

DATE SETTERS WHO STRUCK OUT

By
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Attempting to reveal the time of Christ's second coming is common practice for many. Below is simply a small portion of the many instances in which men have tried to approximate a date for our Lord's second advent and the end of the world. Each prognosticator failed miserably.

1. William Miller (7th Day Adventist Church) predicted that March 21, 1844, would be the day Christ returned. When that day came and went without the Lord's return, Miller declared Jesus would return on October 22, 1844. After this, many of his followers quit following him and his teachings. Enter Ellen G. White. This woman re-interpreted Miller's calculations, and saved his damaged credibility. She insisted that Miller was right about the date, but was wrong about the event. She taught that on October 22, 1844, Jesus moved into a position of "investigative judgment." She taught that Jesus would remain in said position in the holy of holies in the heavenly sanctuary and remain there until He visibly returns. Miller was wrong and had to be saved by a smoke and mirrors parlor trick.
2. Charles T. Russell (founder of the Jehovah's Witnesses) is another famous (infamous) date setter. He said plainly that in 1914 the Lord would return. When 1915 came around, Russell maneuvered to avoid disgrace amongst his followers. The Jehovah's Witnesses have not learned much from his error. They have continued to set dates for the Lord's return and are wrong every time (1918, 1920, 1925, 1941, 1975, 1984, and 1994).
3. Hal Lindsey boldly declared that "The Rapture" would occur before December 31, 1981. When he was proven wrong, Lindsey later changed the date (not so boldly) by hinting at 1988.
4. Hebert W. Armstrong (founder of the Worldwide Church of God) put pen to paper and predicted that Christ would return in 1975. He also said Christ's return would end World War III which up to that point would have killed 1/3 of the world's population.
5. Moses David of "The Children of God" group predicted that the Battle of Armageddon would take place in 1986. Russia would defeat Israel and the United States. A worldwide Communist dictatorship would be established. After all of this was in place, in 1993, Christ would return to earth. Christ did not return in 1993. Also, I was in a class called "American Government" in college in 1993. Perhaps the instructor missed a memo, but he taught us that democracy still prevailed throughout the Republic.

6. In St. Petersburg, Florida in 1981, a man named Ted Kresge launched a massive advertising campaign to help convince/warn folks that the end was imminent. He stated the church would be "raptured" on Saturday, June 20 of that year (1981). The rapture would be followed by 7 years of tribulation, famines, natural disasters, etc. Finally, in 1988, the Lord would visibly return and set up a kingdom on the earth. Mr. Kresge was wrong.
7. A man named Bill Maupin from Tucson, Arizona, got caught up in the date setting frenzy so many fall victim to. Mr. Maupin led 40-50 people to believe that the Lord would return to "rapture" them on June 28, 1981. His converts, after quitting their jobs, selling their homes, cars, etc., followed Mr. Maupin into a desert to await Christ's return. He never came.
8. Perhaps some of you remember a date setter named Edgar Whisenant. He was a former NASA Rocket Scientist who wrote a book called 88 Reasons Why The Rapture Will Be In 1988. The World Bible Society of Nashville, TN, printed over 2,000,000 copies of this book. In addition to that, 700,000 of the copies were given away free of charge. It is my understanding that Mr. Whisenant's work was so well-received that "Rapture Parties" (people gathered for singing and prayer, etc.) began to be heard of across the country. The parties came to an end as 1989 began. Obviously the book was totally false. Amazingly, in 1989, Mr. Whisenant came out with a new book called 89 Reasons why the Rapture is in 1989. This book was a flop. I wonder why?!
9. In 1992, David Koresh of the Branch Davidian group in Waco, Texas changed the name of their commune from "Mt. Carmel" to "Ranch Apocalypse" because of his belief that the battle of Armageddon mentioned in the Bible would start at the compound. He calculated that the end would occur in 1995. After a 51-day standoff, in 1993... you know the rest. 1995 has come and gone. Jesus has not come and the world still stands.
10. Hundreds of others - each and every one of them wrong!

I cannot help but call to mind the words God gave to Israel through Moses.

You know which text I have in mind, right? Check it out below:

"But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (**Deuteronomy 18:20-22**).

I know that all real Christians understand that date setters are scripturally doomed to failure in their pin-pointing endeavors (**Matthew 24:36**). This being true, let's not even try to figure out when it is the Lord will come.

Instead, let's just do what we always have done: let's be ready to meet Him when He does come and do all we scripturally can to help others be ready as well (**Ephesians 5:27; Acts 2:40-41; et al**).