

Some people will take chances with *anything*.



But with eternal destinies, one mistake and it is forever too late.

Eternity is too permanent -- too "final" for taking chances.

Some people think that if they are "good enough," they can get into heaven. Others, however, think that they only need to perform some simple ritual, such as quoting a prayer or walking an aisle, and that this act will guarantee them a "free pass" into heaven, *no matter what they do after that*. They might not carry a "Get Out of Hell Free" card, like the picture suggests, but they act as though they do. They live like the devil, but expect the reward of an angel.

There *is* a sense in which the statement "Get Out of Hell Free" is true. But it's not that *no one* has to pay, or that justice is ignored. The only reason a person can "Get Out of Hell Free" is because Jesus *didn't*. He paid, and paid completely, a debt that wasn't even his. Only afterwards, did he rise from the dead. And now he offers us his new life, in exchange for the death we have earned.

But we must be willing to make this exchange: our death for his life. And his life, if we accept it, will cause a change in our whole attitude about salvation. First, we won't want to live like the devil. Instead, we will want to become one of Jesus' "disciples" - to learn from him and to let his life be seen in us. Second, we will realize that our own works cannot create this life in us. For all our merit, all our human efforts, all our "goodness," died on the cross, when we made the great exchange for his life. It is because *his* life is present, and wants to express itself, that we now desire to do what pleases him.

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me."
(Galatians 2:20)