

THE BOOK OF LIFE

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20 September 2002 (updated 30 Sep 02)

The phrase 'book of life' appears in eight scriptures with all but one in Revelation. However, it is implied in others. I was taught that all my deeds, good and bad, were being recorded in a book in heaven. Out of this record of my life I would be condemned or justified in the day of judgment. Does an infinite God, who can speak things into existence actually need a literal book for record keeping? When I think of a book, I think of an author writing down his thoughts and ideas. God expressed his ideas through Moses. And those writings make up the first five books of the Christian Bible. In all the rest of the Bible, various authors recorded those things of which were inspired. It seems that the 'book of life' would be a place where life giving concepts would be recorded.

Jesus, in his teaching, emphasized the concept of spiritual life. He said, *I am... the life* (Jn 14:6). John 5: 24. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that hears my word, and believes on him that sent me, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.* 25. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.* 26. *For as the Father has life in himself; so has he given to the Son to have life in himself...* In verse 24, 'word' in Greek is *logos*³⁰⁵⁶. It carries the meaning of 'saying or speech', which embodies a concept or idea. The Hebrew concept of 'hearing' also carries the meaning of 'understand and obey'. The idea conveyed by Jesus is that the person who hears, understands and obeys his spiritual concepts will have everlasting (eternal) life. Verse 25 proves that it is spiritual life of which he is speaking, not a resurrection from physical death. Our heavenly Father is the source of all spiritual life, and He gave it to the Son. How? By teaching the Son spiritual concepts from eternity. Then He sent the Son to teach them to humanity. Eternal life are the spiritual concepts of God which lead to a righteous life and immortality, or the physical state of 'not dying', for those obedient to the concepts. Since Jesus is 'the life', therefore the 'book of life' is the mind of Christ containing the spiritual concepts necessary for salvation. It is the inward thinking passed from the Father to the Son to humanity (Rev 1:1). By changing our thoughts, the outward, physical actions change. (See also Phil 2:1-2, 5; Rom 15:5; 2 Cor 13:11)

Paul makes some interesting comments in the book of Philippians. He discusses in chapter three how he wants to know Christ and be found in him. In many places in the book he emphasizes thinking the same way of Christ and obtaining His attributes (Phil 2:2, 5; 3:15, 16, 19). Then near the close of the chapter he states: Phil 3: 20. *For our [citizenship, or manner of life⁴¹⁷⁵] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ:* Notice how Paul continues with his conclusion in chapter four: Phil 4: 1. *Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.* 2. *I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord.* 3. *And I intreat thee also, true yoke fellow, help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other myfellow laborers, whose names are in the book of life.* Being found in Christ appears to be the same as stand fast in the Lord, be of the same mind in the Lord and having their names in the book of life. Is this not the heavenly manner of life? In Jesus' own words: Jn 17: 20. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;* 21. *That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.* Being one in the Father and Son, and they being in us means to have the same way of thinking based in the truth. When we speak out of the thoughts God has given us, then is our citizenship in heaven and our names (characters) remain in the book of life.

Rev 3: 5. *He that over cometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life...* Everyone begins with their name in the book of life. Only those who do not over

come, have their names removed. We know that only through Jesus Christ can we overcome sin.

Here are some other 'book of life' texts:

Rev 13: 8. *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.* Above, scriptures were connected to show that the book of life was that of Christ. This scripture says it directly. The beast that rises out of the sea is the earthly way of thinking sustained by pride and an unchanging attitude. It is self worship. These do not have a character (name) which conforms to the book of life. The concept of this verse is repeated again: Rev 17: 8. *The beast that thou saw was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.* Have you made the connection? The beast out of the sea (13:1), the bottomless pit and dwelling on the earth are just different ways of saying the same thing. It is a person who will not let God put to death the 'old man'.

Rev 21: 27. *And in no way may enter into it (new Jerusalem) any thing defiling, and practicing abomination and a lie: but those who are written in the book of the life of the Lamb.* (Greek Interlinear) Corrupted thoughts defile a person (Mt 15:18). Working an abomination or making a lie is a result of defiled thinking, which describes the dwellers on the earth, or people who have the thoughts of man. They do not enter the heavenly Jerusalem (God's way of thinking). Only those who are found in the Lamb's book of life enter the city.

Rev 20: 12. *And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.* Everything you ever read, heard or did is recorded in your mind. In the final judgment, when the spiritually dead stand before God, their works, in their life before dying the first time, will be compared to the works of Jesus Christ, which they have rejected and continue to reject. Rev 20: 15. *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.* Those that dwell on the earth (spiritually), who worship the beast (pride, unchanging heart of self) and who are not in Christ are cast into the lake of fire (a separate study).

Conclusion: The book of life is the life experience of the Son of God relating to our heavenly Father from eternity past until now. It is Christ's testimony which he came to give as a revelation of his Father to humanity. By hearing and doing the spiritual concepts the Son gives, we come to know our heavenly Father, and become one with the Father and Son. To have your name in the book of life means you are hearing and doing the instruction of God and have Christ's character. All names begin in the book of life (Rev 3:5). It is the manner of life a person lives which determines the character. Anyone not living by God's standards furnished through His only Son, removes their own name (character) from the book of life. It is those refusing to listen to God, and therefore not overcoming, who do not receive the character (name) of Christ, the Book of Life. Once it is removed, it is never restored. All that is left for that individual is eternal death. Ex 32: 33. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.* Ps 69: 28. *Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.*

Mal 3: 16. *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name.* 2 Cor 3: 3. *Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.* AMEN.