

An Argument in Eternity

Matthew 7:21-23

August 14, 2005

I. A Distinction

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

- It should be noted that it is Jesus that makes this distinction.
- There can be no mistake.
- Oh if we could get our world to understand this.
- If we could get church members.

A. Entrance is Not By Man's Words (Not Confession, Not Oratory)

- The name Jesus is cheaply used today.
- To some it is a word of profanity.
- To some it is a word of magic.
- They say, "Lord, Lord"
- Jesus name is thrown around by everyone from Dolly Parton to Bill Clinton.
- You can take your hat off for the opening prayer at a Clemson game, and even say amen at the end of it, but that is no sign that you have a sure home for eternity!
- The scriptures record many who use this appeal to the Lord's name.
- Their words are the same as the five foolish virgins, and they are just as doomed!

Matthew 25:11-12 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. [12] But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

- But it is not by man's words that we enter into Heaven.
- Consider a little story tucked away in the 19th chapter of Acts:

Acts 19:13-17 Then certain of the vagabond [NOTE: wandering] Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. 14 And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? 16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. 17 And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.

B. But Entrance is By God's Will (But Conformity, But Obedience)

Mark 7:6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.

Titus 1:16 They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

1 John 3:18 My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

Luke 6:46 And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

Romans 2:13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

II. A Delusion (22A)

22 Many will say to me in that day

2447. Pentium Cover-Up Hurts July 1994

Intel learned that its Pentium processing chip had a flaw. The chip would occasionally give wrong answers for division problems using large numbers.

Intel believed this was a minor flaw, something they felt would affect the average user once every twenty-seven thousand years. So Intel decided not to make known the flaw and for months continued to promote and sell the flawed computer chip.

But by Thanksgiving word of the flaw began circulating among computer users. Intel finally acknowledged the problem, but tried to downplay its significance. They refused to exchange the flawed chip except in special circumstances.

Only when IBM decided to stop selling computers with a Pentium chip did Intel back down, and agree to exchange the chip when anyone requested.

NOTE: I remember the day that a tech came to my home to replace my chip! Paul Sirois has that computer today!

The Pentium affair was a huge black eye on the image of the company, less because their chip had a flaw, and more because they tried to cover it up.

-Craig Brian Larson

-Encyclopedia of 15,000 Illustration

- It is bad when a trusted company deceives us!
- But oh how tragic when we deceive ourselves!

22 Many will say to me in that day

A. The Enumeration

“many”

NOTE: How many is this. 1 in 12 apostles were lost, but in the parable of the sower, 75% seem to be lost!

Matthew 7:13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

B. The Event

Revelation 20:11-12 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

HUMOR: Knot in de plank will show through de whitewash. (American Negro Proverb)

III. A Debate

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

A. Their Argument

“Lord, Lord, have we not ...”

- Obviously they do not agree with whatever Jesus has just told them.
- I picture a long line, and these have had time to figure out that nothing good is going to come for anyone here.
- They prepare their argument while waiting their turn.

B. Their Appeals

1. An Appeal to Their Exclamation - We have preached for you, Lord.

- In any church, it is the exception that will show up for a church-wide visitation.
- Yet here we have men who have spoken for Christ.
- And they are lost!
- How the pew warmer should tremble at this word.

2. An Appeal to Their Exorcism

- Jesus does not refute the CONTENT of what they say.
- I wonder how many of his demons Satan will allow to be moved around so that HIS preachers can put on a show!
- But they are lost!

QUOTE: The problem is that they cast devils out of many, but left the devil in one . . . themselves.

3. An Appeal to Their Efforts

- Listen to their adjectives: “many” and “wonderful.”
 - a. Abundant - “many”
 - b. Amazing - “wonderful” (That which caused others to marvel and to praise them!)

- No doubt there is widow ministry, orphan ministry, needy people ministry.
- But friends, a crock pot delivered does not deliver your SOUL from HELL!
- Jesus did not argue against their facts.
- But they had focused on the wrong facts!

APPLY: The work of the church is not to be a club! We have a mission! To save lost souls!
And we need to make certain that our own is saved!

IV. A Declaration

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you:

A. The Time of His Declaration

“Then”

- We remind you that we are at the Great White Throne Judgement.
- Jesus has heard all their pleas, and the ruling is against them.
- There is no appeal.
- The judgement will stand.
- The punishment will be immediately effective.
- The sentence will not be commuted, there will be no parol.

B. The Trustworthiness of This Declaration

“I”

THE STORY: On August 1, 2005, Thomas Doswell was released from prison after serving 19 years for a crime he didn't commit. He was convicted in 1986 of rape, criminal attempt, simple assault, terroristic threats, and unlawful restraint. Postconviction DNA testing in 2005 conclusively proved that Doswell could not have been the man that committed this crime.

- That is an awful mistake and an awful miscarriage of judgement.
- Such will not happen when Judge Jesus presides!

Acts 17:30-31 30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent: 31 Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

C. The Tragedy of This Declaration

- I never knew you!
- My dear Pentecostal friends should examen this text.
- It is not that he once knew them, then they lost their salvation.
- He NEVER knew them!
- They had opportunities to know Him.
- These are all religious people.
- And there are MANY of them!

ILLUS: I don't know what the percentages are for lost church members. One evangelist suggested 20% saved, 80% lost. One elderly pastor told me that he believed the number of lost church members in an average Baptist church was greater than 50%.

- You may be angry with a pastor that will say that.
- But if that anger makes you think, and you will turn to Christ, you will thank me one day.
- Otherwise, you will argue with me now, then argue with Jesus when it is too late!

John 10:14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

2 Tim. 2:19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

V. A Departure

23B depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

A. The Who of the Departure

“ye that work iniquity”

- What a stinging rebuke to those who have just claimed such good works!
- We learn that the most active man or woman in a church suffer the torments of Hell!

ILLUS: There will be choir members, pianists, organists, pastors, teachers, youth workers, ushers, grounds keepers, book keepers, deacons that will ultimately be seen to have been LOST! And if they are lost, what of the casual attender? What of the non-attending members on the list!

- God's children are to hunger and thirst after righteousness.
- I am concerned when I see no spiritual appetite!

B. The Where of the Departure

Revelation 20:11-15 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Matthew 25:41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

ILLUS: Dr. Clark, pastor of Freedom Baptist in Greenville, and a former North Carolina fireman, told me of a man that finally ran out of a burning building in which he had been trapped. He just stood there. They pressed a stretcher to his back and tried to, ever so gently, let the man down. As they did, flesh fell from his limbs. Fire is no joke. Hell is no joke, no myth, no fairy tale. It is the place reserved for the devil and his demons, but if you arrogantly assume that you are saved, even while there are no evidences of it, it will be your home!

CONCLUSION:

- If I tell you that there have been three people to die in our facility this morning from something that they inhaled, and you believe me, you will leave the building!

ILLUS: An acquaintance I have is past 70 years old. He had invested, and had money to retire on. He put it in a safe place – Carolina Investors. He will never recover what he lost. But he works now, and is doing o.k. Friend, I am asking you this morning, “Where have you invested your soul?”

ILLUS: Recently, in Anderson, I watched an 85 year old man walk the aisle to be saved. He had reared a Christian family, his son worked in a Christian camp, but he had missed the Lord! For that man, there was an opportunity to come to Christ! Today is your opportunity!