

29 BIBLE SKETCHES

Barbara J Parsons

Easy to use, easy to copy,
Bible-based drama sketches

For Churches, Youth Groups, School Assemblies
and Street Theatre

BeaconLight

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to all those wonderful people who have learned these lines; rehearsed, performed and enjoyed these sketches.

Thank you for your encouragement.

29 Bible Sketches

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29 Bible Sketches - *The Vision*

Why Drama?

Drama is effective because people expect it to be. With a drama sketch, they know it will be short and they know that if they whisper something to their neighbour or fumble in their handbag at the crucial moment, they will miss something vital and won't know what's going on. Just the fact that they know a drama is coming, gives you a silence and an anticipation into which you can drop any truth and know it will be heard.

About the Sketches

The sketches in *29 Bible Sketches* are illustrations of Bible stories, truths, or verses. They are visual aids that work best alongside teaching. Because they are designed to be part of a meeting or church service, a school assembly or performed in the street, the dramas tend to have certain similarities. Generally they are designed to be performed without scenery or special lighting, with minimum furniture and few props. An audience is quite capable of supplying the missing details in its own imagination – the actor in the sheep's hat is a sheep even though he's standing up on two legs and talking with a Geordie accent! Costumes only need to hint at who a character is supposed to be! The aim is to supply no-fuss drama which can be easily staged in almost any setting. The sketch should slip into your programme with minimal disruption.

The Cast

People like to do drama for all sorts of reasons but this kind of drama isn't intended to be the first step on the way to Broadway for some aspiring actor. The cast should understand and be passionate about the message of the drama they are performing.

The Performance

Be well prepared: organize microphones; know when you're 'on'; have a final run through beforehand; have props in place. Because the final line of each drama is the last thing that the audience will hear, it needs to have the greatest potency - it's not called a punch-line for nothing! You'll know when the drama has hit the spot because after the delivery of this line, there will be a pregnant pause, just for a moment, followed by a murmur of assent and the applause. Whether or not you think that applause is appropriate in a church setting, remember that it is just a releasing of tension. It also says, 'we have been somewhere together and this is our unified response'.

The Vision

The vision is not to liven up the church or keep the drama group occupied. Let your vision be to reach the lost and build the Kingdom. A tiny two minute sketch may not save the world, but if it helps give a clear glimpse of the Saviour and His life-changing truth, or grows, challenges or encourages His Church, then it is all worthwhile. And a lot of fun of course! Be blessed.

Barbara J Parsons

The Best Seat in the House

James 2:1-13, Luke 19:1-10

God does not have favourites. Sadly we do, and even in the church we consider some people to be more acceptable than others. We are like the older brother despising the disreputable prodigal son. The Father is not like us. He does not see the rags or the status – He sees into the heart.

Cast: An interviewer and one other actor who plays all other parts.

Props: Clothing suitable for each character. Lay them out in order, in view of audience but to the side and back of stage. Choose clothes that are easy to put on and remove and that won't interfere with microphones. *Don't* change trousers: it take too long!

(Interviewer is on stage; second actor, dressed as Richie the yuppie, enters talking into a mobile phone.)

Richie: *(Into phone)* Ya! Ya! That would be great! Absolutely! And many thanks. Ciao! *(Pronounced 'chow!')*

(Comes towards interviewer and they shake hands.)

Inter: Richie! I'm so glad you've come to join our young people's group. There is always a welcome in our church for people like you. I just wanted to meet you in person and check that you will fit in, if you know what I mean.

Richie *(Poshly)* Oh one certainly hopes that one will.

Inter: No problem. Now I'm assuming (correct me if I'm wrong) that someone as posh as your good self comes from a very rich family.

Richie: Well yes I suppose one does.

Inter: Well that's all I really need to know. *(Shakes hands)* And Richie, I think you should sit in the very front row, where all the most important people sit. OK?

Richie: Well thanks awfully. One's glad one came.

Inter: No problem!

(Richie exits and actor dresses as Hendrix, a '70's musician. He enters and returns to the interviewer and they do an elaborate high five, low five-type greeting.)

Inter: Hendrix! I'm so glad you've come to join our young people's group. There is always a welcome in our church for people like you. I just wanted to meet you in person and check that you will fit in ... know what I mean?

Hendrix: Well I hope I will man!

Inter: You're a guitarist I hear? I guess you're well into the music scene then?

Hendrix: Eat drink and sleep it man. All day and all night. It's my scene man. I know all the words of all the songs, every chord, every bridge, every riff, know what I mean!

Inter: Well, anyone who's really into music is bound to fit in here Hendrix. (I'll mention you to *(Musical director's/minister's name - if appropriate)*! Welcome to the group. Oh and Hendrix? I think you should sit in the very front row, where all the most important people sit.

Hendrix: Far out man!

Inter: No Hendrix. In the front!

Hendrix: I'm cool!

(Hendrix leaves and actor dresses as Beck, a sportsman. He enters, jogging back on, and does warm-up exercises throughout the interview.)

Inter: Beck! *(Shake hands)* I'm so glad you've come to join our young people's group. There is always a welcome in our church for people like you. I just wanted to meet you in person and check that you will fit in, if you know what I mean.

Beck: Great!

Inter: I hear you're into sport!

Beck: Sport? Oh yeah! Love it - down the terraces watching Liverpool United every week. It's great.

Inter: And do you play as well?

Beck: Play what?

Inter: Play sport Beck. You know: football, tennis that kind of thing?

Beck: Oh yeah, I'm fit, me! I do 300 press-ups every night. Then I cycle three miles to the gym, spend a couple of hours on the weights. Jog home. Jog back to get me bike. And then I've got matches every night ... It's my life mate, sport!

Inter: Excellent. Well everyone loves a sportsman. I'm glad you've joined us. I'll sign you up for the football team straight away. Welcome to our church. Oh and Beck? Why don't you have a seat right in the front where all the most important people sit?

Beck: Fanks mate. I fink I will!

(Beck exits and actor dresses as Bixie, in whatever is considered the style of the day! He re-enters with a cool swagger.)

Inter: Bixie! I'm so glad you've come to join our young people's group. There is always a welcome in our church for people like you. I just wanted to meet you in person and check that you will fit in, if you know what I mean.

Bixie: Oh right. Great.

Inter: I see you've got all the latest gear. I think it's so important to look good don't you?

Bixie: Yeah, I think you're such a loser if you don't look cool.

Inter: Quite agree. I see you've got all the right labels.

Bixie: Labels, style. If the magazines mention it, I've got it! I've even got Calvin Klein Jim-jams! I've got so many clothes in my bedroom; I have to sleep on the landing!

Inter: Well Bixie, looking good is very important to us. Welcome to the group. Oh and Bixie? I think you should sit in the very front where all the most important people sit.

Bixie: Oh thanks, I think I will!

(Bixie exits and actor dresses as Ned, a scruffy down-and-out. He re-enters.)

Inter: Ah Ned. Er good to see you. You weren't thinking of joining our group, were you?

Ned: Well, if you'll have me.

Inter: Well yes. It isn't as if you're not welcome of course but, well, if you don't mind me saying so, you are a little, well, scruffy.

Ned: Am I?

Inter: Well, your clothes are a bit, shall we say, holey.

Ned: Well yeah, you see I'm homeless. These are the only clothes I've got.

Inter: How unfortunate. I don't suppose you've got a designer label hidden away somewhere?

Ned: Looking for label. Here we are. It's a bit grimy. Erm can you read it?

Inter: I think it says 'George'!

Ned: Oh yeah. George give it me.

Inter: Maybe you're good at sport then? We have an excellent football team.

Ned: I can play dominoes?

Inter: No. Erm maybe you're into the music scene?

Ned: Now you're talking. The Sound of Music! I love it! I know all the words of all the songs. *(Starts singing)* The hills are alive ...

Inter: Ned. Ned. NO. Well WHY? Why do you want to join our church?

Ned: Well. Someone told me about Jesus, and I thought 'that is my kind of guy'. I'd like get to know Jesus. And I thought I might find Him here ... didn't know where else to look. But if you don't want me to come ...

Inter: Of course we do. It's just that you're not our normal class of person. That doesn't mean you're not welcome. Just one thing occurs to me Nerd, I mean Ned, I just think it might be better if you sit right at the back so all the important people aren't offended.

Ned: That's fine. Oh, erm can I ask you something?

Inter: Well yes ...

Ned: I was wondering... *(Pause then turns to face audience)* where does Jesus sit?

(Freeze)

AS IF BY MAGIC!

Proverbs 8:11

Wisdom is the great theme of the Book of Proverbs. Wisdom is without price. And yet we often consider other things like status or possessions, to be of more value. We couldn't be more wrong! To discover true wisdom is to discover the key to life.

Cast: A man called Ben and a fairy called Hanny.

Props: A clear list for the audience to see: Money, Fame, and Wisdom. A wand.

(Ben is on stage looking at the list.)

Ben: *(Looking at list on wall)* Hmm. Money. Fame. Wisdom. I wonder what that's all about. *(Spots Fairy Hanny)* And who are you?

Han: I am your good fairy and I am here to grant you one wish. You must choose one thing from my list: money, fame or wisdom, and I will wave my magic wand and it will be yours forever.

Ben: Really? It must be my lucky day! So, let me get this straight: I can choose any one of those, and you will wave your magic wand and it will be mine forever.

Han: Forever. So hurry up!

Ben: OK. Well it would be good to have money. How much money?

Han: Whatever you want.

Ben: All the money I want hey? So I'd never have to work but I could buy anything I wanted and have enough left over to support my poor old mother!

Han: Exactly!

Ben: Wow! Or I could be famous. Famous for what?

Han: Famous for anything at all.

Ben: So I could be a famous footballer like David Beckham.

Han: Yep!

Ben: And just as handsome?

Han: Let's put it this way – I have my limits ... but famous certainly.

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- Ben: How exciting is that? Or wisdom. Er what's wisdom?
- Han: Oh I shouldn't worry too much about that one.
- Ben: No, no, it's on the list. I don't want to miss it out in case it's important and I just didn't know.
- Han: Well wisdom, means living the way that God wants you to live ... So He's not disappointed in you.
- Ben: Really? I didn't know that!
- Han: Well then, what's it to be, come on, I have got other wishes to grant today, you know.
- Ben: OK. So I could choose to be rich. I would like to be rich. But supposing I was rich and God was disappointed in me. How would that work? I would just be unhappy. Rich and unhappy! On the other hand, I could be famous. At least that way, everyone else would think I was wonderful ... but I wouldn't be living the way that God wanted me to live and that would make me unhappy. Hmmmmm. OK Fairy Hanny ... I've made up my mind ... get your wand ready ...
- Han: All ready and waiting. And your choice is ...
- Ben: Wisdom.
- Han: Wisdom?
- Ben: I just thought: if being wise is living God's way and making Him smile, then nothing is more exciting than that is it? So go on then, do your magic wand thing.
- Han: I can't.
- Ben: Can't? Wad'ya mean 'can't'? You promised!
- Han: I know I did, but now it won't work, will it?
- Ben: Won't work? Why not?
- Han: Because ... well because people who choose wisdom
(Pause - look toward audience) are already wise.

(Freeze)

Gideon and the Big Battle

Judges 7, Ephesians 3:20

There are times when everything is stacked against us and we seem doomed to fail. That is until God Himself steps in to help. Nothing is impossible for Him. In this story from the book of Judges, Gideon's army seems ridiculously weak and vastly outnumbered by the Midianite hordes, who are immensely strong. On paper, Gideon's battle plan looks bound to fail. But it is God's plan and the victory is both resounding and miraculous.

Cast: Captain Gideon and a soldier.

Props: Jug, torch, trumpet. A desk and chair.

(Gideon is seated at his desk. A soldier knocks.)

Sold: *(Knock, knock)*

Gid: Come in! Come in! Oh it's you, Jessop *(Soldier enters and salutes. Gideon shakes him warmly by the hand)*. Let me be the first to congratulate you soldier.

Sold: *(Pleased)* Thank you very much sir. Er what have I done?

Gid: *(Puzzled)* Done? *(Pause)* Oh I see. 'Congratulations'! Yes indeed! I was congratulating you on being chosen.

Sold: Chosen? Chosen for what exactly sir?

Gid: Soldier, you have been personally chosen to come with me into battle. I have a cunning plan to rout those Midianites. What do you think of that then?

Sold: Wow, sir! That's such an honour. I suppose you will need all the soldiers you can get. How many do you have?

Gid: Well soldier, including you we have 2 hundred and ...no ... three hundred exactly.

Sold: That would be three hundred thousand then sir!

Gid: Er no, that would be just 300. Do you have a problem with that soldier?

Sold: Oh no, no. Erm this must be a great battle plan then sir.

Gid: It is! It is!! You're gonna love it!

Sold: And some formidable weapons of course....

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- Gid: I think so. In fact I have got your special equipment right here. You could take it away with you. Let me see....
- Sold: *(To himself)* Big sword! This is exciting!
- Gid: Right Jessop here we are: trumpet!
- Sold: *(Unsure)* Thank you sir. A trumpet. And this is for? *(Pause)* I know, I blow the trumpet, deafen the enemy, he puts his hands over his ears and I run him through with my great big sword. Good plan sir.
- Gid: Well ... er ... Just a moment, I have something else for you.
- Sold: I bet this is a great big sword eh sir?
- Gid: No, no. Where is it? Ah here we are - one torch!
- Sold: Right. A torch. And erm this is for ... er ... I know, I blast him with the trumpet, he puts his hands over his ears, I shine the torch in his eyes, he can't see anything, and then I run him through with my great big sword?
- Gid: Not exactly but you're getting there! And don't worry, full training will be given.
- Sold: Right.
- Gid: Now next ... *(Produces jug)* One jug!
- Sold: Right ... A jug. And this would be? I know, I deafen him with my trumpet, he puts his hands over his ears, then I blind him with my torch and then hit him over the head with the jug and while he's unconscious, I run him through with my great big sword.
- Gid: Erm. Well that's very close.
- Sold: Permission to ask a question sir?
- Gid: Certainly soldier, ask away.
- Sold: Well, as I have heard sir, there are hordes of marauding Midianites, millions of them, correct me if I'm wrong.
- Gid: No, no, go on.
- Sold: Well I was just thinking, I deafen him with my trumpet, I blind him with my torch, hit him over the head with the jug ... jug breaks. I'm not quite sure of my next move.
- Gid: No worries, full training ...

- Sold: *(Interrupting)* Will be given, yes I know sir. Just a moment, I've got it. If we could get all the hordes of marauding Midianites to stand in one long queue, I could start with the front guy, deafen him with my trumpet, blind him with my torch, hit him over the head with the jug; he falls over, and knocks all the ones behind him over and I run in ... *(Tailing off)* with my great big sword. Are you sure this is going to work sir?
- Gid: I know it all seems a little irregular but just wait till you know what else I've got in mind.
- Sold: I think I know what this is. This is a great big sword, isn't it sir?
- Gid: Well a sword does come into it ...
- Sold: I knew it!
- Gid: What it is exactly is a 'battle cry'!
- Sold: Right ...
- Gid: As the battle starts, what you shout is - you're gonna love this - 'A SWORD FOR THE LORD AND FOR GIDEON' - in fact we all shout it together. Powerful stuff eh soldier?
- Sold: Right. So we shout out that there's a sword, but we don't actually have one. Correct me if I'm wrong sir.
- Gid: No, you are absolutely right. They will be terrified. They will run like frightened rabbits.
- Sold: So let me just re-cap sir, just to get this clear in my own mind. There are millions of them, 300 of us; I deafen them with my trumpet, they put their hands over their ears and at the same time, I blind the first guy with my torch, hit him over the head with my jug, he falls over, knocks all the others down then I rush in shouting 'A sword for the Lord' and they are all so scared they scamper away like frightened rabbits!
- Gid: Good plan eh? I just need to tidy it up a bit.
- Sold: Yes ... well. Am I right in thinking that this is the first battle plan you ever made sir?
- Gid: Yes! I'm rather proud of it! Tonight's the night soldier! What do you think? Be honest now!
- Sold: I think ... I think sir: that if you can pull this one off, it will be *(Pause and face audience)* a miracle.

(Freeze)

Mr Needy

Revelation 3:20

We are needy people. We need a Saviour. The first difficulty is in admitting that this is true. The second difficulty many of us have is in receiving help for our need. Jesus said: “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock, if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in ...”

Cast: Mr Needy is a stereotypical grumpy old man. Another actor plays all the other parts from behind a ‘door’ erected on the stage.

Props: Freestanding ‘door’ on stage. The person behind the door should be out of sight. Mr Needy should have a walking stick and a chair. In between each ‘visitor’ he returns to his chair – sometimes sitting down, sometimes in the act of sitting!

(Mr Needy, sitting in his chair on the stage.)

Mr N: I’m fed up, I am! Here’s me, living all by meself ... no-one ever comes to see me. Nobody cares about me. And another thing, I’m not a well man. I’ve been ill for ages, but does anyone care? No! *(Knock)* Now ‘oo’s that ... *(Peeps behind curtains)* It’s the doctor. Now what does HE want?

Dr: *(Shouting through letter box)* Mr Needy! Are you there? It’s the doctor! I heard you weren’t very well. I’ve brought you some medicine to make you better.

Mr N: Doctor? Doctor? Coming round here with his medicine, making people better! I’ll show him! GO AWAY! There. *(Peeps round curtains)* He’s gone. *(Pause)* And another thing. Pitch dark in here it is. I’ve got no electricity. Come the winter I have to go to bed at half-past-four! But does anyone care? No! *(Knock)* Now ‘oo’s that? It’s the man from the Electricity Board! Now what does ‘e want?

(Electricity man shouts through letter box.)

EM: Mr Needy are you in there? It’s the man from the Electricity Board! I’ve come to reconnect the electricity! Can you let me in?

Mr N: Electricity man! Coming round ‘ere. Connecting up people’s electricity? I’ll soon show him ...GO AWAY. There! *(Peeps round curtains)* There, he’s gone. *(Pause)* And another thing ... freezing cold it is in here. Central heating broke down ten years ago. But do they care? *(Knock)* Now oo’s that? *(Peeps round curtain)* It’s the man from the Gas Board. Now what does ‘e want?

(Gas Board man shouts through letter box.)

GBM: Mr Needy! Are you there? It's the man from the Gas Board! I've come to mend your central heating. Can you let me in?

Mr N: Gas Board man! Coming round 'ere, fixing people's central heating? I'll soon show him ...GO AWAY! There (*Peers round curtain*) He's gone! (*Pause*) And another thing, I'm dying for a cup of tea, but I've got no water - not a drop! What do they care? (*Knock*) Now 'oo's that? (*Peers round curtain*) It's the man from the Water Board! Now what does 'e want?

(Waterboard man shouts through letter box.)

WBM: Mr Needy are you there? It's the man from the Water Board. I've come to turn the water on. Can you let me in!

Mr N: Water Board man? Coming round 'ere, turning people's water on? I'll soon show him. GO AWAY! There! (*Peeps round curtains*) He's gone! (*Pause*) And another thing ... I'm starving. Haven't got a crust of bread in the house! But do they care? (*Knock*) Now 'oo's that? (*Peeps round curtains*) It's Meals on Wheels! Now what do they want?

(Meal on Wheels person shouts through the letter box)

M on W: Mr Needy are you in there? It's Meals on Wheels, I've brought your meat and three veg. Can you let me in?

Mr N: Veg-smedge. Who does he think he is, coming round here bringing people meat and three veg? I'll soon show him. GO AWAY! There. (*Peeps round curtain*) he's gone. (*Pause*) And another thing: I'm lonely. Go all day, don't speak to a soul. Nobody cares about me. (*Knock*) Now 'oo's that? (*Peeps round curtain*) Oh, it's the person who loves me most in the whole world. It's Jesus ...

Jesus: Mr Needy it's Jesus! I have come to bring light and warmth into your life. I've come to bring you healing. I've come to satisfy the deep hunger in your soul and to fill you with living water. And I love you more than any one else ever could. Open the door and let me come in. I will stay with you and you will never be lonely again. Mr Needy? (*Pause*) Mr Needy? Why won't you let me in?

(Freeze)

How to Be Happy

The Beatitudes - Matthew 5:1-12

All of us would like to be happy. Unfortunately we tend to look for happiness in the wrong places. We try shallow remedies looking for a quick fix. Jesus' teaching in the beatitudes is that real joy comes from knowing the 'smile of God' on our lives. It is a joy which only He can give.

Cast: Doctor (*with stethoscope, etc*) and Patient. Card prompter.

Props: Table and two chairs. Prompt card saying: 'TWO WEEKS LATER'. Prescription pad and pen. Knee hammer. Lolly stick to depress tongue.

(The Doctor is sitting at his desk.)

Doctor: Next!

Patient: Morning doctor.

Doctor: Ah Mr Glum! How are we today?

Patient: Not good doctor. Not good at all!

Doctor: Hmmmmm let me see! (*Looks in patient's mouth*) Say Ahhhh!

Patient: Ahhhhh!

Doctor: (*Listens to chest with stethoscope*) Hmmmm. Breathe in! Hmmmm! Breathe out! Oh dear me! Just cross your legs for me please. (*Hits knee with hammer*)

Patient: Ouch!

Doctor: Sorry old chap. Well now this is NOT good.

Patient: What is it doctor? What's wrong with me?

Doctor: Well Mr Glum, as far as I can tell ... you have a very bad case of the blues!

Patient: Is it serious?

Doctor: People with 'the blues' are always serious, Mr Glum. In my opinion, you are a VERY unhappy man.

Patient: Is there anything you can do?

Doctor: Do? This is the 21st century Mr Glum. We have the whole of medical science at our disposal! Here, I'll write you a prescription ... *(Writes)* 'Two weeks' holiday in the Bahamas'. There you go Mr Glum! Two weeks in the Bahamas. Soon put a smile back on your face!

Patient: Wow! And is this on the NHS?

Doctor: Of course. Off you go! Next!

(He exits. Enter card prompter with sign saying 'Two Weeks Later'.)

Doctor: Next! *(Mr Glum enters)*. Ah Mr Glum isn't it? And how are the boils? Or was that Mrs Bentwhistle?

Patient: No Doctor. I'm the one with the blues.

Doctor: The blues? Oh yes of course. And how were the Bahamas? I'm surprised to see you back in the surgery. What is it this time? Sunburn?

Patient: No doctor. I think I've still got the blues. I'm not a happy man!

Doctor: The Bahamas didn't make you happy?

Patient: Well yes, they did for a time, but then I had to come home again. And when I came back, so did the blues.

Doctor: Oh dear. Well, don't despair Mr Glum. I'll write you another prescription. This should do the trick. Now let me see: *(writes)* 'Loads of friends' There Mr Glum. Loads of friends. That should bring you loads of happiness eh? They'll invite you to all kinds of things: cinema, barbecues, their kids' parties, the pub. You'll be cured in no time!

Patient: Thanks doctor. I'll try this.

Doctor: You do that Mr Glum. Next!

(He exits. Card holder enters carrying card which reads 'Two Weeks Later'.)

Doctor: Next!

Patient: Morning doctor. It's me again. Sorry to be a nuisance.

Doctor: Mr Glum! I didn't expect to see you again! How are the blues? All gone eh? Happy are we?

Patient: Well actually ... no doctor. If anything it seems to be getting worse.

Doctor: What? But the friends?

Patient: Well they tried. And it did work for a while, but ...

Doctor: Oh dear, this is far more difficult than I thought *(Thinks)* What to do? Got it! I'll write you another prescription. This is going to work wonders. You'll be happy in no time! *(Writes)* Mercedes Benz, sports model, soft top, 3,000 cc. Colour?

Patient: Yes please!

Doctor: Yes but which colour Mr Glum? I suggest something bright and cheery! How about red! That's a happy colour! There you go – one Mercedes, bright red!

Patient: Wow, thanks doctor! I must say the National Health isn't what it used to be!

Doctor: Indeed! Next!

(Patient leaves. Card carrier walks on, shows audience card and then walks off.)

Doctor: Next! Mr Glum! I am very surprised to see you again. Have you come to tell me how happy you are?

Patient: I wish I had doctor, believe me. I WAS happy with the Merc, but ... well the effect wore off and the blues came back. I thought I'd better let you know.

Doctor: Indeed Mr Glum!

Patient: I thought you might give me a prescription for something else that might make me happy. Anything.

Doctor: Well Mr Glum, much as I hate to see you suffer in this way, I have to confess I have tried everything I know – the holiday, the friends, the car ... I thought at least one of them might have made you happy. I don't know what else to give you.

Patient: This is terrible. I'm a doomed man. There is no hope for me. I will never ever be happy!

Doctor: Well, sadly, Mr Glum I can't make you happy ... But I know a Man *(Points up and looks up – slight pause)* who can!

(Freeze)

Grace and Dover Castle

Romans 5:8

Grace is a wonderful Bible theme: that God's blessing, riches, forgiveness, favour and love are poured out on us, who are so undeserving. The sketch is a very simplistic picture of an act of grace – a sacrificial kindness to someone who is undeserving; an act of generosity from a victim to a perpetrator.

Cast: Jack and Daisy (2 children), Headmaster.

Props: None.

(Jack is annoying Daisy and ends up pulling her hair. Just at that moment the headmaster enters.)

Head: JACK! What are you doing? Stop it at once!

(Jack stands shame-faced before the head.)

Head: You are in big trouble boy. I've warned you time and again about your behaviour! It is unacceptable. *(Pause)* And because you can't behave yourself, I shall ring your mother and tell her you won't be going on the school trip tomorrow.

Jack: Oh no sir! Please sir! I WILL be good from now on. Oh please let me go.

Head: Sorry Jack. You don't seem to be capable of being good. Anyway I shall let Henry, the new boy have your seat on the coach. At least he knows how to behave.

Jack: But that's not fair ...

Head: No Jack, what isn't fair is the horrible way you were treating Daisy. What has she ever done to you?

Jack: Nothing. She just annoys me.

Head: And you annoy me! I shall ring your mother now and then I shall tell Henry the good news.

(Exit – Jack sits dejectedly on step – enter Daisy)

Daisy: Are you OK Jack? What did he say?

Jack: Nuffink

Daisy: He must have said something? Besides, you look pretty miserable.

- Jack: Well if you must know, I'm not allowed to go on the school trip tomorrow. Happy now?
- Daisy: No of course I'm not happy! That's terrible – you were looking forward to it. Everybody is!
- Jack: I've never been to Dover Castle. It's supposed to be huge with towers you climb up and a giant catapult and ... and stuff. And now I can't go. I always miss the school trips.
- Daisy: Do you. Why?
- Jack: I dunno. Somefing always goes wrong. Like. I missed the Sea Life centre last year.
- Daisy: What happened?
- Jack: I got into trouble because I put a frog in Mrs Smith's handbag.
- Daisy: That was really cruel ...
- Jack: She got over it!
- Daisy: I meant: it was really cruel to the frog!
- Jack: And I got taken off the school football tour just because I got into a fight!
- Daisy: But you had a fight with the referee!
- Jack: Yeah, well ... And then I didn't go to the science museum because I accidentally broke a window.
- Daisy: Accidentally how?
- Jack: I was only throwing a chair at Jamie Dosselthwaite ... it's not my fault he ducked!
- Daisy: So none of this is your fault then?
- Jack: Well maybe ... well yes. I always get everything wrong. Even when I try really, really hard, I still seem to get into trouble: I always mess up. Like today! I didn't mean to upset you. And now I'll never get to see Dover Castle.

(Leaves stage – enter headmaster)

- Daisy: Could I ask you something?
- Head: Of course
- Daisy: Well it's about Jack...

Head: No need to worry – I've told him he can't come on the school trip tomorrow. He just can't behave himself that boy ...

Daisy: The thing is, he's really sorry. He knows it's his own fault ... Please could you give him another chance?

Head: He doesn't deserve another chance, does he? Besides it's too late. I just told Henry he can have Jack's seat on the coach, so we haven't got any spaces left.

Daisy: *(Thinks)* Why don't you let him go instead of me? He can have my seat! Oh please?

Head: Daisy ... he's in trouble because he upset you. And now you want to give him your place on the school trip. That just wouldn't be fair.

Daisy: I know, but he IS really sorry. And he is always missing out because no matter how hard he tries, he always seems to mess up. I don't want him to miss out on Dover Castle ... pleeeeeease!

Head: Oh go on then. Are you sure you're happy to swap places with him?

Daisy: Yeah I'm sure.

Head: Well I'm proud of you Daisy! I'll tell him the good news.

(Big hug)

Daisy: Thanks Dad!

(Freeze)

Turn again, Whittington

James 4:13-17

There is nothing wrong with having plans, but making plans comes with a health warning. The Bible says that you only have one life to live and that that life is short. I can choose to live my life in one of two different ways: I can live it to please myself; or I can live to please my Father God. Now here is an interesting question: what happens if I live my life by my own plans? Does that mean that everything will go horribly wrong for me? Well, the world is full of successful people who have left God out of their plans, so that can't be true. What happens when I live just to please myself is this: I get further and further away from the heart of my heavenly Father. I may finish up the most successful person in the whole wide world, but I will not know Him.

Cast: Dick, Doc and Dec.

Props: Possessions wrapped in a handkerchief on a stick, and a cat! The cat can be imaginary.

(Dick Whittington is on stage with his possessions and his cat.)

Doc: Hey! Dick! Dick Whittington! Wait for us!

Dick: Why, if it isn't Doc Bittington and young Dec Mittington! Hi there Doc! Morning Dec!

Doc: You were travelling fast Dick! Where are you off to in such a hurry?

Dick: Well now - I am off to London to make my fortune!

Dec: What on earth for?

Dick: Derrrr! I need a fortune.

Doc: But you're only 13!

Dick: Don't split hairs. Besides London is the greatest capital city in the world. Fortune and fame await me.

Dec: Who says?

Dick: If you must know a little bell TOLLED me! So what do you think?

Doc: Does your father know?

Dick: My father? Certainly not!

Dec: So you're just going away forever, without asking?

Dick: I am an ambitious boy Doc. If I ask him he might say 'no' and then where would my fame and fortune be?

Doc: But what about the plans that he has for you? He loves you dearly; maybe he has something better in mind.

Dick: Better? What could possibly be better than making a fortune and becoming famous?

Dec: How do you know you're going to be famous?

Dick: Because, young Dec, I am ME. I can be anything I want to be, do anything I want to do. If I believe in myself I can climb any mountain, forge any stream, (*Sings*) follow every rainbow ...

Dec: Ohhh spare us ...

Dick: Ah, one day you will remember this conversation lads. I will be Lord Mayor of London. Everyone will know my name. In 500 years time they will still be writing plays about me ...

Doc: I still think you should ask your dad.

Dec: So do I. It's just really mean slipping out of the back door like this.

Dick: Oh do stop going on about my father. When I'm rich and famous he's going to be proud of me isn't he? He will bathe in my reflected glory.

Doc: But if you ask him, you would be going with his blessing - that must be better than breaking his heart.

Dick: Oh he'll get over it! No, this is something I need to do on my own. I don't want anybody's help and I certainly don't need anybody's permission. And if that's all you've got to say, I'm off. Come on puss...

Dec: Puss?

(Exit Dick)

Dec: *(To audience)* Well, he was right. Young Dick Whittington went on to become Lord Mayor of London, he did become rich and he did become famous and he never looked back.

Doc: *(Slowly to audience)* ... But he never ever saw his father again.

(Freeze)

Trial by Justice

Romans 1:18-32

We don't like to think about the 'wrath of God', but it will be poured out on all of unrepentant mankind one day. We need an advocate, and only Jesus stands between us and the rightful anger of His Father. This passage from Romans 1 doesn't pull any punches. We are without excuse if we are without repentance.

Cast: Judge (the voice of justice), Mr Mankind (representing all of unrepentant mankind) in the dock.

Props: Something to represent a 'dock' – maybe a table resting upright on its legs. A black 'cap' for the judge.

(The scene is set. Mankind is in the dock – already found guilty and Justice is about to pass sentence. The judge speaks with authority.)

Justice: So Mr Mankind. You have been found guilty. Do you have anything to say before I pass sentence?

Mankind: There's bin some terrible mistake yer honour. I'm not guilty. You gotta believe me. I didn't know that God even existed. Honest. I 'ad no idea.

Justice: No idea. So you never saw the mountains or the sun or the stars that He made? You never noticed the seas crashing against the rocks. You never saw the sunrise or the colours of autumn? Is that what you're saying?

Mankind: Well, yeah, I SAW them...

Justice: So you saw all that God had made, but didn't worship the God who made them? And who, incidentally, also made you, Mr Mankind!

Mankind: This isn't my fault.

Justice: And I suppose it wasn't your fault that, ignoring the God who made you, you made a few gods of your own in passing, and worshipped them instead?

Mankind: I never...

Justice: Your bank balance for example, and your car, your sport, your career, your pleasure, your booze, your girlfriend... need I go on?

Mankind: Then why didn't God stop me. If He'd stopped me, I wouldn't be here now would I?

Justice: So you are blaming almighty God – who made you, loved you, provided for all your needs, blessed you in every way, offered you salvation? You are blaming Him because YOU turned and walked away? You are blaming Him because you CHOSE to worship the things that He had made rather than the One who made them? Is that what you're saying?

Mankind: He should have said something.

Justice: Mr Mankind – He did saying something – but you moved out of earshot. And in the end, He let you go. Now I notice that you wanted your other crimes taking into consideration... may I just remind the Court of these?

Mankind: I'm not ashamed of anything I've done.

Justice: Very well. As well as forgetting your God, you are also guilty of the following: *(Reads)* Unnatural sexual acts, wickedness, evil, greed, depravity, envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice, gossip, slander, God hating, insolence, arrogance, boastfulness. You have invented ways of doing evil, you have disobeyed your parents, you are senseless, faithless, heartless and ruthless. And even though, Mr Mankind, you knew that these things carried the death penalty you continued to do them until now you stand before me full of your own guilt and without excuse.

Mankind: That's not fair. Everyone does that stuff. My mates do it all the time and they're really great mates...

Justice: Then Mr Mankind, as you admire your 'mates' so much you must join them. *(Putting on black cap)* Inasmuch as you have rejected your God and have remained unrepentant, you are without excuse. It is my duty to condemn you to death and to eternal separation from the God who gave His own life in the hope of saving you from the consequences of yours. *(Pause)* Take him down.

(Freeze)

The Path of Life

Proverbs 4:18-27

There is a 'right way to live'. The Bible calls it 'the Path of Life' because it is the way that God intends us to live. To deviate from the path causes us to stumble and fall; we get lost. To follow God's righteous way leads us to the place of His blessing.

Cast: Hiker 1 and Hiker 2. They should be kitted out as serious hikers.

Props: Hiker 2 should have a woolly hat. Hiker 1 should have a map.

(Two hikers with all their gear walk onto the stage.)

Hiker 1: Right then. All ready?

Hiker 2: Yep!

H1: Off we go then!

H2: Great! I'm really looking forward to this. Where are we going?

H1: Aha! We, my friend, are going to walk the 'Path of Life' from beginning to end!

H2: Oh wow! The Path of Life is every hiker's dream. Let's go!

(They set off walking on the spot)

H1: *(Excited)* Ah look, here comes the sun! I love that first gleam of dawn. You only ever see it on this path. I love watching the sun get brighter and brighter ...

H2: Me to. *(Pulls hat down over his eyes so that he can't see)*

H1: What are you doing?

H2: Pulling my hat down?

H1: But you can't see a blind thing!

H2: I can see my hat!

H1: But what about 'health and safety' if you're not careful you'll fall ...oooops!
(H2 falls over)

H2: Ow that really hurt! Why do things like that always happen to me?

- H1: Maybe it's the hat thing?
- H2: *(Putting his hat back up)* Well it's still not fair! So, which way now?
- H1: Let me look at the instructions *(Get out instructions)*
- H2: Instructions? Why would you want to follow instructions? Why can't we just make it up as we go along!
- H1: But we might get lost. We could go miles out of our way. These instructions are written by someone who knows the way to walk the Path of Life ... all the ups and downs and how to navigate the difficult places. You can't just wander along willy-nilly.
- H2: Boring.
- H1: But I thought you WANTED to walk the Path of Life. If your heart's not in it, you'd better say.
- H2: I'm here aren't I?
- H1: But what about your heart. To a true hiker, the heart is everything...it's about passion...
- H2: Nerd alert!
- H1: Well that's not a nice thing to say ... I worry about you sometimes.
- H2: Well we'd better worry about where we are. Ah look! A signpost.
- H1: Oh yes. Now let me see: *(Reads)* 'Path of life, straight ahead – 'wrong path to the right' – 'another wrong path to the left'.
- H2: Well why don't we try the right one?
- H1: That'll be straight ahead then.
- H2: No, no I mean the one on the right.
- H1: But the right path is the wrong path.
- H2: Yes but it LOOKS like it's more fun. It's dark and bumpy and spooky and dangerous ...
- H1: But it won't take us to where we want to go.
- H2: OK, well why don't we try the LEFT path ... it's even darker ... even more dangerous ...
- H1: Dark? Dangerous? But why wouldn't you want to walk in the sunshine? Look, I think I want to stick with the Path of Life, if that's ok with you I'd just feel so much happier.

H2: Spoilsport. We always have to do what YOU want to do. S'not fair. What's so special about the Path of Life anyway?

H1: Well it's not so much the path itself, as where it leads to ...

H2: So where does it lead?

H1: It leads (*Pause and face audience*) to my Father's house.

(Freeze)

The Tower of Babel

Genesis 11:1-9

In the Bible, Babylon is synonymous with man's pride, power and achievement outside of God. In the same way, the Tower of Babel was to be a testament to man's greatness, but God Himself intervenes and confounds the great plan. This is a pivotal event in history, for here we see the birth of the nations. The confusion of language finds a mirror image in the book of Acts when the Gospel is preached and 'every man hears in his own language'.

Cast: Four men carry the dialogue in the form of a 'poem'. They should wear smart jackets up to the point where they begin to build, where they remove them to look more like labourers.

Props: A safe, free standing ladder.

(The four men enter the stage and stand in a line.)

Mr A: We are the men of Shinar

Mr B: Each one, a clever man

Mr C: We've built this noble city

Mr D: The best in all the land.

Mr A: And yet, one thing is missing,

Mr B: Which seems an awful pity,

Mr C: What do we need?

Mr D: I think I know – What we need's a COMMITTEE!

(Gather round, mutter then separate)

Mr A: We need another building
So God can see our power.

Mr B: A statue?

Mr C: Or a monument?

Mr D: No, what we need's

All: A tower!

Mr A: A tower built of brick, not stone,

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Mr B: It should be very high!

Mr C: So high, we could reach God Himself,

Mr D: A tower to touch the sky.

(Bring on ladder, remove jackets, put on hard hats if available and begin work by forming a chain and passing imaginary 'heavy' bricks along the line and up to Mr A on top of the ladder, who builds the tower).

Mr B: Our tower is growing daily

Mr C: I think we are top nation!

Mr D: Our tower is a testament
To the art of communication!

Mr A: So pass another blungen gup

Mr B: Oh bloogen bleeper blig

Mr C: Eck blivy bluvy glurgy glub

Mr D: Odd doogen deegen dig

Mr B: I don't know what you're saying
So I am going home *(Leaves)*

Mr C: Al blingen blagen bloogy blug *(Leaves)*

Mr D: In zingy zangy zong. *(Leaves)*

Mr A: *(Alone on top of ladder)* Hello? Bonjour?

(Freeze)

Boo and the Great Shepherd

Luke 15:1-7

Jesus came to seek and save the lost. That is what Christianity is all about. Spiritual 'lostness' is the basic human condition and it is a self inflicted state: we have all 'gone our own way'. Some of us don't realize that we are lost, others know but don't want to admit it, but lost is what we are. The Biblical picture that Jesus uses in His parable is that we are like straying sheep. We are helpless and in danger. Jesus is the Good Shepherd who sacrifices everything in order to rescue just one of those who are His. To rescue me. To rescue you.

Cast: Boo the sheep (*Street wise kind of guy*). The donkey (*Hip-hop kind of guy*). The Shepherd (*needs to be tall enough and strong enough to carry Boo.*)

Props: None

(Donkey is on stage. Enter sheep looking a bit 'lost!')

Sheep: Baa!

Donkey: Hey boy! What's your name?

Sheep: Boo!

Donkey: Woah made me jump! Boo eh? Nice name! Where'd you come from Boo?

Sheep: Who wants to know?

Donkey: Just askin'. No offence! You OK?

Sheep: Yeah. Why shouldn't I be?

Donkey: Well you just looked kinda lost somehow man.

Sheep: Well I ain't lost so there.

Donkey: My mistake. *(Pause)* And you're heading where, exactly?

Sheep: I dunno ... anywhere I fancy!

Donkey: But ain't you 'sposed to be with a flock of some kind?

Sheep: Flock? Who needs a flock? They just follow each other around like a stupid ... flock thing ...

Donkey: Well they sure didn't follow you.

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Sheep: Nah. They were too busy following ...

Donkey: Each other? Sort of round in circles?

Sheep: Not exactly. They follow ... someone else...

Donkey: A cow?

Sheep: A c... of course they don't follow a cow ... They follow ...

Donkey: Horse ... pig ... (*with emphasis*) donkey ...

Sheep: Oh shut up with yer ... stuff ... If yer must know, they follow the shepherd.

Donkey: Ahhhhhhhhhhhhh!

Sheep: What d'you mean 'aaaaaaaaaaaaah'?

Donkey: I mean ... At least they follow someone who knows where he's going!

Sheep: So?

Donkey: I mean ...at least they follow someone who's gonna look after them!

Sheep: (*Belligerently*) Yes!

Donkey: And keep them safe...

Sheep: (*Belligerently*) Well ok.

Donkey: That don't sound too stupid to me!

Sheep: (*Belligerently*) Well...

Donkey: So ... talking of stupid, what are you doin' here man? Why aren't you with your mates? Why aren't you right behind this guy who knows where he's goin', looks after you and keeps you safe?

Sheep: I dunno.

Donkey: I think yer do!

Sheep: I fancied going my own way for a change, that's all.

Donkey: Let's face it man. YOU IS LOST BIG TIME!

Sheep: Maybe.

Donkey: Do you know where you are? Do you know where you're goin? Do you know where your shepherd is right now? Do you know how to go back? That don't sound like 'maybe' to me man. YOU IS LOST, AND HOW! I rest my case.

Sheep: *(Looks despondent...)*

Donkey: And I don't want to rub it in, but unless there's a miracle happens, YOU IS LOST FOREVER MAN!

Sheep: *(Starts to call out)* Baaaaaa!

Shepherd: *(Calls from somewhere off stage)* Boo! Where are you?

Sheep: Baaaaaa!

Shepherd: I'm coming Boo, keep calling!

Sheep: Baaaaaaaaaaaa!

Shepherd: Phew! There you are mate.

(Big reunion - they run together and Boo leaps into the Shepherd's arms (audience often applauds at this point.) Wait for quiet before delivering last line.)

Shepherd: I've been looking everywhere for you. You should have called me sooner. I just HAD to find you. Come on Boo, let's go home.

(Boo and Shepherd exit.)

Donkey: Man! Now that's what I call a GREAT Shepherd!

(Freeze)

Follow the Crowd

Matthew 21:1-9, Mark 11:1-10, Luke 19:28-40, John 12:12-15
A Sketch for Palm Sunday

The story of Jesus' 'triumphal entry' into Jerusalem is recorded in all four Gospels. Most of us are swayed by the opinions of others and here the whole crowd turns out to cheer Him as He enters the city. They greet Him as a King - the Messiah. It is hard to believe that one week later they are calling for His crucifixion.

Cast: A number of actors on stage to be the 'crowd': they should have coats, palm branches, etc. Three of the crowd have small speaking parts and these are numbered 3, 4 and 5. Two main characters (1 and 2) can be male or female. Speaking characters stand in line as follows, 4,3,2,1,5. They are holding palm branches. Speaker 2 has 2 x branches in his hand.

Props: Coats and palm branches for the crowd.

(Crowd is on stage. There is an air of excitement as they wait. Enter 1. He pushes through crowd to stand between 2 and 5)

1: (To 2) What's going on here?

2: Dunno. I just thought I'd wait and see what's happening!

1: OK. (Pause) What have you got there then?

2: *(Looking at palm branch in his hand)* This? It's a branch off a palm tree!

1: What's that for then?

2: Search me. Everyone else had one, so I thought I ought to have one as well. Do you want one?

1: Thanks. Er, what do I do with it?

2: Just do what everyone else does.

1: OK

(Crowd begin waving their branches. They need to look as if they are expecting Jesus to come from their right hand side. After looking round at the others, 1 and 2 wave their branches too.)

1: Hey this is fun!

- Cr: Hosanna! Hosanna!
- 1: Hosanna? What does 'hosanna' mean?
- 2: No idea! *(Pause, then joins in shouting)* Hosanna!
- 1: *(Waits a couple of seconds, looking round then joins in)* Hosanna!
Hosanna! This is great!
- 3: *(Pointing to his right and speaking to 2 on his left)* He's coming!
- 2: *(To 1 on his left)* He's coming!
- 1: Who's coming?
- 2: Erm *(To 3)* Who's coming?
- 3: Erm *(To 4)* Who's coming?
- 4: Jesus! Jesus is coming! *(Shouts and waves)* Hosanna!
- 3: *(To 2)* Jesus is coming! *(Starts shouting Hosanna)*
- 2: *(To 1)* Jesus is coming! *(Starts shouting Hosanna)*
- 1: Do I know Him? Oh well *(Shouts)* Hosanna! Hosanna!

(At this point the crowd in the front and to the right begin to take off their coats and put them on the floor. Do this in sequence starting at the far right and moving down. Those standing at the back can continue to wave branches.)

(When the wave of movement reaches number 2, he takes off his coat too)

- 1: What are you doing?
- 2: Taking my coat off
- 1: Why?
- 2: I don't know. Everyone else is!
- 1: Oh right. OK then.

(Takes off his coat and puts on the front of the stage. At this point, crowd cheers the loudest. Crowd can shout the following three phrases as a 'round'! As they do, their heads move slowly from right to left as if following an imaginary procession. Crowd in back row can jump up and down, trying to see. Crowd on right stop cheering moments before crowd on left who are last to see 'Jesus' go past.)

- Cr: a) Son of David!
b) Jesus is King!
c) Hosanna!

(As soon as the imaginary procession has passed, the back row can start to walk off stage, leaving 1, 2 and 5 to speak while the others are leaving.)

1: Popular guy!

5: Wonderful Man!

1: Do you know Him then?

5: Not personally, but He healed my auntie's neighbour's granny. He is a wonderful Teacher too, I've heard Him. Good Man!

1: Really? So is He the King then?

5: We are all hoping that He soon will be.

1: Oh so do I!

(5 leaves stage leaving 1 and 2 putting on their coats)

1: *(To 2)* That was absolutely brilliant. I enjoyed that!

2: It was good wasn't it? Well I hope to see you again.

1: Yeah! Great!

2: Tell you what, if your not doing anything next Friday, why don't you come again?

1: OK! What's happening next Friday?

2: No idea! We could just come and follow the crowd again!

1: OK!

(Pause and exit)

Capital 'I'

1 Corinthians 12:12-31, Matthew 23.11, Luke 22:24-27, Romans 12:3-8

The world's idea of success is to get to the top and be the best, to look down on the less worthy and be proud of personal achievements. This is not the teaching of Jesus. The Church is the body of Christ, controlled by Him and moving together at His direction and for His kingdom. In the church, everyone has a place, everyone has a purpose, and all are of equal value. Pride of place or achievement goes against all that Jesus stands for because the Bible makes it clear that everything we have, all our talents and abilities, are ours by gift not by merit. This little sketch works well in teaching about the worth of the individual so it is quite good for a school assembly. But its main teaching is in showing that in the body of Christ, we are all necessary.

Cast: Individuals to represent the following letters: (*speakers*) I, L, R, Q, H, Y, E. Letters I and E should be the strongest actors. X, U and any number of other letters can take part.

Props: A large card for each actor showing which letter they represent. These can be carried or better still hung round the neck. They should be clearly readable.

(The letters are all on stage except I and E. They are playing a game where they rearrange themselves to spell out words. Enter letter I.)

I: Here I am everybody. Out my way X!

R: Why do you always think you're more important than anyone else?

I: Well I'm certainly more important than an X.

L: No you're not. X is just as important as you.

I: Really. So how many words start with X? Xylophone. Now there's a word I use every day!

R: Don't be so horrible

I: Just stating the facts. You only have to look on the keyboard - who's the dusty one? Oh look ... if it isn't our friend X!

Q: He still gets used.

I: Oh hark who's talking! (*Sarcastically*) Who can't go anywhere without 'U' - know-who'?

H: Q is always there when you need her. Without her we wouldn't have eQuality ... and she's worth 10 points in Scrabble!

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I: Oh look - Harry the Hairy Hat Man! It speaks ...

Q: And quintessential...

(Letters all look puzzled for a moment because they don't know what it means.)

Y: *(After a pause)* Yes ... well ... *(To I)* Anyway what makes YOU so good?

I: Me? My dear boy, I am a vowel ...

Y: So?

I: There are only 5 vowels. There are 21 of you. You lot don't make any sense without the vowels. We are indispensable!

Q: We don't always use vowels ... what about PG Tips?

H: M and Ms ...

Q: NHS ...

I: Initials darling. Now I can make a word all by myself.

L: So can A!

I: And what is A please? A vowel: I rest my case ...

Y: OK then ... see how you manage without me ... Y is on strike! *(Turns his back)*

I: Oh don't be so sill

R: And I'm on strike too. Bet you can't manage without the letter R ... *(Turns his back)*

I: 'ubbish. Oh this is 'idiculous!

L: You ever heard of Noel, Noel? Well ... no L.

I: 'eave then. Aw ... stupid 'ettters.

Letters: That's it! One out, all out!

(All the letters turn their backs on I.)

I: I...I...I...

(Enter E.)

E: Hi I ... what's going on?

I: I ... I ... I ...

H: *(Turning round)* We're on strike.

E: But you can't strike. How is anyone going to talk?

(All the letters now begin to turn round.)

R: I reckons he doesn't need us ...

Y: Reckons vowels are better than anyone else ...

I: Well it's true! I'm used more than anyone else. Well apart from E.

E: The thing is I ... the more you get used, the more of a servant you are.

I: Servant?

E: We are the servants of the words. Look, each one of us has his own special sound. Each sound is unique. We can't function without any one of you. Surely you understand that I. Each sound is a gift to all the other letters.

Q: What about me though. I'm not much use?

E: None of us are much use on our own Q ... not even vowels. You are a part of something much bigger. It is the Alphabet which is important, not just the letters in it. And it's only when we all work together that we fulfil the purpose for which we were made.

H: Like a family then

E: Yes ... very much like a family

L: Like the Church

E: And very much ... *(Turning to audience)* like the Church

Hey Shorty!

Romans 3:23

It is not the committing of sins that makes us sinners. We ARE sinners and therefore, sooner or later, we will sin. Our sinfulness is our state as well as our behaviour. The Bible says: All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. There are no exceptions. By sin, here, we mean 'falling short of God's perfect standard.' Unfit for glory! This sketch is an illustration of that 'falling short'!

Cast: James, Baz and Mike (the smallest). Attendant; Narrator

Props: A bag for Mike

(James, Baz and Mike are at a theme park.)

James: Brilliant! That was brilliant! What shall we do next?

Baz: Let's go to Pharaoh's Tomb!

Mike: Yeah! Oh no – look at the queue!

Baz: Oh well let's wait then...

James: No look! The Cobra... there's hardly anyone waiting. Quick!

(They run to join short queue.)

Mike: Oh pants! There's a height restriction!

James: Oh it won't matter!

Baz: Don't worry Mike, I came with my mate last week and I'm sure he's as puny as you are – they let him in!

James: Anyway, we'll take so long to get there you'll have grown by then anyway!

Mike: I can always stand on tiptoe!

Baz: Don't bover Mike! *(Gives him a shove)*

Mike: I could stand on me bag. *(Falls off)*

James: Tell you what, I'll give you a piggy back!

(Mike jumps on but they stagger about and cause confusion.)

Baz: They'll probably let you in, you're nearly tall enough!

Mike: Oh well, we're here now. I hope you're right, Baz!

Att: *(To Mike)* Sorry mate, you're not tall enough!

Baz: What d'you mean?

Att: There's a height restriction on this ride ... 'e ain't tall enough so 'e can't go on!

Mike: Yeah, but I didn't know!

Att: You must've seen the notice!

Mike: I ... can't read!

James: Yes you can you little liar...

Mike: *(Under his breath)* Shut up, James!

James: Oooops!

Mike: Ow come on, let us on! I've queued up for hours!

Att: I don't care if you've queued up for days, mate! If you're short: you're short!

Mike: That's not fair! I'm not short by much. There's loads of people smaller than me. My sister's smaller than me!

James: Yeah, and my cousin! He's a lot smaller!

Baz: But he's only 4!

James: So! He's still smaller!

Att: Then he wouldn't get on either, would he? It doesn't matter if it's one centimetre or ten centimetres ... If you don't come up to the mark, you can't come in!

Mike: So what CAN I do?

Att: You can GO AWAY!

(Mike turns and walks sadly away.)

(Poignant pause. Other boys, attendant and narrator come to front of stage.)

Baz: The Bible says you have to be perfect to get into heaven.

James: It also says that we have all come short of God's standard.

Att: Mike can always come back when he's taller, but if you get turned away from heaven's gates, it's too late; there is no coming back - ever.

Baz: Only Jesus ever came up to God's standard. He has paid for your sin, and if you ask Him, He will take it away. Then, when your turn comes, Jesus himself will bring you into God's presence.

(Begin to file off as final narration starts.)

Narrator: *(Can be pre-recorded or read 'off stage' as the other walks off.)*

"Just as the gates were opened to let in the pilgrims, I looked in after them; and behold, the city shone like the sun, and the streets were paved with gold. Inside walked many people with crowns on their heads, palms in their hands and golden harps to sing praises. When I had seen, *(Pause)* I wished myself among them."¹

¹ From 'Pilgrim's Progress' by John Bunyan

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Offside

Ephesians 5:22 - 6:4

In this passage, as Paul addresses family life, we tend to prefer the verses that apply to the other members of our family rather than ourselves! Parents love the verses about obedient children! Kids love verse 4 (chapter 6) – about dads not exasperating their children! But all of these rules are part of God’s plan for a happy family life. They are ‘Life Rules’ and, just as both teams in a football match are expected to abide by the rules of the game, so everyone in the family needs to follow the rules that God lays down in order to enjoy a contented home-life!

Cast: A Football Commentator, Mum, Dad, Laddie, Referee.

Props: The family needs to wear matching football kit. The referee needs to be in black shirt and shorts with TWO red cards in his pocket. He should also have a book marked ‘Rules’ The commentator can wear warm outdoor clothes and carry a hand-held microphone. Laddie needs to be doing his homework. Mum is sitting at a table with a coffee and a magazine. If possible, the closing bars of Nessum Dorma.

(Mum and Laddie are on stage. Commentator is standing to one side of the ‘room’.)

Dad: *(Coming in from work)* Come on son, get yourself to bed...

Laddie: Aw dad. I’m still doin’ me homework!

Comm: Welcome viewers, and as you join us, we have just kicked off. And the atmosphere in this home ground is absolutely electric! Defensive move there from Laddie and Dad has the ball, and yes, he passes it to Mum....

Dad: Honestly Irene ... Why don’t you make him do his homework when he first gets home from school....then we wouldn’t have all this fuss when I get in!

Comm: And a neat little pass! Can Mum do anything with it?

Mum: It’s no use George... he needs to relax a bit when he first gets home, the last thing he wants to do is start working straight away!

Comm: Oh well played Mum!

Dad: It’s not a question of what he wants ...

Comm: Neatly back to Mum!

Mum: Oh you make me cross ...

Comm: Bit of tension creeping in here ...

Laddie: Mum's right though Dad ...

Comm: And Laddie is asking for it!

Dad: Just shut up and get on with your work!

Comm: And it's a nasty tackle from Dad!

Laddie: But why can't I do it when I want to?

Camm: Neat little side-step from Laddie there ...

Dad: Because I say so!

Comm: And Dad goes in hard, but here comes Mum...

Mum: Do you have to be SO unreasonable all the time?

Comm: Nice one mum!

Dad: Perhaps I could just remind you that I am the head of this house...

Comm: Nasty move from Dad ... but it's legal ... and here comes Mum again ... she's not going to let it go ...

Mum: Ow, you're always throwing your weight around George ...

Comm: And Mum regains possession ... but Dad is still there ...

Dad: I seem to remember you promised to love, honour and OBEY me ...

Comm: What a shot that was! Can Mum save it on the line?

Mum: If I'd known how bossy you'd be, I'd never have promised anything!

Camm: Great save from Mum ...

Laddie: Nice one mum!

Comm: Oh bad move from Laddie there ... Dad's looking very angry ...

(Family all speak together and begin to fight)

Dad: It's time you learnt some manners boy. }

Mum: Leave him alone George. }

Laddie: It's not fair you're always on my case. }

Comm: And there's one almighty bundle...

(Ref enters blowing whistle)

- Comm: And the ref has intervened ...He's going to throw the book at them.....
- Ref: *(Holds up a red card to Laddie.)*
- Comm: And it looks as though Laddie is in for an early bath ...
- Laddie: Ow come off it ref ... he started it ...what d'I do?
- Ref: *(Gets out rule book)* 'Children obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord'. Sorry but those are the rules son ...
- Comm: And I have to say, the referee is absolutely right here ... but oh dear me, what's this? I think Mum's in trouble as well!
- Ref: *(Holds up red card to mum!)*
- Comm: It's a red card! And Mum is most indignant!
- Mum: I don't believe this! Now what am I supposed to have done?
- Ref: *(Reads)* 'Wives, submit to your husbands as is fitting in the Lord!' You can't just break the rules you don't like...Name?
- Mum: Oh come on ref ...
- Comm: Mum is arguing, but the referee is perfectly within his rights here...only Dad left in the team now ... *(Excited)* Oh no he isn't! I don't believe this ... the referee is showing him TWO red cards ... this is incredible!
- Dad: This is ridiculous! Why do I get TWO red cards?
- Ref: *(Reads)* 'Husbands love your wives and do not be harsh with them'... that's one! 'Father's do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged!' That's two! Sorry, but rules are rules ...
- Comm: Well everyone is absolutely speechless! The referee has sent them ALL off! I've never seen anything like it!
- (Ref gathers the family in order to speak to them)*
- Comm: Just a moment, the referee seems to be conferring with the family... they're all looking very thoughtful! Let's see if we can hear what he's saying...
- Ref: Listen to me. If you want to be a winning side, you HAVE to play by the rules. Dad, you love Mum and Laddie, don't you?
- Dad: Well, yes, of course I do.
- Ref: Then listen to them. Don't be so harsh and critical or you'll never get the best out of your team... look at them...they're demoralized! And Mum, you love Dad don't you?

Mum: Well ... yes ...

Ref: Then show him respect. Your manager has made him Captain so stop arguing and give him your support. Let him know you are on his side. Discuss tactics. Give him good advice! *(Pause)* And Laddie ... you love your mum and dad don't you?

Laddie: I suppose ...

Ref: Well then, you must co-operate with them. They've been playing longer than you so they understand the game better ... listen to them. OK everyone?

Family: OK

(Ref tears up red cards and leaves stage)

Comm: Well this is quite remarkable ... all the family are back in the game ... And dad is in possession ...

Dad: I'm sorry Irene ... Sorry Laddie ...

Comm: Beautiful pass to Laddie ...

Laddie: I'm sorry too Dad ... Mum ...

Comm: Superb control from Laddie ... and now Mum has it ...

Mum: Oh you guys! We were all wrong! Let's start again ... let's try living as if we love one another ...

Comm: What a finish from Mum! And it's there! It's in the back of the net. That was teamwork!

(Last strains of Nessun Dorma if available ... family run towards each other in slow motion, hands raised in 'High Five' position. Then hugging, back slapping in football style celebration as commentator speaks.)

Comm: And the crowd think it's all over! *(Pause)* Well it is now!

(Freeze and exit)

The Quest

Proverbs 4:1-9

To be wise is a great gift. The Bible says it is a prize that we should search for with all our hearts – a crown of splendour. Sadly and ironically, because we lack wisdom, we content ourselves with things of lesser value.

Cast: A knight and a peasant

Props: A grass straw for the peasant to chew

(Peasant is on stage chewing a straw. Knight enters on a 'pretend' horse looking around as if lost.)

Peas: G'morning good knight! Can I 'elp 'e?

Kn: Ah good morrow peasant! *(Gets off pretend 'horse' and strokes its pretend nose)* Yes, I am in need of direction. I am on a quest you see. Seem to have lost my way ...

Peas: Oh-ar a quest be it? Well what be you looking for so desperately?

Kn: I am looking for Wisdom. I thought it was somewhere round here but now I don't know which way to go! Could you maybe point me in the right direction?

Peas: Indeed I can sire – but why be you wanting Wisdom?

Kn: Why Wisdom? Well you see, if I could only find it, it would guard me and ... and protect me ... Wisdom is supreme: it's like a crown of splendour. I must find it.

Peas: Well sire, if that's what you be a-wantin. But Wisdom, she be a long way orf. Why don't you go to Chessington? It be a lot closer.

Kn: Chessington? Why would anyone want to go to Chessington?

Peas: Have you never heard of Chessington World of Adventures Sire! Well if you want fun, that be the place to go, Rameses Revenge and all that!

Kn: Fun? Chessington? Rameses Revenge? Why would I want Rameses Revenge when I can have Wisdom?

Peas: Oh well Sire, suit yourself - I was only suggesting...

Kn: Well thank you for the thought but I am a knight on a quest ... so my good man, how do I get to Wisdom?

- Peas: Well If you went down this road 'ere ... turn left, turn right, straight across the roundabout and then get on a 97 bus...
- Kn: That'd take me to Wisdom?
- Peas: Oh no Sire ... that'd take you to Mr Patel's corner shop where you can purchase a ticket for the lottery.
- Kn: Ticket? Lottery? What has that got to do with my quest for Wisdom?
- Peas: Oh that? Nothing really. But there's a lottery roll-over this week: you could win millions of pounds!
- Kn: But no Wisdom.
- Peas: Oh no sire. On the contrary ...
- Kn: Why would I want millions of pounds when I could have Wisdom? I'm not sure you know where Wisdom is after all.
- Peas: Oh no no no ...yes! Tell you what, go to the station ... get on a train for Cambridge.
- Kn: Cambridge? Is that on the way to Wisdom?
- Peas: Well not exactly ... but Cambridge is where all the clever people go. Educated people. And students as well. Get yourself an education Sire. It's a lot like Wisdom!
- Kn: Education? Students? I'm on a quest for Wisdom, not cleverness – not fun – not money. Wisdom is more valuable than all of those put together. I'd give them all up. (*Wistfully*) In fact I would give up everything if only I could find Wisdom.
- Peas: In that case Sire your quest be over. I think (*Pause*) you have found Wisdom.

(Freeze)

Fight Your Own Battles

Romans 8:31

Satan is a bully, and his attacks on our hearts and minds can leave us feeling extremely vulnerable. This little sketch reminds us that although we may be weak, we are not alone. We are on the Lord's side: He is on our side, and all the host of heaven fights beside us!

Cast: Small boy, Bully boy, Small boy's big brother!

Props: Someone in the audience, near or on the stage, wearing glasses; a school bag.

(Small boy is leaving school, quite happily! Bully boy enters and grabs the small boy's school bag, holding it out of reach and throwing things out of it.)

Sm. Boy: Oi! Give that back!

Bully: Oh yeah? Gonna make me?

Sm. Boy: You're always picking on me! Why don't you just leave me alone?

Bully: I don't like your face, that's all! Any questions?

Sm. Boy: *(Mumbling)* You great thick bully!

Bully: *(Intimidating)* Say that again squirt!

Sm. Boy: I didn't say nuffink!

Bully: I think you DID! Right then, want yer bag back do you? It'll cost you three quid!

Sm Boy: Just give it back. It's not yours!

Bully: It is now! Three quid squirt!

(There's a struggle in which the small boy comes off worst and the bully puts the bag where the smaller boy can't reach it.)

Bully: Right! I'll give you ten minutes! You go home and get back here with three quid in your grubby little hand, or I'll come and find you! I know exactly where you live!

(Small boy goes off sadly, reluctant to leave his bag behind. Bully smokes a pretend cigarette while he's waiting. Small boy returns peeping out from behind his very much bigger brother. Bully's attitude changes.)

Big Bro: This him then?

Sm Boy: Yeah!

Big Bro: Right! Been picking on my little brother have you?

Bully: Oh come on! It was only a joke! I didn't mean it! Where's his sense of humour?

Big bro: *(Sarcastically)* Ha! Ha! Ha! Now where's his bag?

Bully: Oh look here it is all the time! I was gonna give it back, honest!

Big Bro: I ought to punch you right in the lip! *(Grabs hold of bully and talks into his face.)* You know what you are ... you're a bully! Why don't you pick on someone your own size!

Sm Boy: Yeah!

Bully: *(Scared)* Don't hit me! Please don't hit me!

Big Bro: Why shouldn't I? Give me one good reason!

Sm Boy: Yeah!

Bully: You ... you shouldn't hit a man who wears glasses!

Big Bro: *(Le's go of Bully in surprise.)* But you don't wear glasses!

Bully: *(Quickly grabbing the glasses from a man sitting in the audience – pre arranged of course!)* I do now!

(Freeze briefly, then Bully runs off. Big brother picks up the bag, puts his arm around little brother's shoulder and they walk off together.)

Tranquillity

John 14: 27, Philippians 4: 7
A Discussion Starter about Peace

Our understanding of peace often has to do with our desire for life to run smoothly. So long as life is calm, we are calm. But life is often troubled and filled with disappointment and then, understandably, our inner peace vanishes. So what does the Bible mean when it speaks of a 'peace that passes understanding'? What did Jesus mean when He said He gives us His peace which is: 'not as the world gives'? This little sketch shows how easily a tranquil moment can turn into something ugly. So how do we maintain our inner spiritual peace when life goes wrong? Should Christians never be sad or frustrated or angry?

Cast: Mel and Mick – just back from honeymoon.

Props: Interior scene with 2 x comfortable chairs and a phone. A goldfish bowl. Either a power point presentation of peaceful scenes set to soothing music, or just soothing music and some photographs that Mel and Mick look at together. For the photograph option they can make comments like: Do you remember this ... and: Oh that beach ...

(Couple are sitting side by side remembering their honeymoon until the pictures finish.)

Mel: Oh wow! What a wonderful holiday! It was just SO mellow.

Mick: Brilliant! I feel as though I'm ready for anything. D'you wanna cup of tea love? *(He starts to leave)*

Mel: Lovely! Thank you darling. *(Luxurious stretch)*

(Phone rings)

Mel: I'll get it darling.

Mick: OK sweetie.

Mel: Hello? *(Pause)* Oh hello Bob. Yeah he's here. Is everything Ok?
(Pause) Yeah OK I'll just get him. Mick darling! Phone! *(As he comes in)* It's Bob from the firm. Why would he be ringing on a Sunday night?

Mick: Bob me old mate. How you diddling? *(Pause)* Yeah we had a great time. Just got back. Just looking at the photos. What a holiday. Marvellous. Didn't want to come home! *(Pause)* Oh, what kind of bad news? *(Pause)* What? They can't do that. There's some mistake surely. I've been in the firm ten years. I'm senior management for goodness sake. *(Pause)* Well we'll see about that. *(Slams down phone)*

Mel: Whatever's happened?

Mick: I've lost me job. I'm not allowed to go in on Monday. I'm out! I can't believe it.

Mel: There must be some mistake darling ...

(Doorbell rings.)

Mel: Aw ... I'll get it. It's probably Mervyn bringing the goldfish back.

(Goes out and returns with an empty goldfish bowl.)

Mel: *(Tearfully)* Goldie's dead! The cat got her. It's so unfair. Poor little thing, she didn't stand a chance. *(More tears)*

Mick: How can you be upset about a goldfish? I've just lost my job!

Mel: Oh you. You're SO selfish. All you think about is YOU, YOU, YOU. You can get another job. But Goldie's gone forever.

Mick: Women!

Mel: Men!

Mick: I'm going to make the tea!

Mel: Do that!

Mick: I will! Do you want some?

Mel: Not if you're making it. Anyway, I'm too upset.

Mick: *(Exasperated)* Aw...I need a holiday!

(He leaves; she throws herself into a chair.)

The Honeymoon

Matthew 4:18-22, Matthew 10:37–39

Following Jesus is ‘all or nothing’. He told the fishermen to follow Him and they left their old way of life to become His disciples. We are not necessarily called to abandon everything and everyone that we know, but like them, our lives are to be centred on Jesus: we have a new destiny and new purpose. The old has gone. The new has come.

Cast: Him (Mervyn) a nerdy guy, bit of an ‘anorak’! Her (Daphne) his wife-to-be.

Props: 2 chairs side by side.

(Mervyn and Daphne are sitting coyly side by side.)

Her: Just think – six more months and we’ll be married! Isn’t it exciting?

Him: Yes, my love, very!

Her: *(Coyly)* Just one more thing to plan, I think!

Him: One more thing? And what could that be I wonder?

Her: The honeymoon of course ...

Him: *(Embarrassed laugh)* Oh dear me, yes!

Her: I was thinking of somewhere romantic ... we could fly out to the Bahamas ... all that white sand ... blue sea ... sunshine ...

Him: Oh no! No I’m sorry. I couldn’t think of flying anywhere ...

Her: Oh Mervyn! Why not?

Him: It’s mother you see. Her vertigo. She couldn’t cope with flying!

Her: What do you mean she couldn’t cope ... *(Realises)* You’re not suggesting YOUR mother comes on OUR honeymoon?

Him: Well ... yes. I can’t leave her behind. She’s 85!

Her: I don’t care if she’s a hundred and five! She’s not coming!

Him: Aw Daphne ... mother won’t be any trouble. It’ll be a nice break for her. I know! We could take Auntie Em along ... be company for mother!

Her: Auntie Em ...

- Him: ... and there'll be Stanley! He's VERY good with mother!
- Her: Stanley! Not your brother Stanley?
- Him: How many Stanley's are there? I wasn't thinking of inviting a total stranger! It is our honeymoon after all!
- Her: *(Through teeth)* So. We've got your mother, your Auntie Em, your brother Stanley ... anyone else you'd like to bring? Perhaps we could get a party rate! Perhaps we should invite the whole cast of 'Titanic'!
- Him: Aw no Daphne, I think that would be a terrible disaster! Although I WAS thinking of including Desmond in our little group!
- Her: *(Shrilly)* Desmond! Surely you don't mean dopey Desmond – the man with the brain the size of a small dried pea! Now, Mervyn, tell me, why would ANYONE want to take dopey Desmond on their hols?
- Him: Oh that's easy! Birds!
- Her: Birds.
- Him: Desmond and I have been bird spotting companions since we were twelve years of age. We once simultaneously spotted the red shrike! A truly bonding moment! What a tragedy, I say it again, what a tragedy, if I should spot some rare ornithological specimen without Desmond beside me to share my joy?
- Her: Mervyn. Mervyn, stop right there!
- Him: Something amiss my love?
- Her: You could say that. Mervyn, this is my honeymoon. I am going away with YOU! I am not going away with your mother, your Auntie Em, your brother Stanley, your bird-spotting friend Desmond or UNCLE TOM COBLEY AND ALL!
- Him: Oh Uncle Tom! That's a good idea!
- Her: Mervyn. No! No! NO! It's you ... and it's me and it's NO-ONE ELSE! Do you understand?
- Him: Oh very well my love. Although ...
- Her: No.
- Him: What about ...
- Her: No. Just you. Just me.
- Him: Oh, alright then. But no aeroplane. I must put my foot down firmly on the plane!

Her: So now what's the problem? Why can't we fly?

Him: Well ... what about the dog?

(Freeze)

The Artist

John 19:30, Ephesians 2:8-9

We are not saved by works. We are saved by God's grace and our acceptance of that gift. But we do try! Despite the fact that nothing we can do can impress God in any way, we continue to think that some goodness on our part has merit which counts towards our salvation. The truth is that Jesus has done all that is necessary to satisfy the righteousness that God requires. We can add nothing. Salvation can only be accepted freely, humbly and thankfully. And that is very good news.

Cast: The artist. His friend.

Props: An easel. A simple painting of the cross which the audience do not see until the end. A bag of money for the friend.

(The painting is on the easel facing away from the audience. The artist leads his friend up to the painting. He is covering his friend's eyes with his hands. When they are in position, he takes his hand away so that the friend sees the painting for the first time.)

Art: Ok! Open your eyes!

Fr: Wow! Oh wow! That is wonderful! It's perfect! You did this?

Art: I did. And what's more, I did it for you. It's yours!

Fr: Are you serious? You did this for me?

Art: Aha.

Fr: No I can't accept this – really, it's a wonderful gesture, but there must be someone more deserving than me!

Art: No, no, you've missed the point. I want YOU to have it! Nothing would give me more pleasure. Every stroke was done with you in mind. I did it for you, don't you like it?

Fr: I love it, but I can't accept it. It's too much. Here, let me pay for it ...

Art: No, no, I don't want you to pay for it. It's a gift.

Fr: But it's too much – at least let me give you something towards it ...

Art: It wouldn't be a gift then, would it?

Fr: Well, I don't know what to say. This is SO generous!

Art: My pleasure.

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(They stand for a few seconds considering the picture.)

Fr: Do you know what I might do? I think maybe something in the foreground ... maybe a child, or a dog. Or maybe a peasant ... what do you think?

Art: Peasant? What are you talking about?

Fr: Oh it's ok ... you don't have to do it. I can do it myself when I get home. Or maybe I could do it now if you've got a brush handy ...

Art: You want to add something to my picture?

Fr: Well, yes. It would give me ownership if I just added a little something of my own!

Art: My dear friend! How can I make you understand? This is a gift! It's from me to you: I did it with you in mind ... especially for you! You can't pay for it because it's a love-gift and love doesn't come with a price ticket ...

Fr OK ...

Art: And you CAN'T add anything to it, because what I am giving you is already perfect and anything YOU try and do will only spoil it! No offence! All you have to do is take it! You see this picture ...

(Takes it off stand and looks at it.)

Art: It is *(turns picture towards audience)* FINISHED!

(Freeze)

The Box

Genesis 3:1-7, Romans 1:32

This sketch is about temptation. Being forbidden to do something seems to make us want to do it more! Just as Eve reached for the forbidden fruit when every other tree in the garden was permitted, so perverse human nature always desires what it shouldn't have and often reaches for it, despite the warnings.

Cast: Tom and Ben

Props: Use a large carton and cover it with warning stickers - eg DANGER, DO NOT LOOK INSIDE THIS BOX. Inside the box should be a wig with hair standing up on end as if in shock. It should be easy to pull on by Ben when he has his head inside the box.

(The large box is on a low table.)

(Enter Tom and Ben.)

Tom: Oi Ben! Look at this!

Ben: What is it?

Tom: It's some kind of box!

Ben: Der! I can see that, but what's it doing there?

Tom: Well, it's just sort of sitting there really! It wasn't there earlier. I wonder what's in it?

Ben: Well, only one way to find out ... *(Goes to open it)*

Tom: No! No ... Ben don't open it. You can't open it.

Ben: Why not?

Tom: Well, you don't know what's in it? Look. Look here ... 'DANGER do NOT open this box. You will be VERY sorry'

Ben: Oh people just put that stuff on to spoil your fun. It doesn't MEAN it's dangerous. It's a control thing!

Tom: I dunno. I think we should leave it.

Ben: Leave it? You great wooss ... where's your great British spirit of adventure? If I leave it, they've won haven't they?

Tom: Who? Who's won?

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- Ben: They have. The people who put this box here and stuck labels on it to stop us having any fun. I bet that's why it's here. It's a sort of test. I know their little game. *(Goes to open box)*
- Tom: *(Stops him)* No, no Ben ... I really don't think you should open the box. I mean these labels: they're warnings! You can't just ignore them, just in case.
- Ben: In case of what? What's the worst thing that could happen?
- Tom: It could blow your head off?
- Ben: Well yes. Naaaah! Stand back, I'm going in ...
- Tom: Ben don't ... *(Ben puts head in box)* Ben? Ben? What is it? What's in the box? What's happened?
- Ben: *(Pulls out head wearing wig in shock)* AAAAAaaaaaaaargh!

(Freeze)

The Warehouse

Matthew 7:7

I don't know where this story originated, but it is a good story and makes a good point! Of course it is allegorical – we have no reason to think that St Peter shows us the sights of heaven; there is no warehouse and thankfully, no box with your name on it! The point is this: God is willing and ready to pour out His blessings on us. The problem is either that we don't ask, or that we don't open our hearts to receive.

Cast: Saint Peter, Jez newly arrived in heaven

Props: A large shoe box with the name 'Jez' on it.

(Saint Peter is showing Jez the sights of heaven)

Pete: Well, what do you think of it then?

Jez: Pete, this is well ... *(Looks around)* I can't believe I'm REALLY here! Look golden streets ... real gold! It's just too much ... I can't take it in!

Pete: Well mate, you ain't seen nothing yet ...

Jez; Well I just ... what can I say?

Pete: I tell you what ... come and have a look at the Sea of Glass ... it's beautiful man ... I can't explain, you've just gotta be there ...

Jez; Right then...lead the way...*(They move off)* What's that then? *(Pointing)*

Pete: What's what?

Jez: That! Look ... that building ... what on earth is it?

Pete: Oh that? Oh that's nothing, come on ...

Jez: Oh don't give me that ... I'm all curious now, what do you know that I don't know?

Pete: How long have we got?

Jez: Very funny ... come on ... give. What is it?

Pete: It's nothing ... it's just a warehouse that's all ...let me show you the glassy sea ...

Jez: Not so fast me old mate ... something's going on here that you're not telling me. What on earth is a warehouse doing in heaven? I didn't read about THAT in the Good Book!

Pete: Well not directly maybe, but it is there if you look.

Jez: Well I don't need to look now Pete, because YOU are going to tell me. What would anyone want to keep in a warehouse in heaven? Let's go and have a look.

Pete: Jez, just don't do this. It isn't important now – it's all to do with your old life on earth, and that's all finished with now.

Jez: Well is it my sin or something?

Pete: No, no ... that was all forgiven; God doesn't keep a record of wrongs once they're dealt with.

Jez: Well that's a relief. So what are we talking about then?

Pete: Oh OK then, it'll be easier if I show you. Come on.

(They enter the building)

Jez: Wow! It's massive. Look at all these boxes ... there's rows and rows of them! What's inside them: *(Reads)* A to Bo, Br to Cl ... they've all got names on. Is there one for me?

Pete: I'm afraid so.

Jez: Well where is it. Just a minute where's the J aisle? *(Sees his box on a shelf)* There I am ... right up there. Get it down then Pete, let's have a look.

Pete: I don't advise this Jez.

Jez: Oh come on, just a little decko!

Pete: Okay ... eee *(Lifts down box which is heavy)* Seems pretty full to me.

(Jez slowly and cautiously peeps inside, shuts the lid, then peeps inside again. Then, looking puzzled, closes the lid and looks at Pete.)

Jez: I don't understand this AT ALL. What does it mean? What are these things?

Pete: You don't know, do you?

Jez: Pete ...

Pete: Ok. These are your blessings.

Jez: My blessings? But I didn't get any of these?

Pete: I know. These are the blessings that God wanted to give you, but you wouldn't let Him.

Jez: Wouldn't I?

Pete: Well, most of these blessings you didn't get because you just didn't ask.

Jez: Ask? I didn't know I could. *(Thoughtfully)* 'Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and ...' I know that verse ... I learnt it when I was a kid. I just didn't think ...

Pete: You didn't think God meant it? God always means what He says Jez.

Jez: I did know that but ...this is terrible. What a waste! I missed all this!

Pete: You did ... but if it's any consolation Jez, *(Pause, look directly at audience)* ... you're not the only one.

(Freeze)

Seeing is Believing

Hebrews 11:1, John 20:29, Romans 1:20

Many people reject Christianity on the grounds that they have no ‘visual proof’ - most of us prefer to walk by sight. On the other hand, we do accept many other things that we do not actually see for ourselves. All of history is ‘reported’ by others and we believe what the history books tell us without question. The Bible says that the evidence of God is ‘clearly seen’ so that men are without excuse. Perversely, we are selective about what we believe and choose not to see the truth if it is costly, inconvenient or proves us to be in the wrong. It has always been so!

Cast: Galileo, Si and Tim.

Props: A telescope for Galileo.

(Galileo is on stage looking excitedly through his newly invented telescope. Enter Si and Tim.)

Gal: Brilliant! Well would you look at that! Amazing! *(etc)*

Si: Uh-o – don’t look now TJ, but there’s old Galileo!

Tim: Just our luck! What a crackpot! What’s he doing?

Si: No idea ... with a bit of luck, he won’t see us.

(Try to tiptoe past.)

Gal: Guys!

Tim: *(Aside to Si)* Too late!

Si: Galileo! Nice to see you!

(Go to pass on by.)

Gal: Boy am I glad to see you two! Take a look at this! It’s brilliant!

Tim: What’s it supposed to be?

Gal: It’s my latest invention. I call it my telescope.

Si: Ah! A telescope eh? Very nice *(Pulls a face at Tim.)*

Tim: What do you do with it ... stick it in your ear?

- Gal: No! No, look! *(Looks through it.)*
- Tim: Oh silly me, you stick it in your eye!
- Gal: No guys, listen, you look through it! See? It makes everything bigger!
- Si: Oh yeah! Well, have a look at that clock then!
- Gal: *(Looking)* There you are, bigger!
- Si: Well it doesn't look any bigger to me!
- Gal: *(Hands him the telescope.)* That's because you have to look through here. If you just take the trouble to look properly you'll see everything in a new way!
- Si: Get out'a here! I'm not looking through that thing!
- Gal: Guys: You're missing the point! Look! You can see right through that window over there. You can see old Mr Murphy: he's reading the paper. House prices are rising. See!
- Tim: I don't need a tele-what's-it to read that. I can just buy a paper!
- Si: What window?
- Gal: We mock what we don't understand, chaps! With my telescope I shall be able to see every detail of the moon. I shall see the stars ...
- Si: Let's get this straight. You want us to believe that you have invented something that makes things look bigger than they are?
- Tim: And it can give us a close up of the moon and stars and stuff?
- Si: On your bike!
- Tim: What's a bike Si?
- Si: I dunno, I just made it up. Ask Galileo to invent you one!
- Gal: Don't just take my word for it. Look for yourselves. It doesn't hurt to look does it?
- (Si and Tim exchange looks.)*
- Gal: I know it's hard to believe, but once you've experienced it, it will change your life. You'll wonder why you ever doubted.
- Tim: *(Looking at watch.)* It's not April the first is it?
- Gal: Oh come on lads, this is the best thing I've done.

- Si: Wasn't it you who said that men would land on the moon one day?
- Tim: He didn't.
- Si: Yeah, he did.
- Tim: What we gonna do then, grow wings? (*Flaps*) Look out moon, I'm a'comin' in to land!
- Gal: No, no, no. My theory is that one day we will invent a machine that will send brave men hurtling through space!
- Si: Like a big catapult, Boioioing!
- Gal: Well maybe that's for the future. Faith in some things grows gradually. But my telescope is real NOW! You can see it NOW! Why don't you just take a look? You don't have to take my word for it. See for yourselves. Please guys.
- Si: Sorry mate, gotta go. Some other time maybe.
- Gal: Just look once and you'll see. You'll want to discover more and more.
- Tim: Yeah right. Come on Si, we'll be late for the meeting!
- Gal: What meeting? Can I come? I could show them my telescope.
- Si: Er, sorry Gal, members only.
- Gal: Well I could join.
- Tim: Er no! You wouldn't be interested.
- Si: Nah. Somehow I can't see you in the Flat Earth Society!

(Exit mumbling about Galileo.)

- Gal: *(Leaving stage looking through telescope.)* Flat Earth Society? Losers! Wow! Would you look at that! Who'd wanna miss this?

Not Ashamed of the Gospel

Romans 1:16

To be saved by Jesus is the best thing that could happen to anyone. So why are we so coy about sharing this wonderful truth? Although we readily share any other good news, when it comes to the Gospel, we are overcome with embarrassment. There is a Brian in most of us.

Cast: Stan and Brian during their tea break.

Props: Table and two chairs. Bottle of coke. Mug of coffee. Somewhere to hide.

(Brian is sitting at a table with a mug of coffee. Stan joins him.)

Stan: *(Sitting down with a Coke)* It's good to see you mate. How you doin'?

Brian: Great. You?

Stan: Yeah great! Good weekend?

Brian: Not bad. You?

Stan: OK I s'pose. You do anything special?

Brian: Nah. Well yeah. Actually I did. There's something on me mind like. Something I've been meaning to tell you for a long time.

Stan: You're not ill are you?

Brian: No, Oh no, nothing like that, it's quite good news actually.

Stan: You've never gone and got engaged to that Lorraine?

Brian: Well no, not exactly...

Stan: Then what is it? Spit it out man ...

Brian: It's ... well ... it's a bit embarrassing really ...

Stan: You've not split your trousers again? Here borrow me jacket ...

Brian: No. Nothing like that.

Stan: You'll 'ave to give me clue Brian. You've got me imagining all sorts!

Brian: Well if you must know ... *(Mumbles)* I'm a Christian ...

- Stan: What? You missed me? It was only a weekend ...
- Brian: No, no ... I didn't say I missed you. I said 'I'm a Christian'. OK? So now you know.
- Stan: You're a Christian? Is that it?
- Brian: Yeah
- Stan: I thought you said it was embarrassing. I mean, your mobile phone going off during a funeral, that's embarrassing. Or accidentally passing wind in front of your grandma. That's embarrassing! Or your grandma passing wind in front of you ... Now that's embarrassing. What's embarrassing about being a Christian?
- Brian: It's very personal that's all.
- Stan: I suppose. When did this happen then?
- Brian: Erm 1994.
- Stan: 1994? You've been a Christian since 1994 and you never thought to mention it?
- Brian: Well I sort of hoped you'd notice.
- Stan: What, like that halo round your head.
- Brian: No but ... you know, the way I live. I don't smoke or swear or stuff.
- Stan: But you never did smoke and I've known you 20 years!
- Brian: Well, even so.
- Stan: So, how big a deal is it then, this Christian thing?
- Brian: Big! Massive! Huge! It's the best thing ever.
- Stan: What bigger than this thing with Lorraine?
- Brian: Oh yeah! Much bigger.
- Stan: Does she know?
- Brian: Well I WILL tell her at some stage ...
- Stan: So, you gonna try and convert me then?
- Brian: Me? Oh no, no you carry on believing what you ... believe ... you know.
- Stan: So it doesn't really matter what I believe?

- Brian: Of course it does Stan. I just don't want to offend you in any way.
- Stan: Well thanks mate. So this is the best thing ever, but you're quite happy for me to believe something else?
- Brian: Not happy exactly, but it's up to you after all. I wouldn't want to force my beliefs onto you.
- Stan: So what do you believe exactly?
- Brian: Well, I'm going to heaven and you're going to erm hell. *(Laughs awkwardly.)*
- Stan: I'm going to hell.
- Brian: Well ... yes and no ... well, yes actually.
- Stan: And you've known this for ten years and you didn't think to tell me?
- Brian: Well ... no. I felt a bit shy.
- Stan: So if I was a blind man and I was going to bump straight into a lamp post, you wouldn't tell me just because you felt a bit shy?
- Brian: There's no need to be offensive Stan. I'm not like you. I'm a very private person.
- Stan: Well that'll be a great consolation when I wake up in hospital with a lump as big as an ostrich egg!
- Brian: *(Offended)* Well if that's the way you feel I shall leave. Goodbye Stanley. Thank you for the chat.

(Comes to front of stage very excited.)

- Brian: Wow! That went so well! I was so bold in there! I bet old Stan's still sitting there now, thinking about all the stuff I said. I bet he wants to become a Christian right now ...

(Looks round and sees Stan standing up and coming his way.)

- Brian: No! Aw no! He's coming my way. I bet he's going to ask me some REALLY awkward question. I've gotta go! Too late, I'd better hide ... quick ...

(Hides but so the audience can still see his head and worried expression. Stan leaves stage and Brian creeps out.)

- Brian: Has he gone yet? *(Realises that he has.)* Phew!

(Straightens up and saunters off!)

The Door Keeper

John 10:1-10

The Bible often uses the picture of God as our Shepherd. As His sheep we are vulnerable, weak and prone to stray. Jesus declared Himself to be the Good Shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep, and here in chapter 10 of John's Gospel, He describes Himself as the 'Door of the Sheepfold'. The picture here is of an Eastern shepherd lying across the entrance to the sheepfold to protect the sheep from intruders who might harm or steal the flock. Use this as a mime or rap.

Cast: Shepherd, Wolf, 4 Sheep.

Props: A mask for the wolf. A crook for the shepherd. A sheepfold which can be made from a circle of chairs covered with a cloth or sheets.

(The Shepherd and the sheep are on stage. The reader begins the narrative)

All through the long hot summer's day
 Down by the little stream,
 Doris, Flossie, Curly, Shaun,
 Chew on the grass and dream.
 Safely their faithful shepherd watches,
 And if they stray too wide,
 He calls: 'Doris!' 'Flossie' 'Curly!' 'Shaun'
 You need to stay by my side.

And as the sun sinks, reddening down
 The shepherd leads them home:
 Safely into the sturdy fold
 Away from night-times harm.
 So fed and watered they lay down,
 As the shepherd makes His bed
 Across the opening of the fold
 Where no enemy can tread.

But in the night there is a hiss
 And a wolf looks over the wall:
 'Oi you' he whispers to the sheep,
 Who look up when they hear him call.
 'It's time to go – so come with me'
 Says the wolf, with a glint in his eye -
 'You can all come out to dinner with me,
 It's chips and mutton pie!'

Now sheep are slow, but they think a bit
And something's not quite right!
Could this be their shepherd calling them
To a feast in the middle of the night?
But why would He call them over the wall,
And why would He call them 'Oi',
When He knew their names and never before
Had He offered them mutton pie?

So they stay where they are, and morning comes
And then they hear a voice:
'Come, Doris, Flossie, Curly, Shaun'
And their woolly hearts rejoice!
Then they know their shepherd spent the night
Lying on the stone hard floor,
Barring the way into their fold
A loving, living door.

And He calls to them in a voice they know:
(Not like the wolf on the wall),
For He calls each sheep by their special name
And they recognise His call.
And they know they can safely follow Him
Through the sun and rain and the cold,
And when night-time comes He will keep them safe;
For HE is the door of the fold.

(Leave stage)

It Is Finished

John 8:36, John 19:28-30

This is a sketch for Easter. There are so many wonderful things that can be said about the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and no sketch can say it all! This drama is about one aspect of salvation – redemption! Redemption is where a third party pays the price to buy freedom for another. So God, by giving His Son, paid the price of our freedom from the power of Satan and the chains of sin.

Cast: Slave owner, Slave, Slave free-er.

Props: Length of chain with which to bind the slave. An envelope clearly marked 'My Most Precious Possession', with an easy-to-read card inside which has the inscription: 'The Life of My Beloved Son'.

(Enter slave in chains followed by slave owner.)

S Owner: Stop. Face front. Stand still. No talking.

(Slave obeys.)

(Slave Free-er enters.)

S Free-er: What's going on?

S Owner: Oh nothing. I'm just making this wretched slave obey my every word.

S Free-er: Why?

S Owner: I don't know really. Just because I can, I suppose. *(To slave)* I told you to face the front.

S Free-er: *(Aside)* This is terrible. *(Thinks)* Erm, supposing I wanted to buy this slave, how much would it cost me?

S Owner: Sorry mate. This one's not for sale.

S Free-er: Come now. Every man has his price ... Go on, just for argument's sake.

S Owner: Well OK. Let me see. This wretch? He would cost you the most precious, the most valuable thing that you have.

S free-er: OK ... so if I give you the most precious, most valuable thing that I have, that slave would be mine?

S Owner: Yup! Your most precious thing in exchange for this piece of human garbage! Some deal eh?

S Free-er: OK. Well hang on just a minute. Don't go away *(Goes off stage and comes back with large envelope on which is written 'The most precious thing I have' which he hands to the slave-owner)*. There you are then. You drive a very hard bargain.

S Owner: Well, if that's what you really want. Pleasure doing business with you!

(Slave free-er begins to unchain the slave.)

S Owner: What are you doing? You can't take those chains off.

S Free-er: Listen mate, these chains belong to you, but this man is mine now. Your chains just can't hold him any more.

S Owner: But he's a slave for goodness sake. Put them back. You, slave, wretch, get back in those chains, I command you!

S Free-er: That's enough! I paid your price; you don't own this poor man any longer. He is free of you for good. You have no power over him any more. The control you once had? IT IS FINISHED.

(By this time the slave is free. Slave and slave free-er face each other.)

Slave: Thank you.

(Manly hug.)

S Free-er: Come on. Let's go home.

(They leave. Slave owner opens the envelope and slowly draws out a card which he shows to the audience. On the card is written:

THE LIFE OF MY BELOVED SON)

(Freeze)

Bethlehem's Lamb

Luke 2:8-20

A sketch for Christmas. There are so many wonderful truths found in the Christmas story. In a very simple way, this sketch explores who Jesus is. He is the King of all the world, His glory shrouded in humanity. He is the God who made and loves the world – the Shepherd, caring for His flock. He is also the Lamb of God, come to give His life for our forgiveness.

Cast: Lammy 1, Lammy 2.

Props: 2 sheep's hats. Lambs can be dressed in white with black socks on their hands for 'hoofs'. A black nose adds to the effect!

(Lammy 1 is on stage. He wakes up and looks round.)

L1: Hey what's happened? Where's everybody gone?

L2: *(Entering)* Hi Lammy 1!

L1: Lammy 2 ... am I glad to see you. Where is everyone?

L2: Where've you been? Don't tell me you fell asleep and missed it all!

L1: Missed what?

L2: 'Missed what' he says! Lammy 1, you have just missed the biggest event of your entire life!

L1: Was it my birthday?

L2: Birthday? Lammy, you missed the angels.

L1: What's an angel?

L2: An angel. Well it's sort of white with huge wings.

L1: Oh, you mean like Clara the chicken!

L2: No, not like Clara the chicken. An angel flies in the sky. The sky was full of them last night. It was wonderful. You must have been asleep!

L1: So what's an angel for?

L2: An angel is a kind of messenger.

L1: What. Like the postman?

- L2: No, no, no. It is a special messenger. He's holy. He comes from God.
- L1: Wow!
- L2: I can't believe you missed it.
- L1: So what was the special message then?
- L2: Hmm ... let me think. Someone was born down in Bethlehem. Someone SO important that our shepherds left us and ran off to see who it was.
- L1: Was it a little lamb?
- L2: Maybe. No, no. Lambs are born to die. *(L1 looks startled.)*
- L2: Uh! I guess your mother never told you. Oh well I'll explain it all to you one day.
- L1: So if it wasn't a lamb, maybe it was a shepherd. Shepherds are important. Maybe a shepherd was born ...
- L2: Well shepherds ARE very important. A shepherd looks after those who belong to him. Mind you, a baby would be a funny shepherd.
- L1: Maybe it was a king then. Maybe the angels told our shepherds to go and see a baby King.
- L2: You could be right Lammy 1. No-one is more important than a king ...
- L1: Except God of course. Maybe the baby was God's Baby.
- L2: Wow! *(Pause)*
- L1: So maybe it was a lamb, and a shepherd, and a King and maybe it was God's Baby all in one. That would be worth sending an angel for.
- L2: That's true. But not a lamb though.
- L1: Why not?
- L2: Lambs are born to die.
- L1: Uh.
- (Freeze)*

Macedonian Man

Acts 16:9

Acts 16. 9: “During the night, Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him: ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us’. After Paul had seen the vision, we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the Gospel to them”. It could have been very different and the following sketch shows how different this story might have been. There are times in our lives when we stand in front of a clear signpost wondering which path to take.

Cast: Paul, Silas and the man from Macedonia.

Props: A map book. A ‘tent’ which Paul is ‘making’.

(Paul and Silas are on stage talking. Paul is ‘making a tent’. The Macedonian Man appears at the edge of the stage and calls to them.)

MM: Hey! Guys! Come over to Macedonia and help us!

Paul: Ooo’s that then?

Silas: Dunno!

Paul: I’ll ask! *(Calls to man)* What d’you want?

MM: Come over to Macedonia and help us! Please?

Paul: *(To Silas)* He said something about Macedonia! Isn’t that that little Greek restaurant?

Silas: No, no! It’s some place up north! *(Looks at map book)* Wow! It’s a long drive is that!

Paul: *(Looking over his shoulder)* It’s miles! He must be kidding! I’m not going all the way up there!

Silas: Nah! Plenty of work to do here anyway.

Paul: Yeah ... I mean, they must have some local guy who could help.

Silas: Oh yeah! Local’s best every time!

Paul: Besides, we’ve got lots of friends here ...

Silas: I mean, why should we go all the way up there? Ridiculous!

Paul: It’s cold up north anyway ...

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Silas: And you're not as young as you were ...

(Paul gives him a withering look!)

Silas: Well youngish ... young at heart and ... but ...

Paul: Anyway ... what's Macedonia got that Troas hasn't got?

Silas: It's got Macedonian Man!

Paul: True. True.

Silas: We'd have to go by boat wouldn't we?

Paul: Oh no ... might get a bit ... *(Makes waves and then vomit actions with his hands.)*

Silas: Bet he didn't think of THAT!

MM: Hey guys! Please come over to Macedonia and help us.

Paul: What a kidder! Why's he picking on us? Someone else could go ... I mean Macedonia might be right up someone else's street!

Silas: Probably is ... must be up SOMEONE'S street!

Paul: Oh well, back to work. I want to get this tent finished before lunch.

Silas: *(Pause)* Do you like making tents Paul?

Paul: It's a living Silas! Bit slack at the moment. I'll have to CANVAS for a bit more business!

Silas: Ha! Very funny that! *(Pause)* But what would you LIKE to do? Given the choice, I mean?

Paul: Promise not to laugh?

Silas: I won't laugh!

Paul: Promise?

Silas: Cross my heart!

Paul: Well I'd like to ... no, you'll laugh ...

Silas: I WON'T laugh ... honest!

Paul: *(Sigh)* Well if you must know ... I've always thought I'd like to be a missionary!

Silas: A missionary? But that's uncanny! That's what I want to be!

Paul: No kidding! You want to be a missionary? Small world!

Silas: If only eh?

Paul: Yeah! The trouble is you've got to get THE CALL, haven't you?

Silas: Oh THE CALL! Right!

MM: Hey guys! Come over to Macedonia and help us!

Paul: Oh not him again! Macedonia Man! Doesn't give up does he?

Silas: *(Shouting at man.)* GET LOST! There, that told him!

Paul: Now then, what were you saying? Oh yes ...THE CALL!

(Freeze)

Dad

Matthew 7:9

Sometimes we forget what a privilege it is to be a child of God. We forget that God's plan is to bless us and not to harm us; that He is the giver of all good things. He is the perfect Father, providing for His much loved children. Jesus uses this very witty illustration to remind us of this.

Cast: Dad. His sons, Jimmy and Jack.

Props: A can for dad. A snake. A rock.

(Dad is slumped in chair with can. Enter Jimmy and Jack.)

Jimmy: Dad, we're starving. Can we have something to eat?

Dad: Can't you see I'm busy sleeping? Have a look in the bread bin.

Jimmy: *(Coming back)* But Dad, this bread is rock hard.

Jack: Anyone got a saw?

Dad: It's not rock hard! It is a rock! Go away you ungrateful wretches and eat it in the garden!

(Kids go off but creep back later.)

Kids: Daaa...d.

Dad: Oh what is it NOW!

Kids: We're hungry.

Dad: You're ALWAYS hungry, what's the matter with you?

Jimmy: We haven't had anything to eat for three weeks.

Dad: Don't be silly. It must be at least four!

Jack: Could we have some fish fingers dad?

Dad: What am I? Made of money? Go away ...

Kids: But Dad ...

Dad: Go and look in the fridge ... I think I saw half a left-over fish finger in there last Sunday...

(Kids go away – but come back panicking and yelling.)

Dad: Oi! What's all that noise about? I can't hear the telly!

(Kids back towards him and then turn round with a live snake in their hands and a look of horror on their faces.)

Jimmy: *(Terrified)* Dad ... there's a snake in the fridge

Dad: Oh yeah ... I forgot about that. Oh well, stick it in a sandwich and belt up!

Jack: *(Tearfully)* There isn't any bread ...

Jimmy: There's only a rock ...

Jack: And a snake ...

Dad: *(Grabs snake)* Then GO AWAY before it bites you! *(Kids flee)* Rotten kids!

(Slumps back in his chair.)

(Freeze)

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