

IS MY NAME WRITTEN IN HEAVEN?

By Henry T. Mahan

2Peter 1:10-11

“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall. For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

TV-464a

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The apostle Peter wrote these words in **Second Peter Chapter 1:10**, saying *“Wherefore brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure, for if you do these things, (make your calling and election sure) you shall never fail. For, so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

Now, here’s our subject today: **“IS MY NAME WRITTEN IN HEAVEN?”** Almighty God has a Book; He calls it “My Book”. In the **Book of Exodus, Chapter 32**, Moses stood before God and said (speaking in defense of the rebellious children of Israel; I don’t understand these words, but Moses said them). *“Lord, if you won’t forgive the people, then blot me out of the Book that you have written.”* And this was the Lord’s reply to Moses (Exodus, Chapter 32 and verse 33), *“Whosoever has sinned against Me, Him will I blot out of My Book.”* God has a Book; He calls it “My Book”.

This Book is also called *“The Book of Life”*. In **Revelation 20:12 and 15**, it says, *“Another Book was opened which is the Book of Life.”* God calls it *“My Book,”* and he calls it *“The Book of Life.”* In verse 15 it says, *“Whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.”* It’s God’s Book, *“The Book of Life.”* In **Revelation 21**, that Book is called *“The Lamb’s Book.”* Who is the Lamb? It’s the Lord Jesus Christ, He is the Lamb. John the Baptist pointed to Him and said, *“Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.”* So, Christ is the Lamb, *“the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”* This Book, God’s Book, and the Book of Life are called *“The Lamb’s Book of Life.”* In **Revelation 13:8**, it says, *“The Book of Life, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.”*

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Our Lord's disciples came back one day from preaching, and they were marveling. They said to Him, "*Even the demons are subject to us.*" This is how our Lord replied to them, saying, "*Rejoice not that the demons are subject to you but rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven.*" (Rejoice that your names are written in heaven).

In **Hebrews 12:23**; the writer of Hebrews talks about the church of the first-born, that's the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. He's first-born from the dead, the first begotten. He says, "*The church of the first-born whose names are written in heaven.*" My subject today and my question, is my name written in heaven? Is your name written in heaven? I know that God's book (He calls it My Book, the Book of God's decrees, the Book of God's purposes) is closed to the curiosity of men, I know that; "*No man has ever looked thereon.*" It will be open someday, that's what He said, "*The dead will stand before God and the Books will be open and the dead shall be judged out of those things written in the Book.*" Then He said, "*Then another Book will be open which is the Book of Life.*" It's not open now, but it will be open some day. That time will come in God's good pleasure.

I must be honest, as I hope you will be too. I'd like to look at that Book wouldn't you? I'd love to look within the pages of God's Book, the Book of Life, the Book of the Lamb of God; I would like to look in. Whose name would you look for first? Why, you know, you would look for your own; I would look for mine. Secondly, you would probably look for your wife or husband's name, and then you would look for all of your children's names and loved ones, then your friends. I'd be interested in looking into that Book, that is just being honest, I would.

Mrs. James L. Gray (1843) wrote these words:

Am I called, can it be
That the Saviour has chosen me?
Guilty and sinful as I am
Will He own my worthless name?
Is my name written there?
Vilest of the vile, there I raise my hopes so high
Am I called, am I an heir of God?
Washed, redeemed by His precious blood?

A lot of people have talked about this subject, "Is my name written there?" Charles Spurgeon, you're familiar with Charles Spurgeon. I don't suppose that there has been in the last two or three hundred years, a preacher as well known and heard by so many people, as Charles Haden Spurgeon. I came across some comments that he made about this Book of Life, "Is My Name Written There?" This is what he said on this subject, "How can I know whether I am elected of God to everlasting life? How can I know if my name is written in God's Book of Life? This is a question of vast importance to me; my eternal interests are involved in this matter. Am I among that unhappy number who will hear the Lord say, '*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,*' or do I belong to that blessed company who shall hear the Lord say, though they have sinned, and they are washed in His

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blood, they shall hear the Lord say in that day, ‘*Enter ye blessed into the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*’ Is my name written in heaven?”

Spurgeon continued, he said, “Until that question is answered, at least to some extent for me, I can find no rest. Until that question at least, to some extent is answered for me, I can find no rest because my relationship with Christ concerns me more than all the affairs of this life.”

If I cannot see the Book of Life, how can I know if my name is written there? Well, here comes the answer. While God has not published the names of those who have been written in the Book of Life, and no man knows whose name is in that Book of certainty, yet, God has a lot to say about those people whose names are written in the Book of Life; He has a lot to say about those people. He has a lot to say about their calling, He has to say a lot about their character, and he has a lot to say about their conduct.

When we use to travel a lot, our children would play a game called, “Who am I?” They would give clues. They would be thinking of a person’s name, the other children wouldn’t know who they were thinking about. They had a name on their hearts or minds, and they would start giving clues. They would start telling how old this person is, the color of their hair, if this person is male or female, what kind of car they drove, and where they lived. The other children would try to guess (who am I?) by the character, conduct and personalities and characteristics of that person. While God has not published the names of His people and those whose names are written in the Book of Life, He has a lot to say about their character and a lot to say about their conduct and a lot to say about their attitude and a lot to say about their calling and their conversation.

Let’s see if we can find out something about these people. Turn with me to **First Thessalonians Chapter 1**. Now, this church at Thessalonica was special to the apostle Paul. Paul came to Thessalonica on one of his missionary trips and he preached to this church for three solid weeks, and the foundation of the church was laid. Many of these people were converted; they were brought to a knowledge of Christ. Paul preached to them and a church was born; people were saved and a foundation was laid for a ministry there. Paul left and Timothy came back to Thessalonica and Timothy preached to them and established them in the faith of Christ Jesus. Timothy returned to Paul and told Paul about these people. You’ll find it in **verse 3 of First Timothy 1**. He told Paul about their works of faith, their labor of love, and their patience of hope; their faith, hope and love.

Paul wrote this epistle (**First Thessalonians**), to that church, when Timothy came to him and told him about their work of faith, labor of love and patience of hope. At **First Thessalonians verse 4**, what follows here are the reasons why Paul believes that these people belong to God. He says, in **verse 4**, “*I know brethren*, (talking to the church; this is not written indiscriminately to the whole world; it is written to the brethren) *beloved of God your election of God.*” Then, Paul gives the reasons why he knows that they are God’s elect, why he knows that their names are written in heaven, why he knows that they will be among those people who will be conformed to the image of Christ. He gives several reasons why he knows they are God’s sheep, and why he knows they are God’s elect. He said, “Brethren, I know that you are elect of God.”

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First Thessalonians chapter 1:5, look at it, do you have your Bible open? For he said, “I know you are God’s elect.” “*For our gospel didn’t come to you in Word only, (in doctrine, in creed only), but our gospel, this gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, came to you in power.*” It’s not just a theory, it’s not just a creed, it’s not just a doctrine to you; this gospel of the Son of God who loved us and gave Himself for us, came to you in power; it came to you in the Holy Spirit. It came to you in the regenerating, convicting, converting work of the Holy Spirit and it came to you in much assurance. In other words, this is the first characteristic, or calling of the people of God whose names are written in heaven, (they hear the gospel). They hear it in heart; they hear it in conviction of sin; they hear it in regeneration of the Holy Spirit; they hear it in conversion.

Not very long ago, a man came up to me and said, “You know, I heard you preach a long time before I really heard you.” Do you know what he was saying? He was saying, “I heard you preach a long time before I really heard you in the power of the Holy Spirit.” That’s what I’m saying; people hear preachers and they hear scripture read, but then one day the Spirit of God takes that gospel and sends it deeper than the mental faculties, He sends it to the heart. That person is regenerated, convicted of sin, brought to hear that gospel, to believe it, to love it and to receive it.

Saul of Tarsus was a very religious man. One day he heard the gospel of Christ on the road to Damascus. God arrested him; God stopped him and God revealed Himself to him. He heard!

That’s the first mark of those whose names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life. They have heard the gospel. “*They have heard it in power and the Holy Ghost in much assurance.*”

Look at **verse 6**: Here is the second reason that Paul gives for believing that these people are the elect of God and their names are written in the Book of Life, he said, “*You became followers of the Lord and of us.*” Those, whose names are written in heaven, hear the gospel, they hear it in power, in the Holy Ghost, and they confess Christ as their Lord and they follow Him. Christ said, “*My sheep hear my voice and they follow me, and another Shepherd they will not follow.*” They follow Me and they identify with the Lord’s people; they love the Lord. They follow Him in obedience, in worship and in godliness and truth. They love the house of God and the people of God and they seek the company and fellowship of God’s people.

“You became followers of us and of the Lord.” They received the Word. He said, “*You receive the word, you received it in much affliction, but you receive it in the joy of the Holy Spirit.*” Do you love the Word of God? Do you love the house of God? Do you love the people of God? Do you follow the Lord?

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There was a man in the Old Testament whose name was Caleb. Actually, the meaning of the name Caleb is “faithful dog”. It says that every time the name of Caleb is mentioned in the Old Testament, it follows with this word, “*He followed the Lord, fully.*” That’s the mark of a man whose name is in the Book of Life. He follows the Lord.

Look at **verse 7**: “*So that you were examples,*” (this is the third reason). Paul says, “*I know you are God’s elect, so you were examples to all who believe, in Macedonia and Achaia,*” in your area and outside your area; you were examples. Let me pause here a moment. Of course, no believer claims to be perfect; no believer claims to be a pattern for other people. No believer would say, “Be like me, walk like me, talk like me, do like I do, say what I say.” No, not for a moment! Christ is our pattern. Christ is our example. Christ our Lord is perfect and He’s the only one Who is. He’s the only one that is to be followed fully. “*Caleb followed the Lord.*” Christ our Lord is our pattern; we long to be like Him.

How then are we (whose names are in the Book of Life), how are we to be examples? Well, here’s the way that we are examples, those whose names are written in the Book of Life have heard the gospel; they believe God and they follow the Lord. In this they are examples! They have left the old way, the old walk and the old world and they are following the Lord. In this, they are examples! They are identified with the people of God in worship, in fellowship and faithfulness; in this they are examples! They have heard the Word of God and believe the Word of God and loved the Word of God even in affliction and trial; in this they are examples! They love one another and they help one another and they seek to glorify God in their lives; and in this they are examples! All that I’ve read so far in this scripture; that’s an example! I know you’re God’s elect; you’ve heard the gospel and believed it and followed the Lord and us and received the Word in much affliction, but also with much joy; in this we are examples!

All right, look at **verse 8**; this is the fourth reason why Paul believed that these people’s names were in the Book of Life. “*From you sounded out the Word of the Lord. Not only in Macedonia, where you live but all around the world your faith in God is known and spoken of.*” My friends, those who have heard the gospel in power, want others to hear it the same way. They don’t want others just to get religion or to reform their lives; they want them to hear the gospel, the true gospel, the gospel of God’s grace, the gospel of God’s mercy, and the gospel of God’s peace in Christ Jesus. They want other people to hear this gospel.

It’s not just a matter of going to church on Sunday; they want others to hear this gospel. Those who know the Lord and follow the Lord, they want others to know Him and to follow Him. Those who have found peace, the peace of God and a good hope through grace and a love in Christ; they want others to find that same peace and joy and hope and love, not to just get religion but to know God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent.

These people witness and they speak a word in due season and they support true pastors and true missionaries and they are faithful to the house of God because from them sounds out the Word of God. God opens an effectual door for them and they tell others what He has done for them. That’s the best witnessing in the world.

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I heard a definition of witnessing one time. The very best witnessing is one beggar telling another beggar where he got a good meal, where he found bread. Back in the depression days, I go back that far and I remember the hobos and beggars coming by our house and Mother would feed them. Another bunch and another bunch told the others about my mother, about her meals and about her kindness. Wherever they would go out there on the streets, they would say, “I’ll tell you where you can get a good meal; I’ll tell you where you can get some bread; I’ll tell you where you can get a hand out. I can tell you for sure where you can get some nourishment.” That’s witnessing. You can’t tell what you haven’t learned and haven’t experienced; you can’t tell what you don’t know anymore that you can come back from where you haven’t been. If you know Him, you can tell about it. He’s visited you in grace and you can tell about it and from you sounded out the Word of the Lord.

Now, look at **verse 9**; I’ll tell you why you are God’s elect, the last line. He said, “*You turn from your idols to serve the living God.*” You actually turn from your idols. I looked up that word in the dictionary. What is an idol? This is the standard definition; an idol is an object of worship other than the true and living God; an idol is an object of excessive devotion, an admiration other than Christ the Lord that can be self. Self can be an idol, self-love, self-righteousness, family, fame, applause, and popularity. An idol is an object of excessive devotion and admiration. It is what a person clamors after.

The apostle Paul said, “*Oh that I may win Christ and be found in Him.*” He said, “*I count all things but loss.*” He talked about his heritage, he talked about his learning, he talked about his accomplishments, he talked about his successes and he talked about his religion. He said, “*I count these things but dung.*” These things were idols in which I trusted. “*That which I considered gain, I count loss; I turn from these idols to the living God.*” I tell you, idols are a material obsession, obsession with riches, jewelry, clothes, houses, land, a better job, and automobiles, (idols)! Here’s the best definition; an idol is an imposter; it cannot do for you what you need to have done; it’s an imposter.

That’s right, “*Christ saves to the uttermost; He’s able to keep you from falling. He’s able to translate you from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of His dear Son.*” He is able to do all things. Riches and wealth, glory, fame, worldly materialism, it can’t do anything of the things that it promises. All it can do is crumble like the little sand castle you built on the beach when the tide comes in. When years pass, when old age takes over and death crumbles; He ever lives. An idol is an excessive devotion, an idol is an imposter, and idol is a material obsession. An idol is anything you put before Christ. He said, “*I know your name is in the Book of Life, you turned to God from your idols to serve the living and true God.*” Was that deliberately or willingly to serve the living God?

In **verse 10**, here’s the sixth reason, and He says, “*And you’re waiting for His Son from heaven whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivered us from the wrath to come.*” We’re waiting. The Lord Jesus Christ was talking to His disciples one day and He said, “*Now, let not your hearts be troubled, you believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father’s house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you. Now, I go to*

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cross and to the tomb and to the right hand of God to prepare you for the place and to prepare the place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.” The disciples said, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going; we’ve never been there; I’ve never seen heaven; I’ve never seen the gates of glory; I’ve never seen the streets of gold; I’ve never seen the mansions in glory; I don’t know where you are going.” That is what they said, “*We don’t know where you’re going, how can we know the way?*” He said to them, “*I’m the way, and I am the truth and I am the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me.*”

I’ll tell you, those whose names are written in heaven have heard the gospel of Christ and believed it and are following that Lord Jesus Christ. They are obsessed with Him and with His Word and they are following Him. They are fellowshiping with one another. I’ll tell you, they are examples of faith, hope and love. From them, from their hearts and from their fellowship goes forth to others this glorious gospel. They are telling beggars where to find bread. They are telling other hobos where to get help, the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. They have laid down their idols; they have turned from their idols. Idols are imposters.

I hear people talk about what they gave up when they came to the Lord. I didn’t give up anything; I received a whole lot. Everything that I laid down wasn’t fit to have. Everything that I turned away from wasn’t fit to associate with. Everything and everybody that I turned away from wasn’t fit to associate with. I gave up nothing; I received everything. Turn from the imposters, turn from your idols to the living God. I’ll tell you, we’re waiting for His Son. The angels said, “*This same Jesus which is taken up from you to heaven will so come in like manner.*”

Is my name written in heaven? I believe it is. I believe that many of your names are written in the Book of Life.