

MISTAKE 2

WE SHOULD NEVER CLAIM THAT CHRIST IS COMING BACK SOON

Another common mistake: we should never claim that Jesus Christ is returning soon! There are a couple of reasons as to why this is so. They are as follows:

First, we do not know when He is coming back to the earth. While the signs are obviously setting the stage for His return this does not mean that it will happen in our lifetime. There is nothing in Scripture that compels the Lord to return in any particular time frame. In other words, He has not limited Himself as to the time of His return. What He does tell us is that we do NOT know when He is coming!

There is also the problem of what someone means by “soon.” Is it days, weeks, months, or years? Sadly, when many hear that Christ is coming back soon they assume it will be a matter of days or months. While that may not be the intention of the person who makes the claim, there will be people who interpret it in this way.

There is something else to consider. This type of behavior of date setting, or saying the Lord will return soon, causes the unbelievers to mock Christians as well as their faith in the Bible. Indeed, it gives the wrong impression that the Bible somehow is incorrect. Supposedly Scripture gives an incorrect prediction of the return of the Lord when it does no such thing.

SOME PERSONAL TESTIMONIES

As one who has been in the ministry for over 50 years, I can personally testify to many heartbreaking examples of people who have abandoned the faith because they were taught the “soon coming of Christ.”

As the years go by, and Christ has not returned, they questioned if the other “truths” they were taught about Christ were indeed true. In the end, they concluded that Jesus Christ was not the One whom He claimed to be because He did not come back in a “soon time-frame” as they were taught that He would.

Sadly, many of these people have become scoffers, anti-Christians, mocking the Christian faith because they were led to believe that Christ must come back within a definite window of time.

In one sense, their disillusionment is understandable. Let me give just a few personal examples (unhappily I have many more).

I heard one famous Bible teacher, who emphasized the imminent coming of Christ throughout his ministry, say the following to an audience in 1971 about the Lord’s soon return:

I believe that all these things will take place by 1975.

Being there when this was said, I can testify to the excitement of the people who heard and believed this. One can only wonder what they thought after 1975 came and went.

I have another sad example in the late 1970’s with this same Bible teacher. A huge rally was held at a local packed convention center, with multiple thousands attending. After listing all the latest events as to why Christ was coming soon the invitation was given to come forward and believe in Jesus. He told the people who had come forward, and prayed the prayer to receive the Lord these closing words.

We Should Never Claim That Christ Is Coming Back Soon

Syria is presently massing their troops on the Israeli border for an immediate invasion. He then said, “well you just made it in under the wire, but at least you got in.”

Again, I wonder what those who came forward that night, over 40 years ago, now think about the “soon” coming of Christ?

I had a friend whom I met in 1980. We would often drive by a church that had a big sign painted on the wall of the back of their Christian bookstore which read: Jesus Christ is Coming Soon.

We noticed over the years that the paint would fade and that it had to be repainted over and over again. Finally, after about twenty or so years, there was a different message painted on the wall of the bookstore.

We then asked each other this question: What would people think who read the same message for these twenty odd years and now see something different. Is Christ not coming soon?

In 1993, prophecy specialist Dave Hunt wrote a book called *When Will Jesus Come?: Compelling Evidence for the Soon Return of Christ*. This is another example as to why we should never use the word “soon” when we talk about the coming of the Lord.

One last personal illustration. In the late 1970's I traveled a couple of hours to speak at a large church in a particular city. I stayed the night at a beautiful house of this very lovely young Christian couple. In the morning, I commented how gorgeous their house was. I asked if they owned it. I'll never forget their reply. They said, “Oh no, we wouldn't waste the money buying a house now because we know Christ is coming soon.”

Again, I wonder how they now feel about this, some forty plus years later.

We could go on and on but I believe the point has been made.

In sum, these types of predictions and statements made by well-known Bible teachers should never have been made! Never!! Yes, the Lord is coming back. Yes, the signs of the coming are everywhere.

But as to the timing of His coming, none of us knows how “soon” it will be. Hence, we should never claim that He is coming “soon.” Indeed, we can see the damage that saying something like this can do.