

## What Does God's Word Say About... How Your Name Can be Included in The Book of Life

According to scripture the Lord keeps an accurate account of everyone's life. The Psalmist wrote, "My frame was not hidden from You when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; and in Your book were all written the days that were ordained for me, when as yet there was not one of them" (Psm. 139:15-16). Even our struggles of trying to live a godly life against hardship and temptation appear to be recorded in heaven. David, who was destined to be Israel's next king, asked God to remember his suffering during a low point in his life when he was surrounded by enemies. He said, "You have taken account of my wanderings; put my tears in Your bottle. Are they not in your book?" (Psm. 56:8).

Does God record men's sins in heaven? Solomon said, "For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil" (Eccl. 12:14). Paul wrote that the Lord, upon His return, will "bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God" (1 Cor. 4:5). While Jesus was on earth He said, "But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they will have an accounting for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned" (Matt. 12:36-37).

God also keeps an account of our very conversations with each other. "Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, and the Lord gave attention and heard it, and the book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the Lord and who esteem His name" (Malachi 3:16). To those who care for the needs of others the Hebrew writer wrote, "For God is not unjust so as not to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and in still ministering to the saints" (Heb. 6:10). According to the apostle John when the dead are judged on the great white throne we will be judged "from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds" (Rev. 20:12).

God reveals through scripture that He has a very special book. This book contains a registry of names. The souls that are listed in this book, God deems very precious. The first mention of the book of life is when Moses offered to have his name erased from it. Speaking to God, Moses said, "Alas, this people has committed a great sin, and they have made a god of gold for themselves. But now, if You will, forgive their sin – if not, please blot me out from Your book which You have written!" The Lord said to Moses, 'Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book' (Ex. 32:31-33). As noble as Moses intentions may have been to protect his fellow Israelites from God's wrath, God will not negotiate with people's salvation in this way.

The prophet Daniel, describing the vision he was given of God's throne room where judgment takes place, said: "I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days [God] was seated...the court was seated and the books were opened" (Dan. 7:9-10).

The apostle John was also given a vision of God's future judgment. John recounted: "Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it...then I saw the dead, the great and the small standing before the throne, and the books were opened; and another book was opened which is the book of life" (Rev. 20:11-12). These books represent the word of God, which contain God's law – the standard by which everyone's deeds will be judged. Jesus said, "He who rejects

Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day” (John 12:48).

What is the Lamb’s book of life? The apostle John’s vision in the book of Revelation explains this book. “I saw in the right hand of Him [God] who sat on the throne, a book written inside and on the back, sealed up with seven seals” (Rev. 5:1). John explained in this vision that he “began to weep greatly because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it; and one of the elders said to me, ‘Stop weeping; behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals’. And I saw between the throne...a Lamb standing, as if slain...and He [Jesus] came and took the book out of the right hand of Him [God] who sat on the throne” (Rev. 5:4-7). John explained this book by saying, “Worthy are You [Jesus] to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Rev. 5:9). As John explains it, this is the Lamb’s book of life and He [Jesus] is worthy to open this book (Rev. 5:12-13).

If one is “not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:15). So how are we added to Lamb’s book of life? We must hear and heed to the word of God (Romans 10:17). We must believe with all our heart (Acts 16:30-31). We must repent of our sins (Luke 13:3). We must confess Jesus before others (Rom. 10:9-10). We must be baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:27). When we are baptized into Christ we are then added to His church, which is His kingdom (Acts 2:47).

When we are added to His kingdom, which is the church, we are added to the Lamb’s book of life. “You [Jesus] have made them [those baptized into Christ] to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth” (Rev. 5:10). The Hebrew writer said, “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born who are enrolled in heaven [Lamb’s book of life]...Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe” (Heb. 12:22-23, 28). The apostle John explained that this “city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb...and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb’s book of life” (Rev. 21:23, 27). Paul agreed with the apostle John when he wrote concerning the holiness and purity of the church in Ephesians 5:25-27.