

Set Times IV

"It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority,"¹ was said to the eleven men who did not believe enough to hold onto His words, "But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee,"² to believe the message of the angels and the women enough to go. As such, if you are still where the eleven were... more concerned about the restoration of Israel than about the advent of God's kingdom on Earth... more afraid of your enemies and contemporaries so that you would hide behind the closed doors of the rooms of your heart rather than burst out and run to Galilee because you have heard "He is alive!" and now you are going there to see for yourself, still more interested in doing things your way rather than believe and obey what He said... then it is truly true, "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority."

However, if His words abide in you and you abide in Him so that where He is you are also, then ask whatever you wish and whatever you will, and it will be given to you. Just make sure that His words do abide in you and that you do abide in Him first. You see, Jesus said, "If you remain (abide) in Me and My words remain (abide) in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you."³ He did not say, "If you remain in Me or My words remain in you, ask..." Many, many... indeed, all who believe in Jesus have and do in one way or another abide and remain in Him, for as He has said, "For My Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."⁴ Put simply, salvation does not make you fulfil the conditions of John 15.7, but rather, having been saved, you have used that salvation to change your heart until it is a good and noble heart that receives the word of Jesus like fertile soil receives a seed and yields back to Him a harvest of 30, 60, 100 times as much as His words being thought, spoken and done.

If, however, you have used the salvation to ensure that you are preaching and abiding by James the Younger's recommendations – making sure you avoid eating food sacrificed to idols or strangled meat or blood, as well as avoidance of sexual immorality and observance of other parts of the Mosaic law that suit you, like tithing a tenth or warning those who are of the New Covenant about the effects of the sins of the forefathers – then John 15.7 is not fulfilled in you. You may be in Christ and Christ may remain in you, but His words do not. As such, if even the apostles were told, "It is not for you to know..." then who can know? Anyone who remains in Him **AND** in whom His words remain. How do you know His words remain in you? When you find yourself always thinking about them, always speaking in relation to them, and always doing something to practise them.

As an example, when you see someone slapping you on the face an opportunity for you to practise turning the other cheek rather than your right to sue him and incarcerate him. When you see someone lying about you your opportunity to bless them rather than your right to defend and refute their lies and so on. When you see a person refusing to receive the gospel as a confirmation to the truth of Jesus' words rather than an affront to His words. Jesus has said that some are like the stony path... so when you encounter people whose hearts are like that, praise God for the truth of His words and work to turn the stony ground to good soil.

Now see the concession that Jesus made to the eleven even though it was not for them to know the hour or dates... He said, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the Earth."⁵ Even though they had not earned the right to know the times and dates, nevertheless they would be, rather, had to be given power to be witnesses. Why? Because they still had to finish their work. So, the presence of the power of the Holy Spirit in your life and ministry to do the things that Jesus has been doing and greater things confirms that you believe and have faith in Him... yes... and that He trusts you enough to give you the power. However, it does not mean that you are **trusted** enough to know the set dates and times. So, elect, let no man or woman impress you with the power they have to do signs, wonders and miracles, not even their testimonies, when it comes to knowing the set times or dates, for as you can see from the Lord's words in Acts 1.7, even the eleven who received the power, certainly more power than anyone else in the present church, were not privy to know the set times.

So who may know the set times amongst those who seem to remain in Jesus and in whom His words seem to remain? For, elect, there are many who are always mindful of the words of Jesus, who are always speaking the words of Jesus, and who are also constantly preaching the words of Jesus with a

¹ Acts 1.7

² Matthew 26.32; Mark 14.28

³ John 15.7 NIV, NASB, ESV, NKJV, NLT

⁴ John 6.40

⁵ Acts 1.8

ministry of signs, wonders and miracles. Does such a haloed status qualify a person to know the times? Perhaps... but how would you know, especially since such a person would never tell you anyway? Forget those who tell you, "The Lord told me it will be such a date or time," for they have made Jesus out to be a liar! So how do we know... how can we know... and if we do not know, how do we plan? For even the servants who are staying awake to watch for their master who is late or the owner of the house who is watching out for the thief must have a plan of action that allows them to cover the eventuality of the sudden arrival of the master or the thief, or the master who comes like a thief, no matter the hour.

How do you know if another person also knows the set times or dates? **First, become one yourself, and those who know will be evident to you.** For by the light of the revelation in you, you will see the revelation in them, and likewise, the Master's word will leap forth to your remembrance – **"Silence!"**⁶

In your general duties of remaining in the Lord and ensuring that His words remain in you, your degree of abiding and indeed your degree of trustworthiness of the secret and holy things of God will be manifest more and more as you find that what you wish and what you will manifests... from small things like an answered prayer or a pleasure of the world desired granted. These are little signs from Him to show you that you are in John 15.7, but not yet the master and owner of John 15.7 so that whatever you wish or will to know of God's secrets is given to you. There are of course more important secrets of God than just the dates and times He has set for this creation... but for now, for our purpose and ministry, knowing those set dates and times are as about as important as it gets.

For eternal life is about getting to know Him, the only God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent... and there is no end to that because there is no end to Them. However, just as a graduation exam is all important to a university student but getting a mortgage is not, so likewise, **the ability to prioritise what is of the utmost importance of our times is the key to our success.**

For the eleven, their emphasis was focussed on a correct start of the church age, and we know how well it all started. Now, learning from them, we have to make use of all the knowledge of their tactics to ensure that we successfully complete our part. And what should be the focus now of our ministries? Is it not to ensure a successful and as flawless as possible ending of the church age? For if the church age is a relay race where the baton of ministerial responsibility is passed on from runner to runner, is it not the last runner who has the responsibility not to lose the lead his predecessors have given... if there was a lead? Likewise, is it also not the opportunity of the last runner to so fly that he makes up for all the lost ground of his predecessors so that together, and this is the key, elect... together the entire podium takes the winner's place?

So as much as the Holy Spirit has graciously pointed out the failings of the eleven, so likewise, it is all the more our responsibility to extend this grace to wipe it all out and finish this race, this age, as if everything that ever happened was the strategy of His grace.

We know they did not listen and made a habit of not listening, then we must all the more listen and make a habit of listening. We know they stopped those who could do what they could not do, so then we should all the more make sure others can do what we cannot do. We know they were arguing about which of them was the greatest, then we should all the more be silent about who is the least.

For our focus must be on the finishing of the age of the gentiles, the age of the church, so that its end can come, and in order to do that, we must not only believe and hope, but we must plan. Noah must have planned. He must have looked at the required ark and its dimensions and scouted out a place where the timber was available and the means by which he could cut, shape, transport and assemble the wood, even making the tools and machineries. He would have considered... for an ocean going ship of 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high requires plans to be built. As the Lord said, **"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?"**⁷ So likewise, you must make the plan – the estimate of the cost.

Now amongst those who remain in Jesus and in whom His words remain so that they are ever mindful of His words, speaking and reading His words, practising and applying His words, with a ministry of great signs, wonders and miracles done with great perseverance, you will recognise those who know the set times and more importantly, you will become one who knows the set times if the effect of being one who fulfils John 15.7 causes you to become one who is consumed by the zeal of His house so that everything you have is directed at fulfilling all Scriptures needed to allow Him to return.

⁶ Amos 8.3

⁷ Luke 14.28

Such a person like Noah would have God wait for him patiently so that the work is not done hastily and so done with error and weakness that can be revealed when the days of distress comes. God did not hurry Noah because the ark had to be strong enough to withstand the flood. So likewise, you will find God will not hurry you, but rather, assist you so that you may hurry... in the same way as Jesus made the boat reach the shore immediately.

The principle is eternal and has not changed... with one man who believed enough to obey, to plan, to obey and not stop, God had a finished ark to save those He wanted to save... then how much more when there are more than one who, like Noah, believe and not out of holy fear, but holy love, sought out the command, obeyed it, set their plans by it and applied their heart, soul, might and mind to the completion of it all. And there is more than one knower available for Him now. If Noah can do it, then what excuse have we? None.

So continue to strive to remain in Him and His words remain in you as you listen to Him and practise His words until the greater things are you doing, and when you have finished your work, then shall God come to you and speak to you as He spoke to Noah, "One seven from now..."

Amen.