

ROMANS 16:1-16

WHEN THE ROLL IS CALLED DOWN HERE!

“I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church at Cenchreae, that you may welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and help her in whatever she may need from you, for she has been a patron of many and of myself as well.

“Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in Asia. Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you.”¹

This name was Charlie Greer. I doubt that many people outside of his family remember him now. I am reasonably certain that his parents are no longer living; if they are, their hearts are undoubtedly still raw despite the passage of over forty years. He had an older brother and two younger sisters; I met one of those sisters, Roberta, this past year; I hadn't seen her since Charlie came home for the last time. She still thinks of him; the family members no doubt value the few ageing photographs in albums or hanging in cherished places on the walls. Every Veterans Day and each Memorial Day they probably go to the cemetery and place flowers on the grave, shed a few tears and think of Charlie. Frankly, I can't forget Charlie. A raw memory of Charlie forces its way into my consciousness at the most inopportune times.

The last time I saw Charlie is vividly etched in my memory. We had joined forces in Fredonia, the county seat of Wilson County Kansas. From Fredonia we rode a Continental Trailways bus to Cherryvale. In Cherryvale we caught the Missouri Pacific passenger train to Kansas City. By unspoken consent Charlie had hidden a couple of bottles of peach brandy in his luggage and I smuggled a couple of bottles of “Old Sour Breath,” and so we spent the hours tippling. We were two teenage boys on our way to war and with teenage bravado; we vainly tried to forget the threat hanging over our heads. By the time we got to Kansas City neither of us was able to form a sound opinion about much of anything; but we were still teenagers and life was sweet and we were about to enter into the service of our country and we would live forever. What would one more night matter? Who could possibly object to us having a little fun?

So we two boys from a small town in Kansas wandered the streets of the big city until well into the morning hours. I had a ticket to stay at the YMCA courtesy of the United States Marine Corps and so I invited Charlie to sleep on the floor for the remainder of the night—all three hours of it. We would then get up and report to the induction centre across the street.

Those few hours swiftly fled and soon we were entering the imposing looking building where we asked a few questions and discovered where we were supposed to go. Pausing before a stern looking United States Army sergeant, Charlie gave his name and stated that he was to report for induction. Looking down a rather long list the sergeant looked up and said, “You were supposed to be here last night, Greer. Where were you?”

Charlie stammered some reply which made no great imprint on my memory, but the rejoinder of that sergeant is stamped indelibly on my memory: “Son, you just bought a one-way ticket to Vietnam.” In retrospect, his words were more a prophecy than a statement, and the words are chilling in their impact to this day.

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Charlie grinned and waved good-bye to me and disappeared through the door behind that old sergeant while I continued on my way to the Marine Corps induction centre. Two years later, in April of 1967, Charlie came home from Vietnam. Charlie's final journey was in a metal coffin carried by six men and accompanied by a friend who had also joined the Marines, Lance Corporal Jack Fail. Two weeks before rotating home, Charlie was shot in the head by a sniper as he walked about believing himself to be secure in his own camp.

Charlie Greer—it's just a name to most people; but when viewed on line #4 of panel #17E, together with fifty-eight thousand one hundred ninety other names engraved on the black granite wall; but for me, that name evokes some of the most powerful memories imaginable. What memories flood visitors as they approach the wall laughing and chattering! Nearing the wall a strange phenomenon is observed as voices are first muted and then silenced. Other than quiet sobbing or the occasional whisper as a visitor speaks the name of a departed friend or family member, there is no sound. Those 58,191 names of dead and missing men and women are a powerful reminder of the cost of freedom and the folly of unrestrained government.

A mother and a father look at a name and they again see the faltering steps of a little child grow into the purposeful stride of young manhood. They see that young man proudly wearing the uniform of his country and they see their own dreams for him smashed by the black trimmed telegram which begins: "We regret to inform you that your son..."

A woman of sixty something, or even seventy years of age, stands before the wall and recalls the tender embraces with which her young husband comforted her as she sobbed at the thought of a thirteen-month separation. How could she make it on the money he would be able to send home? And the child which would be born in just seven months? That little one would be six months old before he or she ever saw Dad! The unknown gnawed at her and left her apprehensive. Yet he had stroked her hair, kissed her forehead and spoken just the words she needed to hear—words of purpose and resolve and a reaffirmation of his love and devotion for her, his childhood sweetheart. She still remembers the day the knock on the door startled her as she was busy with the affairs of the home and motherhood, and opening the door she saw the chaplain standing there with a captain she had never seen before. Before either could say a word she cried out, her voice rising to a scream: "No! Not him! No! No! No!"

The ageing man stands, head bowed and hand extended to the wall. A look of profound grief crosses his face and knits his brow. The insensitive observer would stare and see the tears streaming down his face as the anguished screams for a medic echo in his mind and he again cradles his best friend in his arms, watching his life blood drain out onto the jungle floor. The grieving man lays a medal—a piece of ribbon with an icon that indicates heroism at the base of the wall. In his mind, he knows he wasn't a hero, just a boy sent to perform an impossible job with inadequate support. He knows that the heroes are memorialised on that black wall.

The young woman stands before the wall, and before laying a single rose at the base of the wall she wonders what her father would say about the decisions facing her now—marriage, family, education, work—all seems so overwhelming at times. She longs to have a father tell her what she should do, a dad to give her advice about her options; but it will never be. She never knew him, but she has often heard about him as she grew up. She has even been told that she looks a lot like him and that her mannerisms remind old friends and family members of him. The way she speaks evoked strong memories for her mother and for her grandmother.

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A piece of polished black granite inscribed with names of family, friends and neighbours has become for an entire nation one of the most powerful sources of emotion. Those names speak of acts of courage and of acts of cowardice. The names are those of men and women, citizens and aliens, young and old, each alike was engaged in a conflict they could not wish, each was swept up in a great social upheaval. The names inscribed on that wall point to other unlisted names representing individuals who were equally courageous but who carried and still carry scars which will never heal—scars both visible and unseen. Always underlying the names listed is the knowledge of the hurt to millions of young Vietnamese who have no memorial.

Names can evoke powerful emotions and powerful memories, and when those names represent that which is considered precious, as do the names inscribed on this memorial, the power resident within those names can only be enhanced. There are other lists of names which hold great significance for us as citizens of one of the nations of this dying world. These other lists speak of privilege and responsibility.

Along with most of my neighbours I travel to a local school, church or community hall. We arrive individually and in little knots throughout the day. Arrive at the wrong time and your wait may be extended; at other times you will be able to walk right in, march up to the table and obtain your materials. Seated behind the table is one of your neighbours who will ask your name and verify that you are listed on the master list. You may find it necessary to produce your registration card or two pieces of mail in the event the clerk seated before you is somewhat nervous or a novice. In a ritual as old as democracy itself the citizenry is participating in the selection of those who will direct the affairs of the municipality, of the province or of the nation.

Not everyone living in the community will be permitted to cast a ballot; only those enrolled on the voters list are permitted to vote. There are rules for being listed on the voters' list. You must be a member of the community, you must be a citizen—the privilege is not automatic. Though many non-citizens are graciously permitted to live among us, even to benefit from the decisions our governments make, they are not permitted the great privilege of determining the direction government will proceed during the coming term.

From the voter's list which speaks of the privilege of participating in the democratic process is drawn another vital list which speaks of responsibility. Privilege always leads to responsibility and the responsibility imposed on voters is that they must participate in administration of justice. In a procedure as old as British jurisprudence the names of voters are set down on a list and those so listed are subject to random selection as potential jurors. Gathered in a courtroom, that large body of men and women—known as the jury pool—listen to detailed instructions from a sheriff. Then they hear the judge describe the cases which will be heard. He gives an indication of the length of time the participating lawyers estimate they will need to present their respective cases. Without further delay juries are empanelled from that list of citizens.

It is a privilege to vote, to participate in the selection of those directing affairs of state and matters of civic need. Only those meeting the requirements of citizenship may participate in that act. Balancing the privilege is the awesome responsibility of participating in the administration of justice through hearing legal arguments and making decisions based upon those arguments. Again, the responsibility is incumbent upon those who are members of the society and citizens of the community, of the province, of the nation.

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Surely we are aware that names are significant. John closes his third letter with this admonition, “Greet the friends, each by name” [3 JOHN 15]. Names can evoke intense emotions, feelings of pride and sorrow and determination. Names remind us of privilege restricted to those meeting the requirements to be numbered among those listed. Likewise, names, when listed to remind us of privilege also speak of responsibility to be borne by those so privileged.

Throughout the Word of God are found lists of names. Beginning in the Old Testament we read the lists giving us the names of the descendants of Cain, the descendants of Adam, the descendants of Shem, Ham and Japheth. Later we read the names of Esau’s descendants and a list of the rulers of Edom. Then we discover a list of the descendants of Israel. Each list is more vital than we dare imagine as they lay the foundation for events yet to be detailed as the Word is unfolded. The lists are only the beginning as they continue to appear and are expanded throughout the remainder of the books of the Old Testament, culminating in the list which gives the lineage of Jesus, who is the Christ.

As Paul concludes the letter to the Church in Rome he creates one additional list of names. The casual reader may be tempted to consider such lists a nuisance to be endured or even skipped over as he or she reads through the Word of God. However, there is significance to the lists provided in the Word of God significance exceeding anything we may ascribe to all other lists developed by mankind. The list given in this Roman letter evokes powerful emotions, speaks of privilege beyond all expectation and confers awesome responsibility upon those listed.

Priscilla, Aquila, Epaphroditus, Mary, Andronicus and Junia—mostly strange sounds in our ears, each name refers to a man or woman who was enrolled as a member of the saints in Rome. Few of these individuals were recognized as having greater significance than fellow members, nor would they be known as people of importance now. Their names did not cause the powerful of the ancient world to tremble or pause to reflect on who they were. Likewise, the names of the members of this church, or of any congregation of the faithful, are not likely to be recognized far beyond the immediate boundaries of the assembly. Neither do the names of these members cause many to reflect on who they may be; yet each evokes powerful emotion in Heaven itself.

When one has been born from above and into the Kingdom of Heaven we are informed that there is more rejoicing in heaven over that one sinner who has repented than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent [see LUKE 15:7]. The Spirit of God places those born from above in the congregation He Himself chooses; and though the membership rolls of the churches of this world are not a perfect reflection of those united in the Church of the Firstborn [cf. HEBREWS 12:23], it is assuredly anticipated that among those so listed will be included the names of the members of that heavenly band.

Churches are not perfect; someone has observed that if you find a perfect church do not join it because it will no longer be perfect. We know from experience and from the teaching of Christ Himself that mixed with the good seed of the Kingdom are weeds planted by the enemy [see MATTHEW 13:24-30]. Even were it not for the weeds sprouting along with the wheat, those members who are truly born from above are often immature. The members of a given church reflect a range of maturity from new-born to elders, and only with maturity do Christians cease from many of their childish ways. Consequently, length of membership is not the sole criterion for determining maturity. Some who have been professing believers for a long time are the most immature, and some who are relatively young in the Faith are the most mature.

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Included in the roll of members of any church are names representing people of exceptional character and courage—names that elicit deep emotions. I somehow imagine that Paul stifled a sob from time-to-time as he dictated the closing greetings. Priscilla and Aquila were husband and wife who had at some point risked their lives for the Apostle. We don't know the particular instance, but it must have occurred during the time he ministered in Corinth. Perhaps they had in some way placed their lives on the line when he was put out of the synagogue; perhaps Paul is referring to the peril of sea travel when they had journeyed with him to Ephesus. In some way they had risked all for the cause of Christ and for His servant. Could the Apostle remember them without feeling deepest gratitude for such loyalty and friendship?

Epaenetus was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia, and now he was in Rome serving among the saints in that great city. Recalling his name, I imagine the aged Apostle held this saint in highest esteem. The firstfruits of any labour in the Faith that results in a harvest are held in a special memory. What pressures Epaenetus must have experienced! How the trials he faced must have called again and again for boldness! What determination must have impelled him to continue faithful in the cause of the Master despite intense opposition!

Paul mentions a woman named Mary, distinguished for her labours on behalf of the saints in Rome. We can readily imagine that this woman perhaps served in some capacity in Paul's stead. The Apostle recalled her with fondness.

Andronicus and Junia were perhaps a husband and wife team. During one of his multiplied imprisonments, they appear to have shared incarceration with the Apostle. Can we suppose that Paul had shared such hardship as imprisonment without forging a powerful bond? These two were distinguished in the estimate of all the Apostles. We can readily imagine that they were part of a dedicated band of servants of Christ who hazarding their lives had extended the Kingdom of God beyond safe boundaries and into all the world.

Ampliatius was loved in the Lord. Urbanus was a fellow worker in Christ and Stachys was given the title of a dear friend of the Apostle. Could the Apostle recall Apelles without being deeply moved at the knowledge that he had been tested and approved in Christ? The members of the household of Aristobulus were also known to the Apostle and they appear to have been held in high esteem by the aged saint. Herodion was a relative of Paul; He was perhaps one of those converted under Stephen's preaching while in attendance at the Synagogue of the Freedmen [cf. [ACTS 6:9](#)]. Stephen's effective ministry so enraged Saul that he engineered and approved of the murder of that godly deacon, the first martyr for Christ. How the Apostle must have felt gratitude that this relative still accepted him! How he must have felt with each memory deep sorrow at his participation in the death of that good man! How he must have regretted the rage which had driven him to act as a wild boar in the vineyard of the Lord!

Among the household of Narcissus were some in the Lord whom the Apostle knew and held dear. Tryphaena and Tryphosa were women who worked hard in the Lord; therefore, they were special to the hard-working Apostle. Persis was another woman who worked very hard in the Lord, and was thus held dear by the aged Apostle. Rufus was said to be chosen in the Lord, and his mother had apparently treated Paul as though he was a son. How could he remember this mother and son without deep feelings of love and gratitude? Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, Philologus, Julia, Nereus and his sister, Olympas—to us, simply more names, but each one known to Paul and held in sufficient esteem to merit personal greetings.

John would write much later: “Greet the friends, each by name” [3 JOHN 15]. Among the reasons for such a statement is the fact that the membership of your church is comprised of men and women who are dearer than anyone dare imagine. They are not simply individuals who work at various tasks and occasionally meet to participate in a liturgy; the members of the church are men and women who share the most intimate of all human experiences—worship.

These people are family and they thus speak of one another as brothers and sisters. The titles are neither superfluous nor affected, nor must we ever permit them to become trite. We accept one another as dearly loved children of a common Father through new birth in the Spirit. This does not mean that we have no differences or that we have no conflicts; it does mean that overarching every relationship is the knowledge that God is our Father and that He is in control of our lives individually and collectively. Friends and family are to be greeted by name because their name carries something of the knowledge of each as an individual.

Ask yourself, what do you know of your fellow worshipers? I don’t mean by that, what do you know superficially about their likes or dislikes, their habits or their preferences; I mean, what do you know about their individual struggles and their personal victories? Can you name the greatest sorrow of the one sitting closest to you? Do you share in that grief, holding that brother or that sister in loving prayer before the Throne of the Great King? Can you name the greatest victory of any given member of the Body? Did you share in that victory? How intimately has your life been affected by the life of each member of this congregation? What changes have taken place in your life because of each member of the assembly? It is only because we have been trained to cloister ourselves in straitened places of our own making, thinking we are rugged individualists, that we know so little about one another.

What would happen if we actually began to pray for one another—praying knowledgeably, with intensity and persistently? How would our lives be changed if we dared strip away the masks hiding our true selves and began to live boldly for Christ’s sake? What would happen if we were to dare trust one another as children of the Living God, treating one another with dignity and refusing to take advantage of one another?

I confess that I am deeply concerned for the churches in the closing days of this Age of Grace. Increasingly I see the development of a strange, unbiblical “lone ranger” type of Christianity. With our lips, we Christians profess deepest love for one another, even as we isolate ourselves from one another and hide our lives through donning masks of our own making. Do we not realise that such masks are the height of hypocrisy, for a hypocrite is but someone wearing a mask? When I hide from others I am an actor playing out a role which is not me.

Should a brother or sister be in distress we are silent, giving every appearance of unconcern for their welfare either physically or spiritually. Are we truly unaffected by their grief? Should our brothers or sisters be disgraced or shamed in some manner, fellow Christians seem to convey an attitude which fairly shouts a lack of concern, or worse still an attitude which indicates our conviction that they have only received just dues. Dear people, the Word of God does not permit us to hold such *laissez faire* attitudes toward members of our spiritual family. Consider the teaching of the Word.

“Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor... Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep” [ROMANS 12:10, 15].

“Let brotherly love continue” [HEBREWS 13:1].

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Note the admonition from God's Word: "Love one another earnestly from a pure heart" [1 PETER 1:22]. Dear saints, love is not passive—it is active, daring to intervene when necessary and for the sake of fellow saints and for the cause of Christ. Love is willing to get its hands dirty and love dares risk relationships because the one loved is valuable and dear. Recall James' query of those who claim this family relationship in Christ? "What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and filled,' without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that" [JAMES 2:14-16]? I urge us to love one another, for we are members of the divine family. We have confessed one Lord, embraced one faith, submitted to one baptism, and together you call on one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all [see EPHESIANS 4:5, 6].

The names of those enrolled as members of this particular assembly are just names ... until we recall the love associated with each one. Members of this Body have labored in prayer for this Pastor as one whom God sent to build up His holy people; and though the pastor cannot have fully realised the toil of those who labored in prayer, yet he benefited from it, as has each one receiving his ministry. You loved and prayed for former pastors in churches where you may have served, just as you are praying for me as I fulfil my responsibilities here. In those bygone years, you loved those whom God had sent and you cannot retract the prayers presented in love before the Lord, nor would those pastors retract their prayers for you in your times of distress.

Members of this Body have grieved with one another; and though we could not have understood the sorrows of others, we were nevertheless comforted through the shared mourning. Members of this Body have rejoiced with one another in times of victory; and through sharing, our joy was heightened. There is not a sorrow that you have experienced but that fellow members felt your grief; there is not a valley you have traversed but that others within the Body have walked with you in their spirit. There is not a joy you have felt but that others within the Body rejoiced with you and exulted in your victory.

Never again may we take for granted the roll of names, and more importantly, the lives of each individual who shares this common Faith. Never again may I casually regard the individuals represented within this congregation. Each one is precious to Christ—He gave His life for each, calling each one by His grace. Each one is precious to me because of Christ's purchase and because of shared lives.

There is yet a final list of blessed names significant beyond anything we dare imagine. I speak of the names written in the Lamb's Book of life. John was granted the unique privilege of seeing the New Jerusalem, the Holy City, coming down out of Heaven. Writing of that city and of the inhabitants of those blessed precincts, the aged exile wrote, "I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. They will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. But nothing unclean will ever enter it, nor anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life" [REVELATION 21:22-27]. Admission to this eternal venue is restricted, only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life shall enter into that blessed abode.

On this roll are listed the names of the saints of all the ages, the redeemed from every land who spoke many languages and dialects and who lived in every conceivable condition while occupying every imaginable social strata. These are those of whom the author of Hebrews wrote. “You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.” [HEBREWS 12:22-24]. Those listed in the Lamb’s Book of Life have an “inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled and unfading, kept in heaven” [1 PETER 1:4].

Together with the saints who have gone before, these enumerated on this heavenly list are commended for their faith. This roll is the list of names of those who have been made perfect by the grace of and through the redeeming power of God our Saviour. The names listed on this heavenly roll may have had their names listed on a stele somewhere because they gave their lives in service to their country, or they may have been unknown to all save a few individuals. They may have been citizens entitled to vote in one of the nations of this world, or they may have lived out their time on this earth as slaves without privilege or rights. They were no doubt members of an assembly of believers somewhere during the days of their earthly labours and they likely invested their lives in service to God and to their fellow saints as they exercised the gifts He had entrusted to them. They are named in Heaven itself, however, on one basis only—the merits of Christ Jesus. Neither service to country, sacrifice—even of their life, nor membership in a church, would suffice to obtain an entry on the pages of this unique ledger.

When John wrote his apocalyptic vision, you will remember that he dedicated the letter to Jesus Christ, “who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and has made us a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever” [REVELATION 1:5,6]. How revealing are the words of the Apostle’s dedication! Those loved by Jesus are individuals who have been freed from their sins by His shed blood. Those who have been freed by the blood of Christ are people who have been made into a kingdom and made to be priests to serve Him and His God forever. Those who have been made into a kingdom are saints who are listed on the divine roll of the redeemed.

All mankind is divided into two categories—redeemed and lost. REVELATION 22:14, 15 reveals the division. “Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.” Those enrolled on the divine register of the redeemed are those fitted for that fair city by the work of God through His indwelling Spirit. Purified through God’s gracious work, they have the right to enter the holy city. By implication, those not enrolled in the divine register of the redeemed are considered as being those who would spoil fair heaven itself, being those who love and practice what is contrary to the will of God.

The roll is being written even now; its reality is revealed through the lives of men and women made whole by the grace of God and through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. Though not yet perfect, these who have believed are even now being conformed to the likeness of God’s Son. Known to God, they are recognised by the reflection of His glory in their lives, and one day the roll will be called down here. Paul wrote of that day on several occasions.

One of the best known examples of Paul's writing about that day is the passage which is recorded in **1 THESSALONIANS 4:14-17**. "Since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord."

Assembled before the Bema Seat from which Christ shall judge His own, in the lives of these blessed souls shall be revealed the beauty that flows from God's perfecting grace. They shall be rewarded for all that they have done to the glory of God. God shall be glorified in them, for they are His precious jewels assembled to the praise of His glory. Then shall Christ receive honour and praise and glory and majesty forever and ever. Amen.

There is another roll from which I would spare you; I speak of the roll of the damned. The lost shall also one day stand before a throne; however, there will be no commendation of those before this throne. It is a throne before the lost must stand to receive that awful sentence of eternal separation and damnation. The Apostle John saw that throne and wrote of it in **REVELATION 20:11-15**. "I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."

Because this thought does not fit your theology is no reason to refuse to accept that God gives it as an expression of mercy. If you will but heed the warning now, there is no need to be condemned. You may have your name enrolled on the register of the blessed through submission to the Risen Lord of Glory. This is what you must do: Confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. God's Word promises that it is with your heart that one believes and is justified, and it is with one's mouth that an individual confesses and is saved. We are promised in Scripture, "Anyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame." It is also written that there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him. Again, the Word of God promises all, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." [see **ROMANS 10:9-13**]. I would that each one listening to this message would say today, "By God's grace I take Jesus as my Saviour. I submit to Him as Master of my life. By the mercies of God I receive His salvation now." May God bless you with saving faith, with redeeming grace, as you heed the Gospel call now. Amen.