the wrath and judgment of God.
5. No man knows the time, we do not know all the details, but this does not alter the fact. “THE LORD IS COMING”.

II. THE FACT OF HIS COMING

1. There are over 1800 references in the Bible to second coming of the Lord we are told.
   
   a. Paul mentions the second coming in every chapter of I Thess.
   b. Over 50 times Paul alone declares the coming of Jesus. Its importance is seen in the fact His coming is named by Paul 50 times, baptism referred to only 13 times.

2. Jesus Himself declared He would return. John 14:1-3
3. The angels testified to His coming. Acts 1:9-11
4. Every time the Lord’s Supper is observed, a testimony of the return of Jesus is declared. I Cor. 1:26, “For as oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord’s death till He come.”

III. THE CONDITIONS AT THE TIME OF HIS COMING

1. The Bible tells us how things are to be when He returns. These are signs given to help us understand His return draws near.
2. Social conditions of the end time described:
   a. Like the days of Noah, so will the coming of Jesus be:
      1. They did eat... they drank... they married wives... they were given in marriage.
      2. They did the same in the days of Lot, and very day Lot went out of Sodom, it rained death upon them.
   3. So, will it be at Christ’s coming.
4. The prominent sin of the antediluvian days was sensuality in its varied forms. This also was true of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The picture the Bible gives of the closing age is one of much knowledge, when men get so intelligent, they are almost unreachable.

5. Perfect security will have taken possession of the whole race, just as, on a smaller scale was the case of the days of Noah and Lot. Lack of fear of God and conviction. As sin today.

6. They will be given up to their pursuits, their pleasures and their sins, and will not believe the warnings given.

3. Professional conditions of the world at the end of this age.
   1. Business as usual.
   2. “They did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built.” Luke 17:28
   3. All the time Noah was building the ark, business was as usual with those who cared not.
   4. All the time Abraham was praying, it was, business as usual, while the dark cloud of their doom was gathering, they continued in their pursuit of worldly wealth and sensual satisfaction.

4. Politically at the end time age there is deception and corruption
   1. I Thess. 5:3 “For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.”
   2. While the enemy chips away at the very moral and spiritual foundation of our country, our leaders, many of them say, “Why there is no cause for concern.”
   3. Inroads by communism and worldliness have not been gained by force, but by deception and corruption.

5. Morally the condition of this end time age is corruption and debauchery.
   1. Just as it was in the days of Noah, even so shall it be at the coming of the Son of man.
   2. What were those days like? Morally the people had gone so low they were an abomination unto God and the stench of their wickedness had
come up to the nostrils of God

6. Spiritually the end time is described as “only wickedness.”
   1. Gen. 6:5, declares the heart of men, even his very thoughts and intents, his purpose in life seemed to be anti-God.
   2. His thoughts were only evil continually.
   3. Now I Know I have painted a very dark picture but at the same time I Challenge you to open your eyes, see with the eye, perceive with the heart... these days are here. This is fact and not fantasy!

IV. THE ASPECTS OF HIS COMING...
   Rapture and Revelation

1. The rapture of the saints.
   a. The dead in Christ shall rise first. I Thess. 4:16 “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.”
   b. “The dead shall be raised incorruptible,

and we shall be changed.” 1 Cor. 15:52c
   c. Then those alive shall be caught up in the air. I Thess. 4:17, “Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the air: and so, shall we ever be with the Lord.”
   1. The unsaved dead will not be disturbed at this time. Rev. 20:5
   d. The judgment (manifestation) of works (not salvation) will be. 1 Cor. 3:13-15

2. The revelation of God’s judgment on unsaved.
   a. The tribulation, 7 years of wrath from the God of heaven whose love turns to hate. How terrible. Rev. 6:12-17
   b. The battle of Armageddon in progress at the close of this period.
1. Jesus will bring an end to this war. Rev. 19:14-15

2. He shall come with His saints, put down sin and evil, rule and reign with His saints here upon earth for a thousand years.

3. At the close of this period the devil will be loosed for a season, he will muster all evil and all the power of evil against Christ and righteousness. Jesus shall cast him down into the lake of fire.

4. Then the White Throne Judgment... lost, unsaved, will be cast in the flame of condemnation forever and ever.

3. The Lord will bring forth a New Heaven and a new earth. With His saints He will be forever, we with Him.

V. Conclusion:

1. Every person chooses now... in this life, where he will be in eternity. Either with God and His children... or away from God in everlasting torment.

2. What is your Choice?

Bro. J.B. Powers At Home with The Lord

CHECKING OUR TEMPATURE
Revelation 3:14-22

Introduction:
This message was written to a church in the city of Laodicea, in Asia Minor. It is believed that it
pictures the condition of churches of Jesus Christ in this age. This is a generalization and may not apply to a particular church. A church doesn’t have to be in the state described in this text.

Let us use the gauges used to determine the temperature of this church to determine our own temperature.

This is a case where normal is abnormal... If our temperature is normal, we are sick, spiritually. Normal is not acceptable to Christ.

There are several things to be considered in reading the gauges.

I. CONSIDER THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST

A. Christ said that I know your works.
   1. The Lord is keenly aware of all that we do, good or bad.
   2. With this knowledge he is able to reward or chastise
   3. We may be able to conceal our symptoms from people, but not from Christ.

B. Being unaware of the real condition indicates normal temperature.
   1. Being unaware of the real condition only contributes toward worsening the condition.
   2. The condition as Jesus saw it in the text was as follows:
      a. They were wretched
      b. They were miserable

II. CONSIDER THINGS WHICH INDICATE NORMAL TEMPERATURE.

A. A feeling of no spiritual need.
   1. one has the feeling that he doesn’t need to assemble with his church for worship and study.
   2. One has the feeling that he doesn’t need the fellowship of other Christians
   3. One feels indifferent to truth proclaimed by Christ and the apostles and toward Christian life and service.
   4. One feels that he has no need and asks God for nothing.
c. They were poor and blind
d. They were naked

III. THE REMEDY FOR NORMAL TEMPERATURE

A. Jesus instructed the church to buy medicine of Him.
   1. It meant that one must get the medicine at a cost to himself.
   2. It meant that the medicine for the cure could only come from Christ.
   3. It meant that to have the medicine for the cure one must be willing to pay the price Christ required.

B. It costs nothing to give lip service, or say I can’t

C. To follow Christ with a cross requires the sacrifice of oneself.

D. The Lord stated what the church and we need as a cure for normal temperature. Rev. 3:18

IV. THE REMEDY MUST BE INDIVIDUALLY SOUGHT AND RECEIVED.

A. Jesus said, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock;”
   1. This implies that the door had been shut to Christ.
   2. It is a gracious thing that He seeks entrance.

B. Christ said, “If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.”
   1. Christ gave the condition of His entering.
   2. One’s will must be exercised to let Him in.
   3. One may blame times, conditions, circumstances, jobs, pastor, teacher, friends, and a lot of other things for his failure.
   4. The real reason Jesus doesn’t come in and cure the normal temperature of a person is that the person will not let Him in.
One doesn’t want to be cured.

C. Jesus called upon the church of Laodicea to repent and calls upon churches and individuals today to repent.

Conclusion:

Is your temperature normal?
If your temperature is normal, look to Christ and follow His instructions for the cure.

Bro. P.A. DuBose
Gary Tx.

WHEN ALL GOD’S PEOPLE GET HOME WHO WILL NOT BE THERE Rev 20:15

Introduction:

A. Many will miss the joy of a homecoming in heaven unless God’s people wake up and get serious about the business at hand.

B. The homecoming we will enjoy when we all get to Heaven will be grand, we cannot imagine how great it will be, but that is in the future and we are living in the present.

1. We should be concerned about the present because this is where we can make a difference about the future of many people.

2. There are more people today than at any other time in the history of mankind.

C. Then, why aren’t people coming to Church Services, why aren’t those saved joining and submitting to baptism (ABA missionaries reported 2,605 saved, but only 5,062 baptized)?

D. Jesus Christ said to go into the highway and byways and compel them to come in. Luke 14:23

a. Do you think our churches are going to those millions of people?

b. Do you think they are not reachable, is this why they are not being saved?

c. Have things gotten so bad the lost cannot be saved?

d. Or, do you think maybe, the vehicle the Lord provided to get the message out needs some repairs, some finetuning so it can get back in the game.

E. Where does the remedy begin?

a. If the truth was known, more than
50% on a given Sunday Morning would rather be somewhere else but feel obligated to attend.

b. We need to correct our Worship of God, we need to be excited and help the services to be exciting.

c. There is no such thing as having church, this is the problem too many churches are trying to have church and are failing to have a worshipful relationship with the Lord.

d. This is the reason there are many first-time visitors and very few repeat visitors.

e. The worship services are boring, the members are not excited.

F. What is the answer, is there a need for change?

I. CHANGE FOR THE SAKE OF CHANGE IS WRONG.

A. Never change just to be like everyone else.

B. Make sure the change is beneficial.

1. The children of Israel wanted a king.

2. They wanted to be like the other nations.

3. This was not best for them and certainly not pleasing to God.

C. When changing for the wrong reason there will always be consequences.

1. God is not honored.

2. The right way is blurred.

3. The wrong example is set.

II. THERE ARE TIMES WHEN CHANGE IS NECESSARY. Luke 16:16-17

A. It was necessary to change from the Temple way of worship.

B. John came preaching repentance for the kingdom of heaven was near.

1. There had to be a change of attitude.

2. No longer needed sacrifices, Jesus gave the ultimate sacrifice.
3. No need of a high priest, Jesus became our high priest and we can reach Him at any time.

C. Some of the traditions our churches old to needs to be looked at, we are losing a generation of young people.

III. WORSHIP SERVICES ARE IMPORTANT.

A. The right kind of worship will cause a church to grow and prosper, but the wrong will do the opposite.

B. In the days of Christ many did not have the idea of authentic worship down. The sad thing is that they were no different than those of today. John 4:19-26

C. False worship is;
   1. Selective worship, it chooses what it wishes to know about God and omits the rest.
      a. The Samaritans took as much of the scripture as they wished and paid no attention to the rest.

      b. People today play the same game, they play pick and choose worship.

      ILLUSTRATION – These are referred to as Buffet Christians, come when they feel like it and take only what you think taste good.

2. False Worship is One-sided worship.
   a. Jesus said there would be a time we would worship in Spirit and Truth.

   b. Great spiritual worship, but not meat, no substance.

   c. Some have great theological depth but there is no feeling.

   d. All Spirit is mere emotionalism and all Truth is mere intellectualism.
e. Jesus said you must have both.

D. Some people Worship not out of a sense of need or out of a real desire, but because they are afraid not too.
   1. This is what the Samaritans were doing. They did not want to take the chance of making another God mad.
   2. Jesus said we must worship in Spirit and Truth.

E. Worship should be that expression that encompasses the whole of who you are and should be done in Spirit and Truth.
      a. Declaring God’s Person; Psalm 47:7-8
      b. Being Thankful for God’s provision, Psalm 126:2,3
      c. Celebrating God’s Promises, Psalm 31:19
      d. Acknowledging God’s Presence, Psalm 139:7-10
      e. Rejoicing in God’s Path to life; Psalm 16:9-11
      f. Responding to God’s Personal call, Psalm 37:39,40
   2. When one comes to worship, really worship,

God will call that person to a deeper relationship with HIM.

3. Either through salvation or a deeper walk with HIM.

IV. WORSHIP THAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

A. Worship services that catch the eyes and hearts of those that might be visiting and having a desire to return at a later date.

B. One preacher called this kind of worship “Wow” worship, when someone leaves the worship services, they do not say that was a good sermon or the music was good, but leave the saying, what a great God!!!

C. For a person and a church to have this kind of witness they must come to worship with;
   1. An open heart.
   3. Hungry and thirsty for the word.
   4. With hope that God has the answer.

CONCLUSION:
A. When church members come to worship in this way,
there will be answers from heaven

B. When church members come to worship in this way there will always be a powerful moving of God’s Spirit and His presence will equip and enable the body to move mountains.

C. The that worships in Spirit and Truth has a powerful attraction, it strips away the things that block the eyes and heart.

Bro. John Wayne Stringer Philippines Missions