



**Prayer of Thanksgiving:** that Jesus is in full control. He has the destiny of humanity in his loving hands. **“On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.” (Re 19:16 ESV)**

Please do not forget to pray for all the shut-ins and isolated brothers and sisters in our congregations Mrs. Jack and C. Campbell (Fredericton) and J. Steffes (Caribou, Me), Mr. Ross Bathurst, P. Ward (Saint John) and others.

**Open Hand Food Bank – Moncton** - is in need of grocery plastic bags to give out food to those in need. If you are interested in donating your unused grocery bags, you can bring them to church and someone will collect them and bring them over. Those who want to bring food to give to the **Open Food Bank** may do so by bringing to church and giving it to **Michael M.** of the Moncton congregation.

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**ACTIVITIES FOR THE MONTH OF November 2018**

Times of worship services: **Moncton** – 10:30 AM every Sunday

In **Saint John**, worship services will be December 9 and 23

**Communion**- on the second and fourth Sunday of the month.

**Address: Moncton**—70 King St. —Sage building;

**Saint John**—50 Newport Cres., Portland United church.

The Moncton congregation of GCI is invited to the home of Mr. and Mrs. Vautour for supper and a social on Friday December 14. We will supper around 6:30 p.m.

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**The good news of the gospel is a message to be shared with others.** Please pray that God will give us the love and wisdom to be able to share this message with others in a loving, clear and confident matter as we participate in his missional work on the earth in our generation.

**“5 ¶ Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. 6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.” (Col 4:5-6 ESV)**

**Please pray** that God will put an end to the senseless violence happening in North America continent and other parts of the world.

**Pray that we will see the good works that God has prepared for us in advance** so that we can enthusiastically participate in the on-going work He is doing now on this earth in bringing people in relationship with him in Jesus by the Holy Spirit.

**Please pray, as per Jesus instructions, the disciples prayer, “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.**

**10 Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt 6:9-10)** as our world is suffering so much and in need of complete restoration by the King of kings, Jesus. As we are his royal priesthood, let us proclaim the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light, as we are instructed in 1 Peter 2.

**Pray for the world and for all people:** we live in a world that does not know the way to peace. Important to pray as we are instructed by the apostle Paul — **“1 ¶ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. 3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior,” (1Ti 2:1-3 ESV)**

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## BIBLICAL QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

(From <http://thesurprisinggodblog.gci.org>)

By Ted Johnston

In exploring incarnational, Trinitarian theology, questions arise about specific passages of Scripture.

### Revelation 13:8; 17:8

**13:8 All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast-- all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.**

**17:8 The beast, which you saw, once was, now is not, and will come up out of the Abyss and go to his destruction. The inhabitants of the earth whose names have not been written in the book of life from the creation of the world will be astonished when they see the beast, because he once was, now is not, and yet will come.**

### How is it that some names are missing from the "book of life" if all humanity is included in God's reconciling love through Jesus?

We need to consider the literary context of these two statements in Revelation. John writes using a literary genre (style) known as *apocalyptic*. This genre, which was commonly used by Jewish writers in John's day, is highly symbolic. There is not a literal "book of life." The "book of life" is a figure of speech, a symbolic way of referring to those who are in allegiance with the Lamb. These verses in Revelation refer to people who reject the new life that Christ has already secured for them.

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**[Daniel 12:2](#) Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.**

### If all are included and forgiven, why this prophecy about some receiving "everlasting contempt"?

Note a similar statement in [2 Thessalonians 1:6-9](#): "God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power."

Both of these passages refer to the final judgment when Jesus is "revealed" (sometimes referred to as the 'Second Coming' or Jesus' 'return in glory'). This is the time when all humans will see clearly who Jesus is and thus who they are in union with Jesus. This 'revealing' presents a choice—will they say "yes" to their inclusion in Christ, or will they say "no"?

This decision neither creates nor destroys their inclusion, but it does determine their attitude toward it—whether they will accept God's love for them and enter the joy of the Lord, or continue in alienation and frustration (and thus in shame and everlasting contempt and destruction). The destruction is a self-destruction as they refuse the purpose for which they have been made, and the redemption that has already been given to them.

In the Judgment, everyone will face Jesus, the Judge who died for all, and they will have to decide whether they will trust him. Those who trust their Savior take part in the joy of the life God has given them in Christ. Those who reject him continue in their hostility and the hell that goes with it.

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### [Matthew 6:14-15](#)

**14 "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins."**

### Does this statement from Jesus contradict the key teaching of Trinitarian, incarnational theology that God, in Christ, has forgiven all people?

The answer is no. This statement is part of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (which spans Matthew chapters 5-7). In this sermon, Jesus is telling his disciples about the nature of life in his kingdom, which means life with him under God's rule. Because Jesus is here, the kingdom is now present. And what Jesus describes in this sermon is what his followers will experience in his presence - how he thinks about all things, and how he relates both to God and to people. This experience of Jesus' life and love occurs now, in this world, but comes to fullness in the age yet to come.

In the [Matthew 6:14-15](#) part of his sermon, Jesus mentions the subject of forgiveness in the midst of teaching about prayer. A superficial reading of this statement might lead one to conclude that what we do (or do not do) conditions the Father's desire to forgive us. However, what we learn in the totality of this sermon, and indeed from Jesus' entire ministry, is that the Father's forgiveness toward us is NOT conditioned upon us (our behavior or our attitude).

Note that Jesus' statement is given in the form of a warning. He warns his followers against succumbing to the temptation to resist God's unconditional forgiveness. If they do so, they will fail to experience the benefits of that forgiveness in their hearts and lives. Jesus' point is that if we cling to a heart of unforgiveness - harboring ill will toward others, rather than seeking reconciliation through forgiveness - the fact of our unforgiveness will block our own reception (experiencing) of God's forgiveness. *In short, hearts closed toward one's neighbor are also closed toward God.*

However (and this is a vital point derived from the whole of Scripture), our unwillingness (or inability) to forgive others does not change the Father's mind about us. His mind toward us is set, conditioned only by the finished work of Jesus on our behalf. God, in Christ, has made up his mind once and for all about us. In Christ, he has forgiven us all.

In the light of this larger faith context, Jesus' statement cannot be interpreted to mean that God doles out forgiveness toward us in some sort of 'tit for tat' manner as though he is looking for an excuse to not forgive us. Jesus' warning must be understood to be *descriptive* rather than *proscriptive*. The consequence contained in the warning (not being forgiven), is not related to God's action but to our own. Jesus is giving a warning *description* of what happens within the heart of an unforgiving person - they do not receive (personally experience) the forgiveness that God has extended to all people in Christ. But whether we receive that forgiveness or somehow manage to refuse it, God remains toward us our "heavenly Father" because Jesus remains our heavenly Brother.

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[Matthew 7:13-14; 21-23](#)

**13 "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. 14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.**

**21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"**

**Is Jesus saying in this passage that most people are doomed to destruction? How can all be included, yet Jesus say of some that he never knew them?**

In vv13-14, Jesus is speaking of this life now—on this side of the general resurrection. In this day, most are living on the “broad road” of destruction. Though they are included in Christ, they live as if they were not. Only the “few” have in this time embraced the truth that is in Jesus—and it is he who is “the narrow gate.”

In vv21-23, Jesus is addressing those who have done miracles, and in doing so have deceived many. They claim to know Jesus, and though Jesus obviously knows them (in his divinity, he is omniscient!), he does not see himself in them with regard to their actual faith or behavior, and so he proclaims, “I never knew you.”

**GCI principle website and Moncton Websites—[www.gci.org](http://www.gci.org), [www.worshipim.ca](http://www.worshipim.ca), [www.facebook.com/GCIMoncton](https://www.facebook.com/GCIMoncton); For a wealth of helpful articles about God, grace and his plan for salvation, who we are, etc., please see the GCI.org website. *Contact Information: Pastor's contact information: email—[evautour47@outlook.com](mailto:evautour47@outlook.com)***