

I will be sending the very final manuscript of my book Heaven, Hell, and the Invention of the Afterlife off to my editor at Simon & Schuster tomorrow (I still don't know what the actual title will be). As is always the case, it has been a very long haul, and I want to explain how publishing a trade book like this for a general audience "works" and "happens" since most people who've never done it have no idea, or rather, have completely wrong ideas.

But before doing that I need some help so I don't have egg on my face. One of my many, many faults as a human being is that I don't keep good enough records of really important information. Just ask my tax person.

As most of you know, in the summer, after writing the first draft, I asked members of the blog if they would be interested in making a donation in order to have the right to read the book in manuscript and make suggestions for improvement. A number of people responded that yes, they would love to do that. I sent them each the manuscript, they read it, and they returned comments to me. I found this extremely helpful.

Now I am writing the Acknowledgments for the book and obviously want to thank everyone who has helped - the editorial staff at Simon & Schuster, the scholars who are experts in one area or another who read part or all of the book, and, of course, these blog members. But I need to make sure that I haven't left anyone off the list! I know, it's pathetic - there should be no issue here. But just to make sure, these are the names I have. If anyone is NOT on the list who needs to be, please let me know ASAP. Apologies for this!

The names I have are: Will Ballard, David Ballinger, Alan Bishop, Paul, Ellis, Rob Gilbert, Steve Otteson, Bobby Ross, and Steve Sutter. Anyone else? (If so, I definitely read and used your comments. I just inadvertently didn't keep good records. Sorry. Just send me an email).

Now, some people may wonder why I'm sending the manuscript in on January 24 when I finished writing the book in August. Ha! Good question. But this is not strange, it is typical.

Writing a book is a long process, and you might think that when you're done writing it, you're simply done, and can send the thing in to be published in a few months. No, no, no! Would that it **were** that simple.

When I finished the draft over the summer ...

The rest of this post is for blog members only. You too can be among this elite corps, the chosen people! Join! It won't cost much, you'll learn so much your family won't be able to stand it, and you'll be helping good charities!

You need to be logged in to see this part of the content. Please [Login](#) to access.



[On Being Just a Textual Critic](#)

[If Jesus Wasn't God, Was He Necessarily Either a Calloused Liar or a Raving Lunatic?](#)