

“Have You Missed First Base”
Mark 10:17-21, (21)

Introduction: Marvin Eugene Throneberry (September 2, 1933 — June 23, 1994) was an American Major League Baseball player, best remembered as the starting first baseman for the 1962 New York Mets. In one famous story, on June 17, 1962, Throneberry hit a triple in a game against the Cubs, but was called out for not touching second base. According to the legend, manager Casey Stengel came out to argue the call, but was told by the umpire "Don't bother arguing Casey, he missed first base, too." The next batter hit a home run, prompting Stengel to come out of the dugout following him and pointing at all four bases. Throneberry's mistake proved costly, as the Cubs won the game 8-7.

➤ Illustration of 90 year old woman on visitation. She had missed first base.

1. We See This Man Running to Jesus v. 17- *“And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him...”*
2. We See This Man Requesting from Jesus v. 17- *“...and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?”*
3. We See This Man’s Religion for Jesus vs. 19-20
4. We See This Man’s Requirement from Jesus v. 21

Body: This man obviously missed first base. He had his religious words and works, but he did not possess salvation. Many people in our churches across the nation are very religious, but they do not possess salvation. They are moral, dedicated, and loyal church members, but they have missed first base. Notice another individual that missed first base:

- I. The Words of the Lost Matthew 7:21- *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven...”*
 - A. The test of salvation is not in words (*“Lord, Lord”*).
 - B. How easy it is to learn a religious vocabulary, and even memorize Bible verses and religious songs, and yet not obey God’s will.
- II. The Will of the Lost Matthew 7:21- *“...but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.”*
 - A. What is the will of the Father which is in heaven?
 - B. I Timothy 2:4- *“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”*
 - C. II Peter 3:9- *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”*
 - D. Doing the will of the Father is obtaining a knowledge of the truth by repenting of your sins. This is salvation. Obedience to God’s will is the test of true faith in Christ.
 - E. I John 2:17- *“And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”*

- III. The Works of the Lost Matthew 7:22- *“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. Judas could have made all of these claims, yet he is in hell. Acts 1:25
 - B. Words are not a substitute for obedience to salvation, and neither are religious works.
 - C. Satan uses lying wonders to deceive people.
 - D. II Thessalonians 2:7-12, Revelation 16:13-14
 - E. The sad reality is this, prophesying has come to a stop.
 - F. I Corinthians 13:8- *“Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.”*
 - G. Prophesying, casting out devils, and good works do not give assurance of salvation. Only the Spirit of God inside a believer can give that assurance.
 - H. Romans 8:9- *“But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”*
 - I. I Thessalonians 1:5- *“For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake.”*
- IV. The Wickedness of the Lost Matthew 7:23- *“And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”*
- A. Alongside those who produce notably bad fruit are those who produce no fruit—nothing but leaves. They can be identified not by the religious language they use, but by what they do.
 - B. Luke 6:46- *“And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?”*

Conclusion: Nicodemus was yet another person that missed first base. John 3:1-9

- What will happen at the end of your life when God shall call everything into judgment? The final test is not what we think of ourselves, or what others may think. The final test is: What will God say?

It was 1908 - in the early days of Major League baseball in America. The Chicago Cubs and the New York Giants were battling it out for the National League championship and the opportunity to play in the World Series. New York first baseman Fred Merkle was in position to be a game-winning hero. He was on base when a teammate got a hit that would enable Merkle to score. And he thought he had as he crossed home plate. But the Cubs touched second base and claimed that Merkle had missed that base as he was running to score. The umpire ruled that the almost-hero was out at second because he hadn't touched the base. That mistake ultimately cost his team the championship.

Imagine - you think you've made it home safely, but it turns out you're "out" because you missed a base you failed to touch. That can happen to people when it comes to the "home" that really matters - an eternal home in heaven when we die. There are just too many passages in the Bible that indicate that people who thought they would make it there will be surprised to find that they can't get into heaven.