

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

How to Play Church

Scripture: Matthew

Code: 1316A

This morning I want to present to you a discussion on the particular verses, Matthew 7:21 to 23 and talk about...well as the subject was advertised...how to play church, church...or the false church incorporated within the true church. Because I think that we have to examine ourselves to begin with to see where we really are before we know what we need. And so, this Sunday and next Sunday I'll be presenting messages dealing with the church and the ministry.

If you have your Bibles, note please Matthew 7 beginning at verse 21, "Not everyone that saith unto Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven but he that doeth the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name, or preached in Thy name and in Thy name have cast out demons and in Thy name done many wonderful works?' And then will I profess unto them, 'I never knew you, depart from Me, ye that work iniquity.'" May we pray.

Our Father, this morning as we approach this most serious passage of Scripture, may the Spirit of God use it to penetrate our hearts like a knife, to lay bare our inmost self that we might know whether our relation to Jesus Christ is real or whether it is not. God, we pray that Christ might be exalted in this particular message this morning, that He might be lifted up for it's in His name we pray. Amen.

The Bible tells us in Matthew chapter 13 that the church is going to be a very strange...the Church Age is going to be a very strange age. You remember that in Matthew 12 the Pharisees and those connected with them had committed the unpardonable sin of attributing to Satan the works of Christ and He said I can forgive you for anything but not that. In other words, if you've seen all the things that I've done, if you've seen everything that I've done and all the miracles and heard everything I've said and all you can conclude is that I do them by the power of Satan, you're beyond the possibility of believing. If you've had all this revelation and haven't accepted, you've had it. There isn't any more you can have. To follow Me, to see Me, to watch Me, to listen to Me and to conclude it's Satanic puts you out of the category of the possibility of belief.

The Church Age then comes up in Matthew chapter 13. Having set Israel aside because of her unbelief, Christ begins to institute a group of parables that discuss the Church Age and they present the Church Age as a very unique age. He talks about the fact that in the Church Age there is going to be the wheat and the tares, that is the true and the false. And they're going to be so hard to tell apart that you won't be able to tell them apart until God who is the final judge decides between them.

And then we read about the fact that there are various dimensions of the church. The mustard seed illustration gives the idea that the church is going to explode and it's going to be a great big thing including real and unreal, true and false. And so the Church Age is going to be a very strange era and truly it is. For under the name church, quote/unquote, we have all kinds of things going on today. Christ commanded John in Revelation to write to the Sardis church, "I know thy works that thou hast the name that thou art alive and art dead." What a commentary on most churches today. They have a title, they have a name, but they're dead. And why are they dead? Well they're dead initially because the people within them are dead. I would say that the great majority of church members in America today probably...probably and according to Billy Graham statistics this is pretty accurate, probably the majority of them don't even know what it is to be a Christian and they're dead spiritually. Paul says in Ephesians 2, "They're dead in sin." Consequently dead people are going to constitute a dead church and the church is not suffering today or dying today because of a tax from the outside, most churches Satan wouldn't even waste powder and shot on them, they're dead from the inside.

But on the other hand, a vital church, a living church, a church that in reality knows Jesus Christ and proclaims His gospel, that kind of church is always going to be under attack because that kind of a church must be the conscience of the community. A church that is alive, a church that is one proclaiming the message of Jesus Christ is going to become an issue in the community. Jesus said, "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you." The church in the world must always be at opposite poles because light and darkness have no fellowship. What concord hath Christ with Belial, there's no relationship.

Very important to understand this and Paul elucidates it in 2 Corinthians chapter 6 beginning in verse 14 where he brings up the fact that the love of Christ is a very basic issue and that what is really important is that the church is involved in making new creations out of these dead people. A church that is a real living vital church is a church that is in the business of taking dead people and communicating to them the gospel that alone can make them alive. That's the mission of the church. There is no way biblically under the sun that the church can ever court the world. The church must be the conscience of the world. The church must be so well defined that it becomes the antagonist of the world. For those outside of Jesus Christ, this church I trust, I pray, this church will be the most uncomfortable seat in the world because we present a gospel that divides.

It's so true that when the church courts the world it dies, as I read to you from Revelation 3:1, the Sardis church thought it was live but it was courting the world and so it wasn't alive, it was dead. The duty of the church is not only to teach saints but the duty of the church is to warn men of God's standards. And we're not fair and we're not faithful to the call of God if all we do is advertise the abundant life. Now that's a great dimension of salvation, but somewhere along the line we've got to proclaim that man is a sinner, that he's separated from a holy God and that in the eyes of God he's an object of God's judgment, he's a child of wrath, as Paul says in Ephesians. To boldly proclaim Jesus

Christ, to boldly proclaim the truth about Jesus Christ, to boldly proclaim the truth about man in his sin is to divide. If you'll remember correctly the words of Jesus Christ in Matthew 10:34 you will remember that He said, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth, I came not to send peace but...what?...a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against her mother and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." So says Christ.

The true church of Jesus Christ is not a religious institution which welcomes everybody, it is the body of Jesus Christ set apart unto God, uniquely married and wedded to the self same Christ, redeemed by faith. And no one outside of that faith redemption can be a part of it for that is the requirement for the church and it is our task as a people and a preacher to warn those who have not received Christ, to warn them in love but to warn them nonetheless how they are in danger of the terror of the Lord. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5 verse 11, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." He says when I stop to think about the coming of the judgment of God, I get busy sharing the gospel. This is our task.

And our text is such a warning this morning. Our text is a warning to those who are comfortably entrenched in the church are who think they're comfortably entrenched in the church but who in reality are not. This is not a warning to outside people. This is a warning to us who are involved in the church to be sure that it's real. And I think it only fair to begin our ministry here that we stop and really approach this with a sense of sobriety and earnestness, to understand how we stand in view of God right now as individuals.

I'm sure that in this church right here there are people who come who do not know Jesus Christ in a personal vital way. I am convinced that because of the size of the congregation this morning there are some sitting right here in this audience who have come to church many times but who do not know Jesus Christ. And perhaps they even have religious sensations and perhaps they even have sanctimonious emotions but they do not know Jesus Christ. And it is my conviction that before we as a church can move together as a body, as a unit, we must become a unit and the only way we can ever be united and become one as Christ prayed that we might be is that when we are all are real in Christ. And so I want us to carefully examine our lives this morning.

Notice the scene in verse 21. There is a phrase "in that day." It's a very important phrase because it says that there is coming a particular day when Christ is going to judge. The idea of "in that day" in the Bible is connected with judgment. This picture is a picture of that day. "In that day" appears in 1 Corinthians 3 in connection with the time of the judgment of believers. It appears in various places in the Bible in connection with the judgment of unbelievers. But it is always a phrase tied in with judgment, the finality of judgment.

There is coming a day when God is going to judge. There is coming a day when the Great White Throne is going to be a reality. In Revelation chapter 20 and I think it bears our careful reading, in Revelation chapter 20 in verse 11 the Bible paints this great picture of final judgment. "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. 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." In other words, they had no faith to commend them, all they could go on was their works. And if you know anything about that you know that the Bible says, "By the deeds of the law shall...what?...no flesh be justified." "And the sea gave up the dead that were in it and the death and Hades delivered up the dead that were in them and they were judged every man according to his works." Again no faith, it had to be works. "And the result of works and death and hell, or Hades, were cast into the Lake of Fire, this is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the Lake of Fire."

Now in Matthew 7:21 to 23 we are taken to the final judgment. We are at the Great White Throne. And we are seeing some of the people who are confronting Christ at that time. And they are saying unto Him, "Lord, Lord, here we are, we are the ones who were religious people." Peter calls this day the day of the judgment and prediction of ungodly men. And the phrase that he uses, "ungodly men," may seem like a very difficult phrase in view of the fact that these are religious people. There is an awesome silence at this judgment. And then the silence is pierced by the words of Jesus Christ as He says in verse 21, "Not everyone that saith unto Me Lord, Lord shall enter into the Kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of My Father who is in heaven." Here we have, first of all, the condition for entrance to the Kingdom, the condition for entrance to the Kingdom.

What is that condition? How is it that a man enters the Kingdom of God? How is it that a man becomes a part of the Kingdom of God? How is it that a man can be in, as it were, with God in a real vital relationship? How is it? Well, first of all, it's not the ones who say, "Lord, Lord." But it's those who do the will of God. In Matthew 25:1 to 13 you have a very interesting story. You have a story of ten virgins. And they were invited to the feast. And five of them came and they had prepared by bringing oils and putting...bringing oil and having it in their lamps. The other five were foolish and they did not prepare. And in verse 11 of Matthew 25 the door is shut and the five are on the outside and you remember what they say, they say, "Lord, Lord, open to us." And the Lord of the feast says, "Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

Interesting, isn't it, that they were invited to the feast. They had heard the gospel, in a sense, symbolically. They had heard the proclamation, "Come to the feast." This is an illustration of God's call to the world. They even prepared to the extent that they had their lamps. They even had the right clothes on. They even arrived at the meeting house. But they didn't get in and their cry was the same as it is in Matthew chapter 7, "Lord, Lord, open to us." But He says it is not those that say,

"Lord, Lord," but those that do My will.

What a solemn warning. At the end of that parable Christ says, "Watch therefore for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man comes."

Hosea illustrates this in the eighth chapter in the first two verses. It's an interesting story. Hosea's people were just about at the bottom historically. Israel had really hit the skids and by the time you get to Hosea's prophecy he is ranting and raving about their lack of knowledge. He says, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." He says that they don't have any reality on the inside. He likens them to the early morning dew that evaporates. They don't have any substance to them. They have neglected God. They have forsaken God. They don't even go near the house of God.

And by the time you come to chapter 8 and verses 1 and 2 you have a most interesting thing. Hosea paints the picture of a vulture. It's called in the Authorized Version an eagle but it's the Hebrew word for vulture. It has the idea of a vulture swooping over the house of God. And it symbolizes the fact that with all of the religious activity in Israel, with all of the things that were going on by way of performance that the real truth was that the place was dead and it's seen because of the vulture that's swooping over it. There was nothing but dead carcass. Israel forsook God's temple as a scene of a relationship to God and the scene became a tragedy, a picture of a flying vulture speaking of the fact that judgment was coming. And then Hosea goes on to prophesy that Israel because of her neglect of God will be crushed.

Israel was still religious. Israel still had religious feelings. The Israelites still went through some of the motions but they were dead. There wasn't a reality to their religion only a formality. And then in verse 2 of Hosea 8, you know what they say? When the judgment call comes from Hosea, God puts it through Hosea, they say this, "My God, we know Thee." Just like Matthew 7, "Lord, Lord, it's us." What do You mean judging us, the Jews said in Hosea 8, we know You, it's us. My God, they cry out, it's us. What a tragedy.

God doesn't know them though. At that point, that particular generation of people had set aside their relationship with God by their own desire.

Well you can see that it's not those who wish to enter the Kingdom who get in necessarily. It's not even those who ask to enter that get in necessarily. It's not enough to ask, it's not enough to wish, it is enough to be obedient. God has set certain rules for entrance to the Kingdom, they must be obeyed or there is no entrance. You may want to enter. In fact, you may want to to the degree that you come to church and you get involved, but not too involved. Unless you come by the way of Jesus Christ you cannot enter, all your religious operation and all the formality that you go through is meaningless. Peter said in that great sermon in the fourth chapter of Acts, he said, "Neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must

be saved." There is no other name than Jesus Christ, none other name.

There was a blind man on a bridge in London. He was reading his Braille Bible. And he was reading in Acts 4:12 and his fingers were running over this and he...he had lost his place. And being oblivious to anyone around him because of his blindness, he kept running his fingers over the same phrase, "None other name, none other name, none other name." There was a group of people who gathered around as he stumbled a little bit, they had already been there collecting on the bridge for the interest's sake of just watching the river go by. And as they watched him there they began to mock him and laugh at him as he fumbled with his Bible and kept repeating, "None other name." There was a man standing on the edge of the crowd, not mocking but listening. That man walked away that night, went home, fell on his knees and invited Christ into his life. And he retestified in a meeting that the thing that brought him to Jesus Christ was a blind man on a bridge stumbling over the word, "None other name...none other name...none other name."

It is only through personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ that you or I or anyone else will ever know the Kingdom of God. It is not through our religious emotion. It is not through our sanctified feelings. It is through the precious blood of Jesus Christ. Lip profession is no good, there must be obedience. And in the statement, "Lord, Lord," you get the idea of some kind of surprise, don't you? Like they're shocked. "You mean, we're not even getting in?" But listen to Jesus Christ in Luke 6:46, you remember what He says? He says, "Why call ye Me Lord, Lord and...what?...do not the things I say?"

The following verse is on an old slab in a cathedral of Leubek(?), Germany. It goes like this, "Thus speaketh Christ our Lord to us, you call Me Master and obey Me not, you call Me light and see Me not, you call Me the way and walk Me not, you call Me life and live Me not, you call Me wise and follow Me not, you call Me fair and love Me not, you call Me rich and ask Me not, you call Me eternal and seek Me not, you call Me gracious and trust Me not, you call Me noble and serve Me not, you call Me mighty and honor Me not, you call Me just and do not accept My justice. If I condemn thee, blame Me not."

God has set in order the requirement for entrance to the Kingdom of heaven. It has nothing to do with a building, it has to do with Jesus Christ. Calling Christ Lord or anything else is not enough, it is doing the will of God that is the answer.

You say, "Well what is the will of God?" Paul told Timothy in 1 Timothy 2, he says, "God our Savior who will have all men to be...what?...saved." That's the will of God. That is what God's will is. This is literally His will. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life, no man comes unto the Father but by Me," that's God's will. In John 5:39 the Father comments on His Son and says, "And this is My will," and then He points out...Christ points out that the will of God is that He sent Christ, that everyone who sees Christ, who believes on Christ may have everlasting life. Hearing and seeing and

believing and receiving, this is God's will. And that's why in John 1:12 the Bible says very plainly, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He the power to become the sons of God." It is by receiving Christ for without faith it is impossible to please God and that means faith in Jesus Christ. It's not by sincerity, it's not by religiosity, it's not by reformation, it's not by kindness, it's not by service to the church, it's not even simply by naming the name of Christ, it's by personal trust and faith in that same Christ.

So Christ announces the condition for the Kingdom. Now watch the cry of those refused entrance. First of all, in verse 21 we saw the condition for entrance. In verse 22 we see the cry of those who were refused entrance. "Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name and in Thy name have cast out demons and in Thy name done many wonderful works?" Here is the cry of the people, it's an outburst. When Christ in judgment says not everyone that says "Lord, Lord," all of a sudden there's an outburst, there's a plea from the hearts of these people and they cry out and they say we've done all these things. Many people are going to go to heaven, perhaps with nothing to show but simple faith in Jesus Christ. But many more people are going to go to hell, eternally disappointed because they thought their religiosity was enough. Millions of people depend on their morality, their good deeds, their baptism, their church membership, their religious feelings. There will be many church workers in hell, there are going to be many pastors there, sad to say, many teachers in so-called religious schools and I'm sure there are going to be many there as we see in Matthew 7, many of these are going to say to Christ, "Christ, it's us, we prophesied in Your name." But Jesus will tear off the sheepskin and lay bare the ravening wolf.

That's exactly what He's been talking about in verses 15 to 20. That's why I had Paul read that because that bears the very same truth, false prophets...those who claim to have reality and have it not. What a picture it is. The false revealed.

In Luke chapter 13 I think we ought to take the time to note what is indicated there because it bears tremendous pressure at this point. Luke 13:25, "When once the master of the house is risen up and hath shut the door and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us. And He shall answer and say unto you, I know you from where you...from where you are. Then shall you begin to say we've eaten and have drunk in Thy presence and Thou hast taught in our streets. But He shall say, I tell you I know you not from where you are, depart from Me all you workers of iniquity. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you shall see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the Kingdom of God and you yourselves thrust out and they shall come from the east and from the west and from the north and from the south and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God. And behold, there are last who shall be first and there are first who shall be last." What a picture of that same day. Those who are cast aside because all they had was the name of Christ without the reality of faith in Him. How sad to see them outside crying to gain entrance.

I'm reminded of those people who must have been doing much the same thing only in a less severe way, perhaps, because it was physical when they were banging on the doors of the ark trying to let Noah know that they finally believed that what he said was true was true. When they were banging and wanting to come in and they could not.

Do you have only a form of godliness? Do you know the Lord personally? Do you see yourself at the Great White Throne with your feeble excuses? Jesus told Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the Kingdom of God."

What do you mean born again? Simply to receive Jesus Christ and allow God to make of you a new creation born eternally into the family of that same God. Nicodemus came to Christ and he had a lot to commend, he was a religious man, he was THE teacher in Israel...THE teacher. You would think with all the religious steps that he had taken Christ would have said, "Well all you need to do, Nicodemus, you're such a great guy, you've gone so far, you've had such a fantastic life, you've done these wonderful things, all you need to do is take one more giant step and you're in." But Christ looked at Nicodemus as if to say you've done everything there is to do religiously, Nicodemus, now forget it all, go back and be a baby, be born all over. It wasn't good to take another step, he had to start from the beginning.

Well it's kind of a useless defense, isn't it? The condition of the Kingdom, doing the will of God. The will of God is to receive Christ. Those who are standing there and haven't done that cry out in horror but it's a useless defense and then the judge speaks again in verse 23. Listen to what the Judge says, for we find the condemnation of those without Christ. We've seen the condition for entrance to the Kingdom. We've seen the cry of those who are left out. And here is the condemnation of those without Christ.

"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." Profess is an interesting word, it means to openly proclaim. And here Christ openly proclaims that He does not know them. That same word, homologia(?), that same word is used in Matthew 10:32, you know what that verse says? "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess before My Father." The same word is used. If you're not willingly openly proclaiming Christ here, then He will not openly proclaim you there. Instead He says, "I never knew you."

Now we come to one of the most important concepts in all of Scripture, the word "know." This is a very very important concept. From time to time you might find me repeating this because it's critical. What does it mean for God to know somebody and not to know somebody else? Now we know it doesn't mean that He's not aware of somebody. We know it doesn't mean He's saying I don't know who you are. Not at all, He knows who everybody is. He's got everybody's hair of their head numbered. He knows when a sparrow falls. He knows everything there is to know as far as cognizant or awareness is concerned.

Well then what is He saying when He says I never knew you? Now watch this cause this is critical, it's very important. Second Timothy 2:19 gives us the key because it says this, "The Lord knows them that are His." Let me give you that verse again, 2 Timothy 2:19, "The Lord knows them that are His."

Now what does that mean? What is he trying to say? The word "know" in Scripture implies a unique love relationship. In Amos 3:2 God says, "Israel only have I known." Now is Israel the only nation God knew about? Were they? No...no, He knew about everybody. What was He saying? He was saying with Israel I have an intimate relationship.

In the Old Testament the concept of a man and a woman coming together in a relationship that produces a child is spoken of as a man knowing his wife. For example, in Genesis 4:17 the Bible says, "Cain knew his wife." Now we're not to assume that he knew his wife in the pure sense of just knowing her, that's obvious or he wouldn't have married her in the beginning if he hadn't known her. It's got to be more than that. It says, "Cain knew his wife and she bear a son." In other words, to know implies the pinnacle, the most unique human love relationship possible even on a human level.

You remember the Bible says that Joseph had not known Mary. That's what shook him up so much when Mary was pregnant. That's why he had a choice of either stoning her or putting her away properly because she was pregnant and he had never known her. The word "know" in a human realm implies a unique love relationship between two people. And in terms of God's relationship it's the same thing, it's the very same thing. For Paul says in Galatians 4, I think it's verse 9, he says, "Believers are known of God." Isn't that a beautiful concept? The intimacy, it's likened to a man knowing his wife. And is that not what happened in Scripture? Did not God say that Israel was his wife? And is the church not the bride and Christ the bridegroom?

We have an intimate love relationship with God, it's a fantastic thing. And it's illustrated beautifully for us in the words of John chapter 10 where John points out the fantastic truth of this relationship by recording the words of Jesus Christ and I want to share them with you. Find the right page, John 10 verse 14 He says, "I am the Good Shepherd," Christ says, "and...what?...know My sheep." Oh, that's fantastic. Now as we go through this, in your mind substitute the word love for every time the word "know" comes up. I'm going to read it with the word love instead of the word know. "I am the Good Shepherd and love My sheep and are loved of Mine. As the Father loves Me, even so love I the Father and I lay down My life for the sheep." Look at verse 27, "My sheep hear My voice and I love them and they follow Me and I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand. My Father who gave them to Me is greater than all and no man is able to pluck them out of My hand. I and My Father are one."

Do you see the beauty of the love relationship we have with Jesus Christ? Do you see the intimacy of it? In Romans 11 the Apostle Paul says, "God has not set aside His people Israel whom He foreknew." God has a predetermined love relationship with you if you're a Christian. Did you know that? Did you know that you were in Christ before you were ever created? In the counsel of God it was foreordained by God's sovereign act of His will that you should be a child of God. You have a predetermined love relationship with God, just like Israel did and does. And the intimacy of that love relationship is so beautiful that God speaks of it in the most magnificent of human terms, that consummating act between the love of a man and a woman. That's the kind of love relationship you have with God. When God says I know My sheep, when Christ says I know who you are, that means you and I have an intimate love relationship. What a glorious thought.

But to these who do not have that love relationship, He says, "I never knew you." We had no such predetermined love relationship. We had no such relationship as a sheep and a shepherd, as a bride and a bridegroom. To be outside that special love relationship is to suffer for He says, "Depart from Me." The saddest three words in the Bible...Depart from Me. What a tragedy. Nothing ever sadder than that. The harsh words in Matthew 25:41 again reiterated, "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels."

Oh how sad it is that the final picture of judgment is a picture of sadness. The final picture of judgment in the Bible is a tragedy, as the unbelieving of all the ages are brought before God, Jesus Christ reiterates the condition for the Kingdom, to do the will of God, they cry out, those who have been held out, "But we've done all this," and the Judge speaks finally and says, "But wait a minute, you're condemned because we never had a love relationship."

Christianity is not a formality. Christianity, if you please, in the modern term is not a religion, it is a personal love relationship with Jesus Christ. Do you have that love relationship? Do you know that same Christ?

I close with this illustration. There was an actor at a drawing room function who was asked to recite. And he stood up and he wanted to be gracious to his audience so he said, "I'll recite anything you would like me to recite." And no one suggested anything so an old preacher happened to be there, he was sitting in the back. I don't know how he got there, he probably crashed the party. Normally preachers don't get invited to drawing room functions on a high society level, but he was there. And he stood up and he said, "I'd like to hear you recite the Twenty-Third Psalm."

Well the actor was a little shocked at that but he had thrown himself open so he had to do what the man asked him to do. He happened to know it so he said, "All right, I'll do that." So he repeated the Twenty-Third Psalm with complete eloquence, masterfully interpreted it. Diction was beautiful. And when he was done there was spontaneous applause throughout the entire room. And the actor figuring he'd get back at the old gentleman said, "Now, sir, I'd like to hear you recite it." The old

gentleman hadn't bargained for that. But because of his love for Christ he stood up and he repeated the Twenty-Third Psalm. His voice cracked, it broke, wasn't very beautiful. The interpretation wasn't really that good. When he got done there was no applause. But there wasn't a dry eye in the room.

And the actor sensing his own emotion stood up and said, "Ladies and gentlemen, I reached your eyes and ears and he reached your heart." And he said, "The difference is this. I know the Psalm, he knows the Shepherd."

Our Father, we thank You this morning for this opportunity of sharing together in Thy Word. God, what a sobering passage of Scripture we have dealt with today that causes us to shudder in our spirits to see those sad, sad people standing at the throne of God and being shut out because they did not know the Shepherd. O God, You love us and You provided salvation for us. God, I pray that if there's one in this church this morning who does not know Jesus Christ in a personal, intimate, love relationship that right now as they sit in their seats they might invite that Christ into their lives.

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