

“For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to battle?” 1 Corinthians 14:8

KJV

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# The Original BAPTIST OBSERVER



“Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls...” Jeremiah 6:16

## Sounding Out The Faith

January 2017



### The “Books” in the Scriptures—Rightly Divided



In this lesson I would like to take a few moments to accurately identify some different books that are spoken of in God's Word. On the surface a couple of these may appear to be the same book, but by utilizing the tools of rightly dividing the Scriptures, we will in fact see that these are totally different books. As a child growing up in a Scriptural, New Testament church it was ingrained in me to always consider the context in order to understand the usage of words: context always dictates the use of a word. Just because a word is defined one way in a particular passage does not mean that same word is being used the same way in a different one. Context is the key every place in the Bible, including understanding these books we will consider.

The books we will examine are titled and defined as:

- Books** – Defined as the 66 books of the Bible
- Book of the Living** – The book each person that has ever existed is written in
- Book of Life** – The book listing all those that have accepted Christ as Savior
- Lamb's Book of Life** – The book of the faithful, who make up the Bride of Christ

The “Books” is probably the easiest to identify. We must understand that though the Holy Bible you and I may hold in our hands is a single book, it is actually a divine library of 66 books. It is these “Books” that the Apostle Paul told Timothy would make him “thoroughly furnished unto all good works”. II Timothy 3:16-17, “**All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.**” It is these same books that one day will judge all those that reject the free gift of salvation, “**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.” (Revelation 20:12) “**He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.**” (John 12:48). “**...for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.**” (Psalm 96:13). But it is not only the lost that will be judged by these books; the saved will also be judged by the Word of God, “**But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.**” (Rom 2:2). “**Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.**” (John 17:17). As you can see, it is fairly easy to identify and understand that the “Books” mentioned in Revelation 20:12 can only be those 66 divine books of God's Holy Word.

The second book to identify is known as the “Book of the Living”: this is a book that every person that has ever been born is written in. One thing to understand about this book is we don't get to decide to have our name written in it nor do we get to decide when our name is taken out of it because God alone is the giver and taker of life. In Psalm 87:4-6 we read, “**I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to them that know me: behold Philistia, and Tyre, with Ethiopia; this man was born there. And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her. The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there.**” As evidenced here, when a man is born the Lord makes a note of it in a book. The Scriptures go on to tell us that when a man dies his name is removed from this book. “**Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous.**” (Psalm 69:28) We find this book mentioned in Exodus 32:31-33 when Moses, because of the sins Israel had committed against the Lord in making and worshipping a golden calf, suggested to God to take his name out of this book instead of the

names of the people, “**And Moses returned unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin--; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And the LORD said**

**unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.**” Again, with this book there is clear evidence that such a book exists.

Let us now move on to the two remaining books that seem to be the hardest for people to differentiate between. Again referring to the 20<sup>th</sup> chapter of the book of Revelation, let us begin with verses 11-15, “**And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 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. 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. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.**” We see here, at the Great White Throne judgment for all the lost, that not only are the “Books” (Bible) opened to judge them, but the “Book of Life” was opened and examined. In Daniel 12:1-2 we find a time when those found written in this book will awake to everlasting life at the point of death, and those that are not in this book will awake in Hell, the place of everlasting contempt. “**And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth 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. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to ever-**

(Continued on page 2)

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# Dangers of Complaining

Often, we as God’s people do not take the thoughts of God seriously, nor do we dwell on them very often. We may go to church and hear His Word, or even spend time on our own reading or “studying” it, but we don’t actually consider what He thinks of our actions on a daily basis. We avoid the “big sins” like drinking, murder, or completely walking away from the Lord and His church, but we allow so many other “little” sins to come between us and our God without even realizing it. One of those sins that we often forget or excuse is complaining.

Before you even continue reading, take a moment to stop and seriously reflect on the last week or month of your life as a New Testament church member. How often do you complain about something? Anything? How many times a day do you complain about the weather, your job, the people around you, etc.?

Now, consider how many times you complain about the church that you are a part of (decisions made that you disagree with, the way other church members act, church events that you don’t want to go to, etc.), your pastor and the way he leads the church, or any other aspect of the Lord’s work in your life. Include in your reflection even those times where you did not voice your dissatisfaction, but you felt and thought on it in your heart, for the Bible declares this a sin as well (Mark 7:21-23). Keep these numbers in mind as we examine what the Bible says of God’s opinion on complaining.

To illustrate just how God feels about complaining, let’s examine some instances where the nation of Israel complained about the Lord or His leaders, since they are to be our examples (I Corinthians 10:11). The children of Israel were big complainers, as we can see through the following examples. Exodus 15:22-16:36 speaks of a time following God’s miraculous deliverance of Israel from slavery. God’s people had been in bondage for 430 years, and after much resistance from the Pharaoh of Egypt, they were finally freed. Then, when they got to the Red Sea and Pharaoh’s armies were close behind, God opened the waters and allowed them to cross before drowning Pharaoh and all of his men. Immediately after this amazing display of God’s power and love for His people, the Israelites began to question God’s faithfulness to them. In Exodus 15:24, the people murmured, or complained, against Moses, their leader, because they needed water and the only water available was the water of Marah, which was bitter. Instead of trusting God, their first instinct was to complain and blame Moses. Then, even after God provided them with sweet water and promised them that He would protect them (Exodus 15:26), they began complaining again (Exodus 16:2-3). They were hungry and rather than praying to God and having faith in His promises, they again blamed Moses and Aaron for the lack of food. And, again, God provided quail and manna for His people to eat (Exodus 16:11-14, 31). On this occasion, Moses made an excellent point to the Israelites about their complaining. In Exodus 16:8, Moses said, “...the Lord heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what are we? Your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord.” In other words, Moses explained that even when the children of Israel directed their complaints at their spiritual leaders, they were really unsatisfied with the Lord and His care for them. How shocked would we be if someone could walk up to God, look Him in the eye, and tell Him that His provision for them was not good! And yet, that is exactly what Israel did here and exactly what we do every time we complain about the Lord’s church, the men He has chosen to lead them, or anything else in their life.

If we continue to Numbers 11:1-3, we can see another time where Israel complained, and we can also see God’s vehement reaction to their murmurings. He sent fire that consumed many of the people. He only stopped the fire when Moses, the one they had complained about several times, interceded for them. Then, in verses 4-9, they immediately started complaining again about the manna that God had graciously given when they cried about not having food. In verse 33, we see that God smote the people with a very great plague because of their complaining. Similarly, in Numbers 14:1-10, we see the instance where the Israelites sent 12 spies into the land of Canaan, the land God had promised them, and 10 of those spies returned with murmurings and complaints about the land. When only 2 of the spies had faith in God and were grateful for the Promised Land, the people wanted to stone them (verse 10). In verse 11, we can see God’s utter desperation and frustration with Israel when He says, “How long will this people provoke me? And how long will it be ere they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them?” Consider how often God might have this same frustration with us when we don’t appreciate the things he does to care for and protect us each and every day. As a result of their discontent, God cursed the people and told them that only those under 20 years old would ever make it to see the Promised Land (Numbers 14:26-35). All the rest of the people would die in the wilderness. In addition, those spies who brought back the evil reports of Canaan were killed with the plague (Numbers 14:37).

How similar we are to the children of Israel when we ask the Lord to provide for us and then complain about the way He does just that! For example, how often do you ask for the Lord to lead or guide your life, and then when He does so through your brethren or through your pastor, you complain about how they spoke to you or how they judged you. Or even still, when you see other church members trying to serve God through helping at a potluck or cleaning the church building, and you complain because they don’t do it the way you want? If we are truly honest with ourselves about our actions, we would find that we are often like the children of Israel because we are constantly complaining about the various aspects of our life, and we don’t stop to realize that God is the one who is in charge of all of those aspects.

A final example of the complaining of the children of Israel is found Numbers 16. In verses 1-3, we see that three men, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, rose up among the people and decided to confront Moses about his leadership. “And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?” (Numbers 16:3). In short, Korah and the other two men went beyond complaining to themselves or to their friends/family about their leader, but they went so far as to confront Moses and Aaron and complain to their faces about the way they were leading God’s people.



Continued on page 3

## Books (Continued from page 1)

**contempt.”** We find in II Timothy 2:19 that there are some that the Lord knows, “**Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.**” Whereas in Matthew 7:21-23 we learn of those that the Lord does NOT know, “**Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.**” The only difference between these two is that some are written in this Book of Life and others are not.

In the next lesson we will examine more closely the fact that the Bible teaches a “once for all” salvation, otherwise known as Security of the Believer. So I am not going to spend a lot of time here on that topic, but know this: once a person accepts Christ as their personal Savior, their name can NEVER be taken out of the Book of Life. That is a promise from God. It may be the choice of each individual to accept Christ and have their name written in this book, but once there, it can never be removed. It does not matter how bad, immoral, ungodly, vile, repulsive, disgusting or reprobate a person becomes: once a person is a child of God and their name is written in the Book of Life, their name will never be removed from it. Titus 1:2 gives us confidence in this: “**In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.**” Jesus promised in John 6:35-40 that whoever would believe in Him would never be lost or cast out, “**And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.**” We also find in John 10:28-29 that once we are in the hand of Jesus, whose hand is held in the hand of the Father, we can never be taken out, “**And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.**” And if that isn't secure enough, Ephesians 1:13 tells us that we are also “sealed” by the Holy Spirit, “**In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise.**”

Now, let’s examine the last book on our list: the “Lamb's Book of Life”. For some reason this one seems to be the hardest for people to accept. Maybe because this exact name is only used once in the Scriptures, or it may be because in some places it is referred to as simply the “book of life”. If we again “rightly divide” the Scriptures, we will see that, even though this specific name isn't used, it is spoken of in several other places. This exact title is used in Revelation 21:24-27 where this exact title is used, “**And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh**

(Continued on page 3)



# Dangers of Complaining

(continued from page 2)

As a result of their actions, God opened up the earth and swallowed not only these three men, but all of their family, servants, goods, and all that was theirs (Numbers 16:28-34). Their utter disrespect for: 1) God and His order, and 2) God’s leaders who were given to Israel specifically to guide them to the Promised Land, provoked a very serious reaction from God. One would think that the awful death of Korah and the others for their sin would teach the rest of Israel a lesson, yet according to verse 41, the very next day, the people began complaining again. This time they blamed Moses and Aaron for killing their loved ones. At this point, God was so fed up with the murmuring of Israel that He sent a plague into all of the people immediately which killed almost 15,000 people (Numbers 16:41-50). Only due to the offerings that Aaron offered for the people was the plague stayed and the rest of the people spared.

Again, compare this to your life today. How often do you complain about the leadership of the Lord in your church? The obvious leader that God has given to the church as an under-shepherd is the pastor (Acts 20:28). Consider the times that you have been unwilling to follow your pastor and felt the need to either just disagree and resist his leadership or even to let others know your feelings. Based on God’s reaction to Israel’s discontent with their leader and on the immense sacrifice that Christ gave for His church as mentioned in Acts 20:28, we can see that God would abhor any complaining, whether verbal or mental, about the leaders He has given to His churches.

In conclusion, consider what I Corinthians 10:1-12 has to say about the children of Israel and our relation to them today. Verse 6 says, “Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.” Verse 10 says, “Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.” Verse 11 says, “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” This passage makes it clear that we are to look at the actions of the children of Israel and learn from their mistakes so that we don’t make the same ones. As we have seen in these different occasions, the children of Israel complained often, and each time, God exhibited serious anger and disapproval of their actions.

So, what does that mean for us? It is not hard to understand that He would not have us act as Israel did, but He would want us to fight the urges of the flesh and resist the temptation to complain or be unsatisfied with what He has given us. Philippians 2:14 and Jude 16-19 both explicitly describe complaining and those who do it in a negative light. In addition, we can see verses such as Philippians 2:11-12, 19, Hebrews 13:5, and I Timothy 6:6 which simply encourage us to be content. These verses bring us to the question, “Why do you complain about the various circumstances, people, or things in your life?” If we go back to Moses’ statement in Exodus 16:8, “...Your murmurings are not against us, but against the Lord”, we can easily see that the reason we complain is when we are not at peace with the Lord in our life. Whether from a need to be truly saved or a need to simply surrender our life to God in service. That separation between us and God is what leads to discontentment and complaining. So, instead of continuing in this sin and hurting not only

ourselves but hindering those around us in their walk with the Lord, let’s repent of our sin and find the peace and joy that are described in Matthew 11:28-30: “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

If you have repented of the sin in your life, and He has made you right with Him, then you will have this rest and peace described here and you will be able to fight the fleshly desire to complain. In fact, when you are close to God and studying His Word daily, you will find those circumstances that tempted you to complain before will not as easily sway you to fall into the sin of murmuring. This is not to say that serving God will be easy at all times, but, if you are right with your Lord and Savior and are striving to serve Him, He will help you to put away that sinful tendency. Hebrews 12:1-2 encourages us, “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.” If we are willing to see complaining for the sin that it is, lay it aside as His Word says, and look to Jesus for help, He will be there to help us resist that temptation.

“There hath no  
temptation taken you  
but such as is  
common to man:  
but God is faithful,  
who will not suffer  
you to be tempted  
above that ye are able;  
but will with the  
temptation also make  
a way to escape,  
that ye may be  
able to bear it.”  
I Corinthians 10:13



## Books (Continued from page 2)

abomination, or *maketh* a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.” Remembering that the context indicates that the subject matter is referring to things occurring in Heaven, we see in these few verses there are some outside the city (nations of the saved) and others that are inside the city. We also see in this last verse that those written in the Lamb’s Book of Life are the only ones allowed in the city. Those written in this book are those who lived faithfully for the Lord in their lifetime and “earned” the right to the tree of life that is in the city (Revelation 22:14).

Malachi called this book a “book of remembrance”, it was a log of those that were faithful to the Lord and served Him, **“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. And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.”** Though not given the same name, we find this exact book mentioned in Revelation 3:1-6, **“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. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. 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. 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. 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. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”**

In these verses we see a couple of things. First, there were members of this church that the Lord says had not “defiled their garments” and would walk with Him in white. The garments worn by the Bride during the wedding ceremony spoken of in Revelation 19:8, were white indicating the “righteousness of saints”. **“And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.”**

Second, the Lord tells those in the church at Sardis that if they continue being faithful He would not blot their name out of “the book of life.” This tells us that a name written in this book COULD be removed if certain prerequisites weren’t met. Being in this book is conditional. If this is the “Book of Life” that all of the saved are written in upon receiving the salvation of Jesus Christ, then this verse would be teaching that one could lose their salvation and that the doctrine of “Security of the Believer” is false. It would also indicate that every time the Lord said “everlasting life” or “eternal life”, He didn’t really mean it. It would mean that it was eternal or everlasting as long as we didn’t “mess up”. But we know that is not the case. Over and over in the scriptures we are taught that salvation is a once for all proposition, and that no matter what happens we will never lose it.

Understanding this, we can also understand that the “Book of Life” mentioned in Revelation 3 is NOT the book regarding salvation, but rather it is the Lamb’s Book of Life mentioned in Revelation 21:27.

In I Corinthians 3:13-15 we find that if one that does not build their life upon Christ as God intends, even

(Continued on page 4)



# The “Books” in the Scriptures—Rightly Divided



(continued from page 3)

though they are saved because they accepted Christ, they will have nothing to show for their life, **“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. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.”** Unfaithfulness to the Lord in this life will not result in the rewards of Heaven. John warns of the possibility of losing rewards due to careless and disobedient living in II John 8, **“Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward”**. No-where in the Scriptures do we find the possibility of losing the salvation that God so freely gives once Jesus has saved our soul. Salvation alone entitles one a mansion, but will not grant access to that special place that Jesus has prepared for those that were faithful to Him, **“Let not your heart be troubled: ye 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. I go to prepare a 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* ye may be also...If ye love me, keep my commandments.”** (John 14:1-3, 15). The context of Philippians 4:1-3 also shows that those that are faithful workers for the Lord are in this Lamb's Book of Life, **“Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, *my* dearly beloved. I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and *with* other my fellowlabourers, whose names *are* in the book of life.”** Consider also what the Psalmist said in Psalm 15:1-5, **“LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart. *He that* backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour. In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. *He that* sweareth to *his own* hurt, and changeth not. *He that* putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these *things* shall never be moved.”** The “tabernacle” and “holy hill” that are spoken about here are reference to this same special place in Heaven that has been reserved for those that written in this book.

Also consider Romans 8:16-17, **“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.”** Salvation will make one an heir, but only faithfulness will make one a joint-heir. The word “joint-heir” is defined as “a participant in” whereas the word “heir” is defined as a “possessor”. One can possess salvation, but that does not mean they are a participant with or for the Lord in anything.

Again keeping context in mind, let us consider another passage that causes confusion at first glance. In Revelation 13:1-8 we find, **“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as *the feet* of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. 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? And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to**

**continue forty *and* two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations. 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.”** It may appear that “the book of life of the Lamb” is the book in which the names of the faithful are written. But, though it sounds similar in name, the CONTEXT tells us otherwise. We must remember that these passages are written about events that take place during the Tribulation, a time when the saved have been already raptured into Heaven. These individuals are here on earth and worshipping the dragon (Satan); because they were not saved their names are not written in the “Book of Life”. In context, Revelation 17:8 is speaking of these same events and clears up which book is being spoken of a little more, **“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.”** These people are lost; they are not unfaithful saved people.

The biggest cause of false doctrines and heresies is a lack of “rightly dividing” the scriptures as Paul admonishes us to do in II Timothy 2:15. By simply slowing down and keeping in context who is speaking, who is being spoken to, what the time frame is, and what the occasion is, most of the troubles in understanding God's Word would be eliminated.

To conclude, let us consider just a few more verses. First, in Revelation 22:19, **“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.”** Based on everything God's Word has revealed to us so far, what book is being spoken of here? Is this the book all the saved are written into? If it is, then once again, the Bible is contradicting itself and salvation can be lost. The fact is, the only book this could be referring to is the Lamb's Book of Life: a book that one's name can be written into for faithfulness or removed for unfaithfulness.

And finally, Hebrews 12:14-17, **“Follow peace with all *men*, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble *you*, and thereby many be defiled; Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.”** Esau sold his birthright, his right to the inheritance of his father. He sold out for what amounts to a little satisfaction in this life, the pleasures of this life. By doing so, even though he tried and earnestly sought to get his inheritance back, he couldn't. Once it was gone, it was gone for good, never to be obtained again. Esau played no part in becoming a son of Isaac, but he held all the control in whether he would obtain the inheritance that could have been his. We learn from this that you and I play no part in obtaining eternal life through the salvation offered by the Lord, we simply accept what has already been done. But, we do control what we do with our lives for or against the Lord from the point of salvation on; it is our choice.

This is a lesson for those who would choose to “sell out” their inheritance or “right to the tree of life” (Rev 22:14) for the pleasures of sin for a season. You see, if we are deemed worthy of the Lord to have our names

written in the Lamb's Book of Life because of our faithfulness to Him and then we rebel and our names are removed, we will never have the chance to get that inheritance or “right” back. **“For *it is impossible* for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, 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 6:4-6). Salvation is a gift, not a “right”; God doesn't owe us salvation, we can't earn it. However, by living faithfully for the Lord we can “earn the right” to the inheritance offered within that holy city New Jerusalem. We may not know exactly when our names may be written in this book nor do we know if or when it has been removed; that is why it is so important to live each day for the Lord to the best of our abilities, because when we leave this life, we will stand before the Lord in the same condition. **“He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.”** (Revelation 22:11)

This is a lesson taken from Bro. David Tierce's second book. Bro. Dave is a Landmark Missionary Baptist pastoring one of the Lord's churches here in Oregon. If you are interested in learning more about the Scriptures and being indoctrinated, he has written two books for study purposes. The first is “Truth...According to the Scriptures”, and the second is “Truth...According to the Scriptures: Milk to Meat”.

If you are looking to further your study deeper into the Scriptures, you can contact Bro. Dave at Lam340kjb@hotmail.com for information about his books.

