So Near, Yet So Far

Introduction:
A. How often do we lament, “We were so near, yet so far?”
   1. A tight ball game.
   2. A tight election.
   3. A missed putt.
B. In spiritual matters, people are often so near, yet so far.
   1. The scribe (Mark. 12:34)
   2. As in physical matters “close doesn’t count except in horseshoes.”
C. We will notice some examples to encourage us to go all the way and not be content with just close.

Discussion:
I. Moses: So Near, Yet So Far (Num. 20:10-12; 27:12-14)
   A. Near to Canaan – the promised land.
   B. Near enough to see it.
   C. Came short because of disobedience (cf. Heb. 3:18-19).
II. Rich Young Ruler: So Near, Yet So Far (Matt. 19:16-22).
   A. Near to Eternal life.
   B. Near enough to inquire.
   C. Came short because of the love of money (cf. 1 Tim. 6:10).
III. The Five Foolish Virgins: So Near, Yet So Far (Matt. 25:1-12).
   A. Near to the Wedding Supper.
   B. Near enough to knock on the door.
   C. Came short because of carelessness.
IV. Felix: So Near, Yet So Far (Acts 24:24, 25)
   A. Near to Salvation
   B. Near enough to tremble.
   C. Came short because of procrastination.
V. Agrippa: So Near, Yet So Far (Acts 26:26-29)
   A. Near to being a Christian.
   B. Near enough to say “almost.”
   C. Came short because of who knows what.
VI. Many: So Near, Yet So Far (Matt. 7:22-23)
   A. Near to heaven.
   B. Near enough to have worked hard
   C. Came short because worked lawlessness.
VII. Ephesian Church: So Near, Yet So Far (Rev. 2:1-6)
   A. Near to being a good church.
   B. Near enough to have worked and defended the faith.
   C. Came short because of leaving their first love.
VIII. Many Churches: So Near, Yet So Far (Heb. 8:5)
   A. Near to following the pattern.
   B. Near enough to do most things according to the pattern.
   C. Come short because do not “all things according to the pattern.”
IX. Denominations: So Near, Yet So Far (1 Pet. 3:21)
   A. Near to the plan of salvation.
   B. Near enough to be one letter away (NOT rather than NOW)
   C. Come short because of perversion.

Conclusion:
A. How close are you to being saved?
B. How close are you to being a faithful Christian?
C. How close are you to being ready to meet Jesus?
D. Don’t look back later and say, “I was so close, yet so far.”