

A Bag, A Book, and A Bottle

God takes great care to comfort his people in their many trials and sorrows in this world. One of the goals which he commands his preachers to have is the comfort of his people. He says, *"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people."* Here are three things described in the Word of God that should be of great comfort to every believer.

God has made **A BAG FOR OUR SINS**. Job said, *"My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity."* In ancient times when men died at sea their bodies were placed in a weighted bag which was sewn together and sealed. Then they were cast into the depths of the sea. That is what God has done with our sins. They are cast *"into the depths of the sea."* When Christ died for our sins which were imputed to him he put them all away. They were buried in the sea of God's infinite forgiveness, put away never to be brought up again. God almighty will never charge us with sin, impute sin to us, remember our sins against us, or treat us any less graciously because of our sin. That is the forgiveness of God! *"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."*

The Lord has written **A BOOK FOR OUR NAMES**. Take heart child of God. Your name is written in the book of God! Before the worlds were made the Lord God inscribed the names of his elect in the Lamb's book of life. In that book God has recorded, not only the names of the chosen heirs of heaven, but also all things pertaining to them. *"In the book all my members were written."* The Lamb's book of life is the book of God's eternal purpose of grace, predestination, and election. The fact that our names are written in that book means that our salvation is a matter of absolute certainty and that all things work together for our good by God's arrangement to secure our predestined end, which is perfect conformity to Christ. When our Lord says, *"Rejoice because your names are written in heaven,"* he is telling us that we have nothing to fear. All is well with those whose names are written in heaven.

Moreover, the Lord God keeps **A BOTTLE FOR OUR TEARS**. *"Thou tellest all my*

wonderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?...This I know; for God is for me." It was customary at ancient Egyptian funerals for mourners to have a small cloth or sponge to wipe away their tears. Then they were squeezed into a small vial, a tear bottle, and placed in the tomb with the dead, symbolizing the care the mourners had for the one who had died. Even so, the Lord our God, our heavenly Father, our almighty Savior, and our holy Comforter tenderly cares for us. In all our afflictions he is afflicted. We are the very apple of his eye.

Could anything be more comforting in this world of sin, sorrow, and death? The Lord our God has put our sins in a bag and buried them, written our names in a book to remember them, and placed our tears in a bottle to show his tender care for us.

—Pastor Don Fortner