

## Closing the Books

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by Wayne Goff

If we live a few more hours, then we will close the books on another year. Two thousand and twelve will be over, and two thousand and thirteen will start a new year for all of us.

Before we cast this past year aside, let us contemplate any wrongs we may have committed, and repent and pray that they might be forgiven! God does not forget sins which have gone *unrepented*! It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God (Heb. 10:31), and He will exact vengeance on sinful men one day (Heb. 10:30)! On the other hand, God will freely forgive all our sins if only we will repent of them, confess them, and pray for His forgiveness! (1 Jn. 1:7-9).

### Books Were Opened!

In Revelation 20, John saw a vision of heaven in which “books” were opened and men “were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works” (v. 12). God keeps perfect record books of all the deeds of men. The *only deeds* removed from those books are the ones forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ (Heb. 8:12). Men who try to **forget** and **ignore** their sinful deeds will find out that God remembers them and will punish accordingly. Dear reader, have all your past sins been washed away by the blood of Jesus Christ? If so, then it is well with your soul. If not, then today would be the day to repent, confess and pray.

God also remembers the righteous deeds of His saints. When we have shown kindness and longsuffering, God remembers. When we give a cup of cold water, or a coat to the naked, or food to the hungry, God remembers. All that we have done in obedience to the Gospel, God remembers. The apostle Paul said that death for him was “gain” (Phil. 1:21). He would receive the “crown of righteousness” (2 Tim. 4:8) which God had promised to give Him in Jesus.

### Some Didn't Make It!

Some notable deaths in this past year include Jack Klugman (90), Robert Bork (85), Daniel Inouye (88), Jovan Belcher (25), Rick Majerus (64), Zig Ziglar (86), Larry Hagman (81), George McGovern (90), Gary Collins (74), Andy Williams (84), Steve Sabol (69), Michael Clarke Duncan (54), Sun Myung Moon (92), Hal David (91), Neil Armstrong (82), Sally Ride (61), Phyllis Diller (95), Helen Gurley Brown (90), Thomas Kinkade (54), Marvin Hamlisch (68), Gore Vidal (86), Earl Scruggs (88), Stephen R. Covey (79), Dick Clark (82), Andy Griffith (86), Frank Cady (96), Bob Welch (66), Richard Dawson (79), Donna Summer (63), Whitney Houston (48), and Davy Jones (66).

In addition to these, think of the thousands and thousands who died this past year virtually unknown, but important and loved by their families. Some were Christians who lived godly lives and served the Lord to the best of their ability. All of these will meet God some day in judgment -- and **all too soon**, you and I will be where they are now.

### Today Is The Day!

It is not as important **how** one dies, or **how old** one is when he dies, as it is whether or not one dies faithful to God. So many people live as though they will never die; rarely giving thought to the eternal life to come. But the wise give much forethought and preparation to that inevitable day (Eccl. 7:2).

May you have the *sense of urgency* necessary to save your eternal soul. We do not know what tomorrow will bring (James 4:14), so we must obey Jesus today (2 Cor. 6:2). Are you ready? It is appointed unto all once to die, and after that, the judgment (Heb. 9:27).

Do not fall into the trap of procrastination. Many have died unprepared while they thought, “Oh, this couldn't happen to me!” But it did.