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Understanding the profound message embedded within the Gettysburg Address requires a close examination of Lincoln's words and the context in which they were spoken. Specifically, identifying the part of the excerpt where Lincoln asserts a fundamental principle about the nation's dedication to equality and the sacrifices made by those who fought at Gettysburg reveals the core of his message. This article explores the excerpt in detail, highlighting the section where Lincoln argues that the nation must remain dedicated to the ideals of liberty, equality, and a government "of the people, by the people, for the people."

The Significance of the Gettysburg Address

Before pinpointing the specific part of the speech, it's important to understand the historical significance of the Gettysburg Address. Delivered on November 19, 1863, during the American Civil War, President Lincoln's speech was a short yet powerful tribute to the fallen soldiers and a reaffirmation of the United States' foundational principles.

Context of the Speech

- The Battle of Gettysburg: One of the bloodiest battles in the Civil War, symbolizing the struggle for national unity and human equality.
- Purpose of Lincoln's Address: To dedicate a national cemetery and to inspire the nation to uphold the values of liberty and democracy.
- Impact: The speech redefined the Civil War as a struggle not just for the Union, but for the principle of human equality.

Core Themes of the Gettysburg Address

- Dedication to the fallen soldiers
- Preservation of the Union
- A renewed commitment to the principles of equality and democracy

Analyzing the Key Section of the Gettysburg Address

The excerpt of Lincoln's speech is brief but densely packed with meaning. The part where Lincoln explicitly argues that the nation must be dedicated to the proposition that "all men are created equal" is central to understanding his moral and political stance.

The Critical Passage

> "But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate — we cannot consecrate — we cannot hallow — this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced."

The Part Where Lincoln Argues the Nation's Dedication

Following this, Lincoln continues:

> "It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us — that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion — that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain — that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

The Specific Argument: Dedication to Equality and the Nation's Future

Identifying the Argument

The part where Lincoln explicitly argues that the nation must be dedicated to the principles of equality and self-government is encapsulated in the closing lines:

> "that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

This statement reflects Lincoln's assertion that the United States was founded on the principle that all men are created equal and that the government derives its legitimacy from the consent of the governed.

How Lincoln's Words Convey This Argument

- "A new birth of freedom": Lincoln emphasizes the need for a renewed dedication to liberty and equality.
- "Government of the people, by the people, for the people": A direct assertion that the government's authority comes from the people and exists to serve their interests.
- Perpetuity of Democracy: Lincoln underscores the importance of preserving this form of government for future generations.

The Role of Sacrifice in Lincoln's Argument

Lincoln's mention of the soldiers' sacrifice is not just a tribute but a strategic rhetorical device to reinforce his argument.

Sacrifice as a Moral Call to Action

- Fighting for the Union and Equality: The soldiers' sacrifices symbolize the commitment to uphold the nation's core values.
- The "unfinished work": Refers to the ongoing struggle to ensure that the ideals of liberty and equality are realized for all.

Why This Matters

Lincoln's invocation of sacrifice serves to:

- Inspire contemporary and future generations to uphold the principles for which the soldiers fought.
- Reinforce the idea that the nation's survival depends on dedication to these principles.

The Broader Implications of Lincoln's Argument

Lincoln's assertion that the government "of the people, by the people, for the people" shall not perish underscores a fundamental democratic ideal that remains relevant today.

The Principles Embedded in Lincoln's Words

- Popular sovereignty: Power resides with the people.
- Equality before the law: The nation's foundation is based on equality.
- Democratic resilience: The government must be preserved through ongoing dedication and sacrifice.

The Address as a Call for Unity

Lincoln's words encourage Americans to:

- Remember the sacrifices made by soldiers.
- Dedicate themselves to a unified nation grounded in shared principles.
- Strive toward a "new birth of freedom" for all citizens.

Conclusion: The Heart of Lincoln's Argument in the Gettysburg Address

In conclusion, the part of the excerpt from the Gettysburg Address where President Abraham Lincoln argues that the nation must be dedicated to the principles of equality, liberty, and democratic self-governance is primarily located in the closing section:

> "that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

This statement encapsulates Lincoln's moral and political vision—an unwavering commitment to the ideals that form the foundation of the United States. It underscores the importance of sacrifice, dedication, and ongoing effort to ensure that these principles endure for future generations. Understanding this part of the speech is essential to grasping Lincoln's message and the enduring legacy of his leadership during one of the most tumultuous times in American history.

Additional Resources for Further Study

- Text of the Gettysburg Address
- Biographies of Abraham Lincoln
- Civil War history and key battles
- Analyses of American democratic principles

By exploring this crucial section of Lincoln's speech, readers can better appreciate the depth of his vision for America and the enduring importance of the principles he championed.

Frequently Asked Questions

Where in the excerpt does President Lincoln emphasize the importance of honoring those who fought at Gettysburg?

In the section where Lincoln states that the dead shall not have died in vain and that the living must dedicate themselves to the unfinished work of ensuring equality and freedom.

At what point does Lincoln argue that the nation must remain dedicated to the principles of liberty and equality?

He makes this argument during the portion where he speaks about the founding of the nation and the proposition that all men are created equal.

Does Lincoln specify a particular part of the excerpt where he discusses the purpose of the Civil War?

Yes, he highlights that the war is a test to see whether a nation founded on principles of equality can endure, particularly in the section stating that the nation shall have a new birth of freedom.

In which part of the excerpt does Lincoln argue that the living have a duty to preserve the Union and continue the work started by the fallen soldiers?

He emphasizes this during the closing remarks, where he urges that those who remain must be dedicated to ensuring that those who fought and died did not do so in vain.

Where in the Gettysburg Address does Lincoln argue that the

government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish?

He makes this argument towards the end of the speech, asserting the importance of a government dedicated to the principles of democracy.

At what point does Lincoln argue that the Civil War is a test for whether a nation committed to equality can survive?

He articulates this in the middle portion of the address, framing the war as a crucial test of the nation's commitment to its founding ideals.

Additional Resources

In Which Part Of This Excerpt From The Gettysburg Address Does President Abraham Lincoln Argue That The—a question that invites deep analysis of one of the most revered speeches in American history—centers on understanding Lincoln's rhetorical strategies, thematic emphasis, and philosophical underpinnings. The Gettysburg Address, delivered on November 19, 1863, during the American Civil War, is celebrated for its brevity, poetic diction, and profound moral and political insight. To grasp the core of Lincoln's argument, it is essential to examine the structure of the speech, identify the thematic focal points, and analyze how Lincoln articulates his vision for a united nation dedicated to the principles of equality and liberty.

Overview of the Gettysburg Address

The Gettysburg Address was delivered at the dedication of the Soldiers' National Cemetery in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, four months after the Battle of Gettysburg, one of the war's pivotal turning points. Lincoln aimed to honor the fallen soldiers and redefine the nation's purpose amid its darkest hours. The speech is notably concise—just about 272 words—but its impact is monumental, embedding themes of national unity, equality, sacrifice, and the preservation of democracy.

Thematic Breakdown of Lincoln's Argument

Lincoln's speech can be dissected into several thematic parts, each contributing to his overarching argument about the nation's ideals and the purpose of the Civil War.

Part 1: Honoring the Fallen and Recognizing Sacrifice

Lincoln begins by acknowledging the sacrifice of those who fought at Gettysburg, emphasizing that the battlefield is hallowed ground because of their dedication and sacrifice.

- Key excerpt: "But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground."
- Purpose: To elevate the significance of the soldiers' sacrifice and set a moral tone for the speech.

Part 2: Affirming the Purpose of the Nation's Founding

Lincoln references the founding principles of the United States, emphasizing that the nation was conceived in liberty and dedicated to equality.

- Key excerpt: "Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal."
- Purpose: To remind the audience of the nation's foundational ideals and to connect the present struggle to these principles.

Part 3: The Civil War as a Test of the Nation's Principles

Lincoln interprets the Civil War as a crucial test to determine whether a nation "conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal," can endure.

- Key excerpt: "Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure."
- Purpose: To frame the conflict as a moral and political trial of the nation's core values.

Part 4: The Call to Dedicate Ourselves to the Cause

Lincoln urges the living to dedicate themselves to ensuring that the soldiers' sacrifice was not in vain by continuing the work of preserving the Union and the principles of equality.

- Key excerpt: "It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced."
- Purpose: To inspire collective action and moral responsibility.

Identifying the Core Argument in Lincoln's Speech

The central part of your question—"In which part of this excerpt does Lincoln argue that the..."—depends on the specific aspect of his argument you focus on. Broadly, Lincoln's argument that the Civil War is a moral test of the nation's foundational principles is most explicitly articulated in the section where he states:

"Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure."

This statement encapsulates Lincoln's philosophical assertion that the war is not merely about territory or political power but about whether a nation founded on equality and liberty can survive when challenged by its own contradictions and divisions.

Analyzing the Rhetorical Strategies Lincoln Uses to Make His Argument

Lincoln's speech employs several rhetorical devices to reinforce his core message.

Repetition and Parallelism

Lincoln uses repetition and parallel structures to emphasize key ideas.

- Examples:
- “We cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground.”
- “Four score and seven years ago... conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.”

This technique underscores the moral weight of his words and makes the message more memorable.

Appeal to Shared Values

Lincoln appeals to the audience’s sense of national identity and shared heritage, invoking the founding fathers and the principles they established.

Conciseness and Poetic Diction

The brevity of the speech, combined with poetic language, lends it a universal and timeless quality, reinforcing the enduring nature of its moral claims.

Pros and Cons of Lincoln’s Argument

Pros:

- Moral Clarity: Lincoln’s framing of the Civil War as a test of the nation’s core principles elevates the conflict beyond mere politics, inspiring moral resolve.
- Unifying Message: Emphasizing shared ideals fosters national unity and collective purpose.
- Timelessness: The focus on liberty and equality makes the speech resonate across generations.

Cons:

- Idealism: The assertion that the nation is “dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal” was aspirational at the time, given the realities of slavery and inequality.
- Lack of Specific Policy Solutions: The speech articulates moral principles but does not specify concrete steps or policies to address the nation’s divisions.
- Potential for Exclusion: While Lincoln advocates for equality, the immediate context of the speech does not address the full scope of racial and social inequalities.

Conclusion: The Heart of Lincoln’s Argument

In conclusion, the part of the excerpt from the Gettysburg Address where Lincoln explicitly argues that the Civil War is a moral and existential test for the nation’s foundational ideals is the statement: “Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure.” This moment encapsulates Lincoln’s central thesis—that the survival of the United States depends on whether the principles of liberty and equality, as enshrined in its founding documents, can withstand the current crisis.

By framing the war as a moral test, Lincoln elevates the conflict from a mere political struggle to a fight for the preservation of the nation's soul. His eloquent appeal to shared values, combined with poetic diction and moral clarity, continues to inspire and resonate. Understanding this part of the speech provides insight into Lincoln's profound vision of a nation committed to the ideals of equality, perseverance, and unity—values that continue to define American identity.

In summary:

- The core argument that the Civil War is a test of the nation's foundational principles is articulated in the section where Lincoln states that the war is "testing whether that nation... can long endure."
- This part underscores the moral and philosophical stakes of the conflict.
- Lincoln's rhetorical mastery lies in framing the war as a moral endeavor, urging the nation to uphold its founding ideals through sacrifice and perseverance.

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