

Put God First Part 5

Work Out to Keep your Name In the Book of Life

As we had discussed previously that from the time we are saved by the blood of Jesus we are sealed with the Holy Spirit and our names are written in the Book of Life. The Bible tells us about the Book of Life that as we are saved our names are written there. Also, the Bible speaks that when people sin and persist in their ways of sin their names are blotted out from the book of life. Let us read now the Scriptures that speak about names written in the book of life and names blotted out:

“4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast; and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? 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.” (Revelation 13:4, 8 KJV) Those who worship the beast, the dragon, the devil, their names are not written in the book of the Lamb of God. Those who are deceived by the beast, the devil their names are not written in the book of life, ***“The beast that thou sawest 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.” (Revelation 17:8 KJV)***

“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. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:12, 15 KJV) On the day of Judgment in front of the white throne of God those whose names are not written in the book of life they will be cast out into the lake of fire.

Those who live in sin and defilement, in lies, cheating stealing, in immoralities, doing witchcraft, etc., their names will be blot out from the book of life and they will not enter into the holy city, the Heavenly Jerusalem that Jesus prepared for us, ***“And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.” (Revelation 21:27 KJV)***

“And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.” (Revelation 22:19 KJV) Those who take away the Scriptures from the Bible and throw them away and not fulfil them their names will be blotted out from the book of life.

We will continue the events in the Bible that tell us under what circumstances and conditions that God would blot out from the Book of Life the names of His people who persistently fail to obey Him:

Previously we spoke:

1. **In the account of the golden calf:**

2. **In the rehearsal of Moses to the Israelites:**

3. **In the encounter with Simon, the sorcerer:**

4. **In the message of God to the church at Sardis:** ***“1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. 2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. 3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. 4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. 5 He that overcometh, 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. 6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” (Revelation 3:1-6 KJV)***

The message of the Lord to the church in Sardis speaks clearly how we need to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. ***“3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent.”*** Paul also said to the Philippians church: ***“12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” (Philippians 2:12 KJV)*** Paul was telling them to work out their salvation, and that means to keep and strengthen out what they have already received – the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ, the spiritual gifts and what they had received from God of material things. In the same manner we have already received and heard the teaching of the Lord and we are accountable to respond and to act or work out things in accordance with God’s will and plan that He ordained for us.

Going back to the book of Revelation to the church at Sardis, the whole mark of God’s coming judgment to this church is in the following statement in verse 2: ***“for I have not found thy works perfect before God.”*** The Lord did not find the deeds of Christians in Sardis perfect. As a church and body of Christ they had heard and received instruction from the Lord; they had started to do but did not complete and perfected the work as the Lord required.

Godly character is a great advantage in order to become productive and effective. On the contrary the following character traits cause us not to complete the work or perfect the task that God requires and so bring us to judgment and that was taking place in the church of Sardis that finally they were called dead church:

1. **Laziness:** The attitude to quickly build up a fire but allow it to die down is the same as laziness. ***“I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.” (Revelation 3:1 KJV)*** In **Proverbs 18:9** it says, ***“9 He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster.” (Proverbs 18:9 KJV)*** Lazy people are cause of much wasting. Non-willingness to persevere and endure troubles is another sign of laziness that would finally make us put aside the work of God that He has entrusted to us.

2. Inconsistency: We may be active and diligent today and tomorrow, but on the third day or later on we put aside what has been entrusted us to do. We start something but then later on we do another thing and the result is incomplete work.

3. Non willingness to respond to correction: The Lord said to the church in Sardis: ***“Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die:” (Revelation 3:2 KJV)*** It sounds like it was not the first time that the Lord had warned the church about their complacency and imperfection, but most probably they were not willing to respond. The Lord will judge any style of reluctance to continue to finish the work of God.

Let us take the message to instruct and guide our lives to complete the work that the Lord entrusted to us, His servants and His church. Let us avoid and put away attitudes and character traits that make our deeds and services incomplete and non perfect in the sight of God.

A. Be watchful: God wants you to wake up and start to watch your life and to find the wrong things and to correct them. ***“14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” (Ephesians 5:14 KJV)*** Now is the time for you to wake up and realize why your stand is not right with God. It is the time for you to correct things and to start to walk faithfully with our Lord and Master Jesus Christ.

B. Strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God: Here the Lord is giving you another chance to correct yourself, before He will come, so now you have hope and new opportunity to use the remaining time and resources to achieve things for God’s glory as He expected from you.

C. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard: Let us sit down with the Lord and remember the things that we have received from Him. Let us think about what God had asked us to do for Him. To sit down with the Lord is to give time for Him to speak to us through His Word and His Spirit, to open our hearts to Him in response and allow Him to take full control of us and our situation. Let us keep a notebook of the things that the Lord is speaking to us so that we will not forget and we shall strive to do exactly as He has told us.

D. Hold fast: Means to obey it and to put into practice what you have heard and are told to do from God’s Word. ***“21 Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. 23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: 24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. 25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.” (James 1:21-25 KJV)*** To look into the Word of God, the perfect law of liberty and to do them, you are perfecting your ways before God as you listen and do His Word.

E. And repent: To repent is to stop sinning (stop telling lies, immoralities, fighting, stealing, etc.) so you will be able to bear fruit and to complete the task for God’s Kingdom. ***“8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:” (Matthew 3:8 KJV)*** Now sit with God and be keen to see how sins are hindering you from doing and completing the work of God.

Apostle Paul also wrote to the Colossian church this instruction: ***“17 And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it.” (Colossians 4:17)*** The message of the Lord through Paul is clear that Archippus needs to complete the work entrusted to him. Paul asked the church in Colossi to speak to Archippus to take heed, to give warning to him and to tell him what he had received from input from the Lord, from instructions, God’s Word, ministry, and spiritual gifts and need to complete, fulfill and perfect his ministry. **** Likewise the message is for you today to complete what has been started in you and not to put aside. God is now and again calling you to complete the work.***

**** As well as we as church should take the rule and speak to people like Archippus and motivate them to complete and perfect the ministry and God’s service that was entrusted to them.***

You need to overcome and we as church we need to overcome and persevere in serving God and perfect our work, so that our names will not be blot out from the book of life, ***“5 He that overcometh, 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.” (Revelation 3:5 KJV)***

Paul also urged the Christians in Corinth to complete their service to the Lord. Therefore Paul sent Titus to the Corinthians church in order to complete the task that he had started to collect from them the support needed for the saints. ***“6 Inasmuch that we desired Titus, that as he had begun, so he would also finish in you the same grace also.” (2 Corinthians 8:6 KJV)*** Titus started this ministry by his own initiative and willingness to serve. Paul also advised the Corinthians through his letter to cooperate with Titus and to excel in giving just as they were excelling in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in love. ***“7 Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.” (2 Corinthians 8:7 KJV)*** The Lord wants us to excel and bring to perfection whatever we started to do for Him. For this reason we need to abound and excel with everything and especially with the followings spiritual characters:

1. Giving: giving your life, your time, your material things, your spiritual gifts and whatever you have and received to the Lord.
2. Faith: Believing that God shall accomplish what He promised us.
3. Utterance: To continue to speak and preach God’s Word to the people around us and to new places that God is leading us.
4. Knowledge: To find out in God’s Word what He wants us to know and do for him, and to be aware of the will of God.
5. Diligence: To be active in serving and away from laziness, inconsistency or procrastination.
6. Love: to be willing to give, to forgive, to sacrifice, and to accept gladly what God is leading us and asking us to do for Him.

Paul concluded with this instruction and advice for God's people and urged them, and urge us today, to complete the task that they were called to do, **"10 And herein I give my advice: for this is expedient for you, who have begun before, not only to do, but also to be forward a year ago. 11 Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have. 12 For if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not."** (2 Corinthian 8:10-12 KJV) **In the same way you also today the message is for you from God through His church, that you had began the good work but you need to complete it, as you are ready in your mind to complete the task and you have willingness then the Lord shall help you in doing that.**

You need to overcome and we as church we need to overcome so that our names will not be blot out from the book of life, "5 He that overcometh, 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." (Revelation 3:5 KJV)

My dear and beloved: The message of God to these three churches, Sardis, Corinthians and Colossians were about service and ministry. Believers who receive many good things from the Lord, salvation above all, the Holy Spirit, the spiritual gifts, the gift of prayers, the Word of God, the written Word in the Bible and all the promises of God, the material things and the resources of God, they are accountable today before God. As well as, you are accountable, and the church is accountable before God to go and do the work of God and to finish the assigned work that He ordained for us.

God in His Word makes us understand things clearer so that as we read the Bible we know the principles that we shall apply into our lives, the truths from God's Word. Let us henceforth work out our salvation by putting into practice what we are hearing from God's Word. Let us wake up, repent of our sins, and be diligent to put into practice what we learn in order to finish the task that is entrusted to us. **A believer and a trained worker who stop serving God, His name will be blot out from the book of life if he will not repent from that.**

As much as we know the Word of truth let us apply them in our lives and in the lives of our children and disciples so that God will not blot out our names from the Book of Life. **"29 The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." (Deuteronomy 29:29 KJV)**

Now work out to keep your name written in the book of life by committing yourself to continue to serve God, continue to evangelize and make disciples, and do whatever your hand can do for the Lord to serve Him, and to finish, and complete and perfect the current task that you have from the Lord.

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the Cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your Word

that showed me clearly my sins and what I need to do to repent and to start to do your will.

Confess your sins and renounce them. Lord I confess and renounce the following sins _____, Lord I renounce the following flesh and worldly desire _____. Lord I renounce doing my own will.

Lord I commit myself to the principles that I learned from this message. Lord I commit myself to go and serve you and to continue the task that you entrusted to me to do. Lord I commit myself to go and evangelize reaching new area and to make new disciples.

Lord, I pray for us as a church; we commit ourselves to walk in your Word and to go on and serve you and be willing to suffer for you in order to finish your work and to implement your will in our life and in the life of the church and the ministry that you entrust to us. Lord fills us once again with the Holy Spirit and enables us to evangelize and to reach new people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and with the Word of God.

Lord, we pray that you will enable us to plant new Bible studies and new congregations for the church and to reach out new people and new places. Lord bless us, enlarge our territory, let your hand be with us, and free us from harm so that we will not feel pain. May the grace of the Lord Jesus and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all in Jesus' name, Amen.

Put God First Part 5. Work Out to Keep your Name In the Book of Life. Revelation 13:4, 8. Revelation 17:8. Revelation 20:12, 15. Revelation 21:27. Revelation 22:19. Revelation 3:1-6. Philippians 2:12. Proverbs 18:9. Ephesians 5:14. James 1:21-25. Matthew 3:8. Colossians 4:17. 2 Corinthian 8:6-7, 10-12. Deuteronomy 29:29.

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