

A script from



“John, The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved”

by
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- What** A monologue from John in which he describes the events that led up to and followed the crucifixion (Themes: Good Friday, Forgiveness, Grace)
- Who** The Apostle John
- When** Biblical times
- Wear (Props)** None
- Why** John 19:1-27
- How** This skit is open-ended in that Christ has yet to be resurrected, so it would probably be helpful to use this skit as a discussion starter that deals with some of the themes in this skit. It is sure to get your audience to think, “What would I have done if I had been there?”
- Time** Approximately 10-12 minutes

John: I am a man who views life simply. Right is right, wrong is wrong. Life is not as complicated as we make it out to be. I tend to see things in black and white. Many people see gray areas in life, but I don't. That's why I've found it very difficult to forgive myself for what I did.

I know you invited me here to tell you about the cross, and I will, but I need to share with you some events that preceded the cross, like the Passover supper we shared. It was different from any Passover supper I'd ever had before. While we were eating and drinking, Jesus kept talking about His body and His blood. We didn't really understand, we just followed His lead. Hey, that's nothing new. To be honest, most of us who followed Jesus didn't understand a third of what He said. Either it was over our heads, or we were too busy arguing about things that didn't really matter to catch the words of our teacher. That night we were definitely paying attention; we just didn't understand. But we ate the bread and drank the wine and went on with the evening.

Following supper, Jesus asked us to go with Him to the garden. This was nothing new either. Jesus liked to pray in the garden, and we liked to listen to Him pray. His prayers to God were so different than any we had heard before. I remember Him praying for us one time. Instead of a peasant speaking to a king, it was like a child asking his father to do things for him. I loved His prayers. But this night was different. Instead of all of us praying together, Jesus said to most of us, “Stay here while I go further into the garden and pray.” We began to sit down, and He motioned to Peter, James, and me to follow Him a little further into the garden. So we did. He stopped, turned around, and said to us, “My soul is overwhelmed to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me.” Then He left us and went even further into the garden. Peter looked at me and said, “John, what is He talking about?” I assured him I didn't know, but that we should pray. We all agreed and began to pray silently.

Our first mistake was praying silently, and our second was lying down after a meal. I don't know when the other guys drifted off, but I barely got, “Dear Heavenly Father,” out of my mouth before I fell asleep. I was awakened by Jesus' voice. “Couldn't you stay watch with me for one hour?” I looked down in shame as He asked us again to stay watch with Him. We all tried, and before I knew it, I was asleep again. I was ashamed to find out later from Peter that Jesus came back a second time while we were asleep. Peter said He looked at us, but said nothing; like a father looking at his child who could not perform a simple task. The father does not get mad, but he longs for his children to grow and learn. Peter confessed that he wanted to say something to Jesus, but he was at a loss for words. In silence, Jesus went back to pray. Finally, Jesus came back a third time to where we were. He woke us up and told us, “The hour is near. The Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.”

Then things got crazy. Judas showed up with a large crowd of people with swords and clubs. He walked right up to Jesus, saying something like, “Greetings, Rabbi,” and kissed Jesus on the cheek. He betrayed Jesus with a kiss of friendship. Traitor! Then Peter, oh Peter, he grabbed a sword and cut this guy’s ear off. Jesus stopped Peter and told him to put up the sword.

Then he reached down, picked up the ear and placed it right back on the guy’s head! After that we all lost it. James took off one way, Peter went another, and I... I’d like to tell you I stayed to defend my Lord, my teacher, my friend, but I didn’t. I got scared and ran away just like the rest of the guys. I ran and hid. In His moment of need, I left Him. We all left Him alone.

As I understand it, they took Jesus through a bunch of trials throughout the night. Made a mockery of justice. They had tried and convicted Him before He ever set foot in front of the religious leaders. They just had to figure out a way to get their job done. But because Jewish Law could not quench their thirst for blood, they took Jesus to the Romans. Governor Pilate wanted nothing to do with Jesus and tried to pawn Him off on Herod. Herod saw Jesus as some sort of magician, but when Jesus refused to speak, much less perform for Herod, He was mocked and sent back to Pilate to deal with. The religious leaders had decided they needed blood, and with the crowd behind them Pilate wasn’t about to disappoint them. So Pilate sentenced Jesus to death and washed his hands of the entire affair.

I don’t remember who it was that came and told me, but when I heard they were going to kill Jesus, I realized just how cowardly I had been. If I had known this was going to happen, I would’ve stayed awake and prayed. If I had known... (*Pause*) things would’ve been different. But this was the way things were, and I was powerless to stop it from happening. I found Jesus’ mother, Mary, and told her what I knew. Then I went with her, and a few other women, to the Place of the Skull.

By the time we got there, they had already stripped Him and were about to nail Him to the cross. At first, I didn’t believe it was Him. He was unrecognizable. His face was swollen from the beating after beating of the soldiers. Later, when I heard His voice, I knew for certain it was my friend. I couldn’t believe it. Just hours earlier, we were eating together and now this was happening. One of the guards approached Jesus, knelt down, and he held a spike to his wrist. He raised his arm, and with a strong swing, tore through Jesus’ flesh right into the wood beneath. Jesus screamed in anguish and pain. Mary fell to the ground, weeping uncontrollably. The cold soldier continued hammering until the nail was securely in the cross. He then stepped over Jesus’ body and proceeded to drive a second nail through Jesus’ other wrist. I could not bear the sound of my friend screaming out in pain, so I bowed my head

and covered my ears. But it was to no avail. A second soldier knelt by Jesus’ feet. He crossed Jesus’ ankles and with the precision of a surgeon, drove a nail through both feet into the wood of the cross. Then with an intricate set of ropes and pulleys, the soldiers raised up the cross with Jesus on it.

As the cross slipped into its hole in the earth, it hit the bottom of the hole with a thud. You could hear the sound of His flesh tearing as the weight of His body shifted from the wood of the cross to the spikes that held Him there. I sat and watched my friend writhe in pain and wondered why a man so pure, so innocent should suffer in this degrading and painful way?

My attention shifted from the cross to the soldiers. They were hovering at the foot of the cross like dogs scavenging for Jesus’ garments.

They gambled for His clothes as if any of them were worthy to wear them.

I then noticed the people who were walking by hurling insults at Him. They shouted, “He saved others, why can’t he save himself?” Why couldn’t they stop long enough to listen to what He said? I have often wondered what would’ve happened to them if some of them would’ve simply stopped to listen. Yet, in their busy life, they didn’t have the time to listen to someone who spoke to God as if it were His right instead of a privilege.

My attention was then drawn to the religious leaders who also hurled insults at Him. “You who were going to tear down and rebuild the temple, look at you now!”

I was so angry with these people! Who were they to be at the foot of the cross where my friend hung? Who were they to walk by and hurl insults at Him? Who were they to stand there so smug? They had turned their backs on God and His servant, and I was ready to shout out to them!

But before I could say a word, Jesus spoke. His voice was raspy, tired and weak. The same voice that had called forth the dead and calmed the sea. The voice that, years earlier, had said to me, “Follow me and I will make you a fisher of men,” now spoke again. “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

Forgive them? Forgive them? What was He thinking? They were killing Him, and He pleaded for their forgiveness? Unbelievable. I think judgment was called for, swift and sure judgment. They had forsaken God’s chosen one, and they deserved the very punishment Jesus was receiving for nothing. How does an innocent man hang on a cross dying and call out for these guilty people to be forgiven? I wanted to