



He's Not In the Book

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As a child, my favorite Disney movie was *Winnie the Pooh*, the adventures of the cuddly bear "stuffed with fluff," based on the classic books by A.A Milne. One of the stories in the film tells of the time Pooh gets stuck in the entrance to Rabbit's burrow because he's had too much to eat. As they try to figure out what to do, a new critter appears - Gopher. Gopher has a habit of whistling out his consonants and seeks to solve digging problems with extreme tools like dynamite.

There is one witty line, though, which Gopher consistently utters. Whenever the chatty mammal leaves the scene his parting words are, "Remember, I'm not in the book." As a kid, I always took this to mean he's not in the phonebook (yes those were still around then) and you could only get in touch with him if he gave you a business card. It wasn't until many years later that I realized the pun. Gopher is **NOT** one of A.A. Milne's characters, and therefore, is not in the book. His existence in the story of Winnie the Pooh only happens because someone with creative authority chose to put him there.

The Bible tells the story of God's interaction with mankind. In its pages we follow, specifically, the narrative of his redemptive work through Jesus to rescue lost humanity from condemning sin. These words were composed within the limited scope of roughly 1,500 years of human history. Like Gopher, you and I are not technically "in the book," and thus one might think, not a part of the story. However, the story of Christ's redemptive work did not stop with the completion of Scripture.

The Bible has been preserved to show people in all eras that God's plan is for this salvation story to continue to the end of time. Jesus prayed in John 17:20-21, "I do not ask for these only, **but also for those who will believe in me through their word**, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."

When we submit to the Lordship of Jesus through our obedient faith, something wonderful happens. We are added to the story! Paul describes it in Colossians 1:13-14, "He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and **transferred** us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins."

Walt Disney added Gopher to A.A. Milne's characters because he had been given the creative license to do so. We can be added to the salvation story of Jesus because God has the authority as the author to do so. What a joy it is to know when you read your Bible, the book may be finished, but the story is not over.