

Joe was a fan of a certain musical group. He had several of their recordings, but had never been able to attend one of their live concerts. One day he was quite excited to discover they would be having a concert in HIS TOWN! He was even happier to learn that the tickets were FREE, and available at several convenient locations around town during the two weeks prior to the concert.

When the day of the concert came, Joe suddenly realized that he had neglected to pick up his free ticket. "Well", he reasoned, "it's a free concert, so I'm sure they'll let me in at the door."

When he got to the venue, hundreds of fans were lined up at the entrances, slowly filing in with their free tickets. Joe got in line too.

When he got to the entrance, he was refused entry because he didn't have a ticket. He argued that since it was a free concert, they should let him in anyway. But they absolutely refused to let in anyone without a ticket!

Joe went home sad, and angry.

What do you think? Were the concert organizers WRONG in refusing entry to anyone without a ticket? Since it was their concert, couldn't they make whatever reasonable entry require-ments they wished? Couldn't they make the tickets available free if they wanted to? OF COURSE THEY COULD! IT WAS THEIR CONCERT!

Perhaps you have heard the question, "How can a loving God send anyone to hell?" The point is that he IS a loving God, and offers "free tickets" to get into heaven. So maybe the question should really be, "How can anyone in his right mind turn down a free ticket to get into heaven?"

Heaven will be such a wonderful experience, far surpassing even the imagination of any earthly pleasures. The apostle John tried to describe some of the glories of heaven in the passage beginning at Revelation 21:18.

On the other hand, hell will be such a terrible experience, far surpassing even the most horrible, gruesome thoughts we could ever have. Jesus said, "Depart from me, you

who are cursed, into the eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matthew 25:41)

After leaving Egypt, during their 40 year journey through the wilderness, the newly forming nation of Israel once came upon a plague of poisonous snakes which were biting them causing many to die. (Numbers 21:4-9) God instructed Moses to prepare a bronze snake and mount it on a pole, so that anyone who was bitten, simply by looking at the bronze snake would be healed.

Jesus referred to that incident in John 3:14,15 when he said, "Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who

believes in him may have eternal life." That's our free ticket to heaven! Just by believing in Jesus, we have eternal life! Yes, it's that simple, so why try to make it hard? Need more convincing? Just start to slowly and methodically read through the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) while you sincerely ask God to help you understand. He will!

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FREE TICKETS

