

1

WE WOULD LIKE TO
PRESENT A FABLE

FOR YOU THIS MORNING.

THIS IS NOT A BIBLE
STORY, BUT IT PRESENTS

Chancel Drama
7th Grade Chapel Service
November 4, 2005

SOME
BIBLICAL
TRUTHS
FOR US
TO PONDER.

Once upon a time there was an old man who was nearing the end of his life on earth. He worried about what was in store for his eternal future, so he said a prayer asking God to show him heaven and hell before he died. He just wanted a sneak preview, and God said, "OK, I will show you heaven and hell, but just for a moment."

The man was very excited and waited for God to show him heaven and hell. Pretty soon God said, "Let's go," and off they went.

~~Smoker~~

— Poof! "Here we are," God said, "the hell observation platform." As the smoke cleared, the old man wiped the fog away from a large observation window and looked through it into a room. It was a strange room, extremely long with a very low ceiling. It was also a very narrow room, so long and so narrow with very narrow walls. In the middle of this long, narrow room was a very long and narrow table, almost as long as the room and almost as wide as the ~~narrow~~ room.

The man looked closer and saw that the table was a dinner table loaded with an enormous feast of food and goodies to eat! It was the most scrumptious, mouthwatering and delicious spread of food the old man had ever seen! All of his favorite foods were on the table: fruits, desserts, turkey, mashed potatoes, chocolate cake, pudding, apple pie and yummy cereals. He could not believe how much food was on this table and how tasty it all looked.

The old man looked at God with a puzzled look on his face and asked, "Are you sure this is not heaven? It looks pretty good!" "Just keep watching," God said.

The old man scratched his head and looked back down into the room with much curiosity. Just then a door opened, and two residents of hell were ushered into the room by one of Satan's demons. One resident of hell sat at one end of the long, long table. The other resident of hell sat all the way at the other end of the table.



The old man could not believe that residents of hell would get to eat such a wonderful feast! He looked at God with a raised eyebrow, and God said, "Just keep watching."

Then the demon told the two residents that they could "dig in," but that they must use the silverware. Both residents looked very hungry and quickly reached down to the floor next to the table and picked up their silverware. The old man observed that the silverware was incredibly long silverware: an extremely long fork, an amazingly long spoon, both about as long as the very long table. The old man again looked at God very puzzled.

The two residents then excitedly began to scoop large portions of tasty food on the ends of their forks and spoons! Each resident tried to maneuver the very long silverware back around to their mouths, but found this very difficult because the room was too narrow. They just kept banging the silverware against the walls. And because the ceiling was so low, they banged up against it too!

Both residents kept digging into the scrumptious feast but just could not get the food into their mouths. Food was flying against walls, ceiling and floor! Silverware was smacking the walls, and none of the food was making it anywhere near their mouths.

Both of hell's residents were cussing and swearing and raising a fuss, madder than hornets! This went on for half an hour with neither resident able to eat one single bite. They could not even get a taste, and boy, were they mad!

Just then, the demon entered the room and said, "Let's go!" The two residents threw down the useless utensils and stormed out of the room, shouting angry words at each other, and showing much hostility toward the demon -- and all this with two very hungry bellies!

The old man looked at God and said, "Wow, this is a terrible place!" He said he had seen enough and asked if he could now see heaven. He was in the mood for a happier scene. God said, "Let's go," and off they went.

— smokes Poof! God said, "We're here. The ~~heaven~~ observation platform."

3

As the smoke cleared the old man wiped the fog from the large glass window. He peered down into a room.

The room was very long, the ceiling was very low and the walls were just as narrow as the ones he saw before. It was a room identical to the one in hell! The man scratched his head, looked down again and saw a dinner table. On the table was the same exact feast that he saw on the dinner table in hell.

He looked at God perplexed and said, "I thought we were going to heaven. This is the same room!" "No," God replied, "just keep watching." The old man looked into the room again. Pudding, cake, turkey, mashed potatoes and the rest -- it seemed very odd to the man.

Just then a door opened into the strange long room. An angel entered and ushered two residents of heaven into the room. Each resident sat at the opposite end of the very long narrow table. The old man looked down onto the floor and saw the same long silverware on the floor. He thought to himself, "They are going to have the same trouble. What's the difference?" God, reading his mind, answered, "Just keep watching."

He watched as the two residents bowed their heads to pray. Then the angel said, "Dig in, but don't forget to use the utensils." The two residents excitedly reached down to pick up the silverware. Again, the old man looked at God and scratched his head. He thought to himself, "They will soon be banging food all over the walls, ceiling and floor just like the people in hell."

But just then the old man saw the most incredible thing! One resident of heaven scooped a spoonful of chocolate pudding, reached across the long table with the long spoon and fed his partner! The other resident returned the favor by feeding his buddy a forkful of apple pie!

The two residents continued feeding each other the scrumptious food using the very long utensils and making sure to say, please and thank you, each time they took a bite. This selfless feeding of each other continued for about 20 minutes until they were both so full and so satisfied that they could not eat another mouthful. They called for the angel to come back



because they were done. When the angel returned, both residents gave thanks and left the room arm in arm, laughing and joking with each other.

At that moment the old man looked at God and said, "Now I see the difference!"

Poof! And the old man was back home, and he knew that heaven was the place where he wanted to be.

Message Explanation:

The Bible does not tell us exactly what heaven and hell will look like, but it does tell us much about the people who will be there.

Now it is important to remember from our Gospel reading and from our skit that we do **not** get to heaven by being nice, doing good deeds or by being unselfish.

It is actually much simpler than that... We are saved by **Grace** as a gift from God through Jesus Christ. It is a **free** gift that we cannot earn no matter how nice we are to others.

But if we are saved by Christ and have eternal life waiting for us in heaven we will just **want** to treat others kindly and think of others first. It will just be who we are and how we want to act. Not to gain God's gifts but because we already have God's greatest gift. The skit tells us less about how to **get** to heaven but tells us lots about those saved people who are bound for heaven. It is not what you **do** that gets you to heaven but what Jesus has already **done** by going to the cross for us and taking our sin upon himself and forgiving us.

In the book of Ephesians we hear God say... "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God, not a result of works so that no one may boast."

"So we are saved by Faith **alone**, but Faith is never **alone**." True saving faith can't help but bring the good works along with it. We do good works for others as our **response** to the gift of eternal life for us. As a healthy apple tree can't help but have good apples, a healthy faith brings forth good works.

So be good and kind and selfless to others as **thanksgiving** for our salvation and the eternal life that awaits us in Christ Jesus.

Explanation of Message:

The Bible does not tell us exactly what heaven and hell will look like, but it does give us an idea of what type of people will end up there. In the Bible lesson from Matthew, Jesus tells those on his right that they will inherit the kingdom of heaven. He tells them that they helped others and so in turn they helped Him. He says to those on His left that they will be sent to hell. He also tells them that since they did not help others they in turn refused to help Him. This does not mean that we can earn our salvation by doing good to others! It means that if we are saved we will want to do good for others. If we love God then we will love others as well. Those who do not love God will not love others, like the people on Jesus left. Our story about the feast and the long silverware is mostly fiction, but it does give us clues about who will live in heaven and hell. Those in hell thought only of themselves while the residents of heaven thought of their brother first. This does not mean we earn our salvation, it means that because we have salvation this is how we act.

Look here, good works does not lead to salvation, good works are a result of our salvation. Salvation is a free gift from God by grace and faith in Christ. Good works are simply our response to this great gift. So the people in our story do not get to heaven by being unselfish, but those who have a ticket to heaven will want to be unselfish as a response to God for His gift.