

Last Page

(Sermon Notes)

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I just learned this week that another good friend of mine – a minister of Jesus Christ – died of a sudden and massive heart attack – he was only 58 years old. He's gone – his life is completed.

We know that our lives are tenuous and fragile – and yet we are baffled by death when it strikes near us. When someone we've known for decades and decades dies unexpectedly, it is always a **sobering** experience.

One of our readers responded to this week's Countdown, "The Countdown to the return of Jesus Christ."

"Very sobering, to think that our **time** is ticking by, and every thought and act makes us accountable to God for how we live our lives."

Brethren, what is this life all about? In the Holy Scriptures we find out how it's all going to work out.

Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the **books** were opened: and another **book** was opened [that's at least three books], 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.

These are the categories of those books mentioned here:

1. All the Books of the Bible (Galatians 3:10)
2. The Book of Life of the Lamb
3. Our own Personal Journal, That is, the **book** containing the record of our works or deeds.

This set of books here in Revelation 20:12 play a vital role during the time of the judgment:

Did you know that there was a **book** in heaven with your name on the cover – and it contains everything about you? Our own **book** contains our extensive life's record as to what each of us has done/not done on earth, in our lifetime.

I've taken the title of today's sermon - **Last Page** - from this concept of being judged out of those things which were written in the **books**, according to their works. We will not be judged by the **book of life** – but there are other books that contain the things by which we will be judged.

Will all the experiences of this life all be forgotten and replaced when the resurrection comes? Or, is this lifetime a stepping stone in the process of our being created? We ask ourselves, "Am I ready to go right this instance?"

My friend's **book** is closed and sealed. Nothing will be added or erased from his **Book of Remembrance**. But for us, it is different. We still have occasion to fill up our **last page**. The record of our life's story continues to be written. We have the opportunity and are able to live up to God's expectations for us, and write our **last page**.

Romans 2:6 [God] will render to every man **according to his deeds**:

Romans 2:7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life:

Christianity and Godliness are a way of life for the people in the Church of God. Trials and tests are designed to help us grow spiritually. Trials and tests also sort us out – as the old saying goes – to separate the men from the boys. We know that there will be decisive and differentiating trials and tests for us to face prior to the return of Jesus Christ. God's true people will be **sorted out from** among those lacking faith; those who are not following the lead of God's Holy Spirit. The Children of God are a select people. The apostle Paul said it like this:

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Children of God" (Romans 8:14).

We are aware that there are tares among the true people of God. They are “seat warmers” who are content to socialize and fellowship. They do not seriously live their Christianity. Somehow, they never get around to the practice of **pure religion**.

James 1:27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

We see two distinct concepts expressed in this verse. **Service** to others, and **living** according to Godliness. There is so much to consider: Giving and sharing: Sacrificing: being persecuted, never saying a cruel word. taking a stand: practicing Christianity and Godliness: putting on Godly characteristics, morality and virtue: practicing forgiveness and reconciliation, etc., the list goes on and on. We do not want our book – to be an empty journal. The Bible is filled with warnings of how a Christian should live his life.

Some never get around to practicing **pure religion** very fervently. God is not going to allow negligence like that to stand: Over and over we see that God is going to purge His people... no one is going to slip into the Kingdom of undetected.

“Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.” (1Corinthians 3:13)

We find ourselves badly scattered all over the face of the earth. God knows those who are His. They hear the voice of the Son. Some people wander all over looking for “the church.” There is only one Church – but many do not know that God’s Church is unified in Him.

Some people are never satisfied – always looking for some new thing. When they happen upon the truth of God they keep searching because they do not know what they are looking for.

They are ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth (2Timothy 3:7).

2Timothy 4:3-4 *“The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fiction.”*

“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” (1John 2:19)

They are like children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. (Ephesians 4:14)

Brethren, these are very dangerous days for us – spiritually speaking. Let’s recall that *we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and every one of us shall give account of himself to God* (Romans 14:10-12).

Jesus Christ has a **Book of Remembrance** on each one of us – with every important detail of our lives. That **Book of Remembrance** holds every act of Christianity and Godliness we’ve done in this lifetime. Every encouraging word, every sacrifice made, every unselfish deed, and every Godly stand we took are all written therein.

Also recorded in our **book** is every unrepented mean or spiteful action, every cruel or hateful word spoken – it is all there – a complete record of our lives. Our **book** contains all the evidence we will be judged on – for good or for bad.

We have the time to make the necessary changes in our lives.

God will accept no substitute in place of His sincerity and truth.

God knows exactly what we need to go through and experience as we go through life – to become the person He knows we should be.

We must never fight against God’s direction in our lives as shown by His perfect way.

It is easy to fight against what God would have us do. It is easy to go our own way instead of following the lead of God's Holy Spirit. (Romans 8:14)

Proverbs 16:9 A man's heart devises his way: but the Lord directs his steps.

Matthew 6:19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

Matthew 6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:

What are these treasures and where is your balance sheet kept?

Every month you receive a statement from your bank. It shows the checks you have written and the deposits you have made.

Verse 19 tells us that our spiritual deposits are not on earth, and

Verse 20 tells us that a record of our spiritual deposits is kept in heaven.

Your treasures are not recorded in my account, and my treasures are not deposited in your account.

Philippians 4:3 And I entreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow laborers, whose names are in the **Book of Life**.

Luke 10:20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because **your names are written in heaven**.

God is making it abundantly clear to us that He is keeping a full and complete record on each and every one of us. Our personal **book** is an inclusive **dossier** or profile of everything about us. Yes they are written in heaven in the **Book of Life** and our own personal record, journal, register, or ledger. Each of us has a record being kept by God.

In Psalm 56:8, David referenced a **book of remembrance** kept by Jesus Christ on each one of us – with every important detail of our lives.

Psalm 56:8 "Thou tellest [record, inscribe or write] my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they **not in thy book?**"

This means that God knows our heart and mind. He knows our burdens – tears – trials – gifts – sacrifices – persecutions – and pains.

Hebrews 6:10 For **God is not unrighteous to forget** [He remembers] your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward His name, in that ye have served the saints, and continue to serve.

That's a nice example of the kind of things God is writing in **our book**. God remembers every act of love – every thought of compassion – every prayer of mercy.

That is the **book** on each and every one of us – which is quite extensive – and comprehensive right down to our DNA. God is intimately and intricately involved in our lives – even before we are born – He never forgets a single incident:

Psalm 139:13 For thou hast possessed my reins [For You formed my inward parts;]: thou hast covered me **in my mother's womb**.

Psalm 139:14 I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made;

Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well.

David recognizes God's hands on involvement – You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together. Like us, David as an infant or little child, – had absolutely no idea of what he was going to become. He recognized that God was overseeing every detail of his existence.

Psalm 139:16 Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being **un-perfect** [being in the embryonic stage of development]; and **in thy book** all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them, yet. [before birth!]

Even now within God's Church we are in the ongoing process of being created. We are not creating ourselves, though we sometimes foolishly believe we are self made. God hasn't done His part in creating us and then stepped away from the process. No! He is very much involved in creating us at this very moment. He is actively – hands on – continuously in the process of creating us to be in His image.

We need God and a close relationship with God. Here in Psalm 139, King David admits that he was created. He was only a passive recipient in the process. Brethren, it is the same for you and me. We certainly did not decide for ourselves that we would **physically** exist and start becoming like God. Only God could do such a thing. Only God could create mankind. But then, for a very select and special people – God is drawing a few out of the pool of mankind – to be His **spiritual** Children – even now. I hope that none of us believes that we've had anything to do with this new **spiritual** part of God's creative process.

2Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is an [absolutely] **new** creation [a spiritual creation]: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

God intended this **spiritual** process to begin with the two trees back in the Garden of Eden. The process of our being spiritually created was interrupted – but now, the process of our being spiritually created is back on course. Again, God has everything to do with this course of our development.

What we need to realize is how intimately involved God is in bring about our spiritual development. In the same way that we did not bring about our own physical gestation and birth – we are no more making ourselves spiritually than we did physically. But, now in this step of our creation – God has a relationship with us requiring our participation.

Our mind's wish, and our heart's desire is now to be spiritually like God. God is allowing us to have an active part with Him in our spiritual creation. Now, for the first time we have and **active** part in determining what we shall be!

Do we see the big picture of our incredible human potential with God's active participation in who we are becoming? We certainly cannot bring about our own **eternal** life – any more than we could have brought ourselves into the world! And we do not yet know specifically what God has called us for – what our job will be in the millennium and beyond. We certainly are not all being trained to do the **same thing** in the world tomorrow.

We all have been called right now to fill a very specific responsibility in God's Kingdom – that is why He says let no man take your crown.

James 1:12 Blessed is the man that endures temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the **crown of life**, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.

Do we realize how crucial it is to draw near to God and develop our God given talents and proclivities to be all we can be spiritually? It is a travesty to say, "I only want to make it into the kingdom – that is all I care about."

Music was designed by God for the purpose of bringing great enjoyment and pleasure into our lives. If you have been given by God the **spiritual** counterpart of being a concert pianist it would be foolish to stop practicing after learning to play chopsticks.

No one that is unqualified for the Kingdom will enter into it. God is serious about that. Sadly, too many have been baptized, and thought to themselves, "I've got it made," and they never *grew in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ* (2Peter 3:18).

When our relationship with God is as it should be, He is bringing about our spiritual creation by **giving** us everything we need to prosper spiritually in our relationship with Him. That is why James says:

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.

God is giving us every good gift in order for us to attain to our maximum potential.

James 1:18 Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creation.

Are we prepared to teach, guide and rule in the millennium? If we died right now, would we know how to manage five or ten cities? What do we think?

Is God just going to create all that character, knowledge, wisdom and know-how after we are resurrected? No! What is this life for? What are we becoming right now? Have we learned to **take a stand** for God's way yet? God said to Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 1:5 Before I formed thee in the womb I knew you; and before thou came forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

Paul gives God the credit for directing his life from the womb:

Galatians 1:15 But when it pleased God, who separated me **from my mother's womb**, and called me by his grace.

God in His infinite foreknowledge, knew that He was going to use Paul mightily – no different from any of us who fear the Lord, and think upon His name.

What is this **book**, and what does it mean for us? It is called the **Book of Remembrance** and everyone who has ever been called by God the Father, and believed in Jesus Christ has one. Malachi also references this **book**:

Malachi 3:16-17 "Then they that feared the LORD spoke 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. And they shall be mine, says the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."

This **Book of Remembrance** holds every act of faithful service done for the Lord. Every encouraging word, every unselfish deed, every sacrifice made, the Lord has carefully placed there.

Daniel 12:1 And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which stands for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be **found written in the book**.

Brethren, God is serious about what He is doing. Even now, God is determining who places Him **first**, and is following His lead – and who is not.

Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.

Galatians 6:8 For he that sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that sows to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.

Galatians 6:9 And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.

Galatians 6:10 As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith.

Revelation 3:5 He that overcomes, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will **not blot** out his name out of the **Book of Life**, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels. [Exodus 32:32-33, Revelation 22:19]

God is not going to blot anyone's name out of the **Book of Life** except for those who turn away, reject and forsake God's perfect way.

Paul says it this way:

Hebrews 6:4 For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit,

Hebrews 6:5 And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come,

Hebrews 6:6 If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.

Hebrews 10:26 For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins,

Hebrews 10:27 But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.

If someone demonstrates to God that they choose to be **incorrigibly** angry, and wicked toward God – it is possible for their name to be **blotted** out – erased from God's **Book of Life**.

Let me give you a needed clarification right here: Those Protestants who hold to the doctrine of "Once saved - Always saved," and those who believe in universal salvation of everyone who has ever been born – have a problem with some of these verses that speak of someone's name being **blotted** out of the **Book of Life**. In order to argue their point they say the **Book of Life**, and the **Lamb's Book of Life**, are two different **books**.

There is only **one book of life**.

Revelation 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship [the beast], whose names are **not** written in the **Book of Life** of the **Lamb** slain from the foundation of the world.

The **Book of Life** of the **Lamb** (Revelation 13:8) and the **Lamb's Book of Life** (Revelation 21:27) are the same Book.

I mention this because those who hold the "Once saved - Always saved" make them two separate **books** because they teach that a name cannot ever be removed from the **Book of Life**.

David begins his prayer to God for deliverance from his enemies in Psalm 69:13.

Psalm 69:28 Let them be **blotted out of the book of the living**, [Book of Life] and not be written with the righteous.

Ecclesiastes 11:9 ...but know you this, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.

Ecclesiastes 12:14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.

Referring to the Day of Judgment:

Daniel 7:10 A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him [Ancient of days]: the judgment was set, and **the books** were opened.

Our own Personal Journal contains a life record as to what each of us has done/not done on earth, in our lifetime. We will be judged in accordance with the entire word of God - in the sense of being in a court of law standing before Jesus Christ.

Revelation 20:13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

Revelation 20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the **Book of Life** was cast into the lake of fire.

Revelation 21:5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

Revelation 21:6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the **fountain of the water of life** freely. [eternal life]

Revelation 21:7 He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

It is clear that everyone will not receive salvation and eternal life.

Revelation 21:8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Revelation 21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it [the holy city, Jerusalem] anything that defiles, neither whatsoever works abomination, or makes a lie: but they which are written in the **Lamb's Book of Life**. [They will enter into the holy city, Jerusalem]

God is keeping record for the time of the judgment.

2Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that **he hath done**, whether it be good or bad.

Romans 2:16 In the day when God shall **judge the secrets** of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Matthew 16:27 [Jesus Christ said:] The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall **reward every man according to his works**.

John 5:26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

John 5:27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

John 5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

John 5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. [judgment]

1Corinthians 15:57 But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

1Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always **abounding in the work** of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a **rewarder of them that diligently seek him**.

And with all this - still we cannot imagine the rewards God has in store for us.

1Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

We are still alive. The journal of our lives is still being recorded.

What would we like to see written on our **last page**?

End: Last Page