

Christmas Play: I'll Come to You

Written by Joanna Richards ©

First Performed at Elk Lake Baptist Church, December 2019, Victoria, British Columbia, Canada

Director Notes: This play was written to give colour and texture to the stories of key witnesses to the birth of Jesus. Each scene opens with scripture and the character's stories are from my imagination. This play can be easily adapted to the children/teens you have. The age recommendations are just suggestions; a strong young actor can take on a part for an older child. Actions and lighting are indicated in brackets and italics.

Actors:

Narration: The Narration can be pre-recorded and played during the play, or read aloud during the performance. You can use one voice, or a new voice for each scene.

Child 1: Role for a 10 year old or older

Jesus: Role for a 10 year old or older

Chorus of Distractions: You can have as many children participate in the distraction as you like. I wrote in 7 distractions for **7 children**. Suggest ages 6 and above.

Joseph: Role for a 13 year old boy or older

Mary: Role for a 13 year old girl or older

Elisabeth: Role for a 13 year old girl or older

Stan (shepherd): Role for a 10 year old or older

Jim (shepherd): Role for a 10 year old or older

Child 2 (shepherd): Role for a 7 year old or older

Child 3 (shepherd): Role for a 7 year old or older

Child 4 (shepherd): Role for a 7 year old or older

Child 5 (shepherd): Role for a 7 year old or older

Gaspar (wiseman): Role for an 11 year old boy or older

Balthasar (wiseman): Role for an 11 year old boy or older

Melchior (wiseman): Role for an 11 year old boy or older

Total Actors Required: Minimum 14 as the Chorus of Distractions can take additional roles. If you would like to include more children, the Chorus of Distractions can be young children who do not have additional roles. Sheep can be added to the Shepherd scene to bring in young children.

Set up and Instructions:

This **play** has **seven scenes** and requires music in the first scene and PPT projection in the last scene. The **stage** benefits from an ancient looking background that doesn't need to change. Each scene should have **costumes and props**, tailored to the characters.

Lights go up and down as indicated in the script.

Scene 1 - Distraction Reigns

(Jesus and Child 1 are positioned on opposite sides of the stage. The other children (chorus) are between them but farther back, facing the back of the stage, each one holding a sign that becomes a distraction throughout Scene 1, keeping Child 1 from reaching Jesus.)

LIGHTS UP

Child 1: I feel terrible. The daily grind of life is wearing me down. Much of the time I feel lonely but I'm also exhausted by the thought of building relationships. I'm afraid of being vulnerable and taking risks, but I'm also afraid no one will ever know me if I don't take risks. I want to use my talents to make the world a better place, but I don't know where to start. I feel restless and purposeless. I need help.

Jesus: Come to me you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest. Take my yolk upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yolk is easy and my burden is light.

Saint: Yeah. That sounds good. That is exactly what I need.

PLAY SONG "SMASH AND GRAB"

(Child 1 starts to walk towards Jesus, but at the first step, GROCERY SHOPPING turns around and dances Child 1 back to his starting place.)

PAUSE MUSIC

Child 1: Ok, good to have that done for the week. Now where was I?

Jesus: Come.

Child 1: Ah yes.

PLAY SMASH AND GRAB

(Child 1 again starts to walk towards Jesus, GOOGLING RANDOM STUFF turns around and dances Child 1 back to his starting place.)

PAUSE MUSIC

Child 1: Phew. Who knew elephants could be pregnant for almost two years. *(Takes deep breath.)*

Jesus: Come.

Child 1: Ok, I'm coming.

PLAY SMASH AND GRAB

Child 1 again starts to walk, LAUNDRY turns around and dances the saint to PLANNING VACATIONS, who dances him to SORTING PHOTOS who dances him to FACEBOOK who dances him to NETFLIX who dances him back to his starting place.

PAUSE MUSIC

Child 1: I just can't seem to find the time to get to you.

Jesus: Never mind, I'll come to you.

As Jesus strides towards Child 1, the light fades, and the manger scene is projected on the screen.

LIGHTS OUT

SLIDE WITH STAR ON BETHLEHEM UP

Scene 2 - Joseph

PLAY NARRATION 1

Narrator:

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about^(a): His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet^(a) did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,^(a) because he will save his people from their sins."

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" which means "God with us".

(Joseph comes on stage with a wooden box, nails and a hammer)

LIGHTS UP

Joseph: My wife says I'm a dreamer. I've got big plans, big goals, big ideas see. She doesn't understand. When I dream, I'm in my element. I feel alive. I know my place in the cosmos. I see the possibilities. I see how it could all come together.

This carpentry gig was the family business and never meant to be a permanent career, know what I mean? Yes it's a steady income. Yes it puts a roof over our heads and feeds the five little fellas. But it was never *my* dream. I wanted to run a *falafel* house.

Imagine me, the son of Azor, the son of Zadok, the son of Akim, the son of Elihud, the son of Eleazar, the son of Matthan, the son of Jacob, me, Joseph, mixing the spices, warming the oil, frying the patties until they were sizzled to perfection, then delivering them to paying customers in the market. Paying customers who said, Joseph! Joseph son of Azor, Zadok, Akim, Elihud, Eleazar, Matthan, Jacob, Joseph! This is *the* most *delicious* falafel I have ever tasted! How did you learn to perfect the spices in this way! How did you learn to cook it to perfection!

And I would reply, my friends, it starts with a dream. You have to have the dream to make the reality. And they would laugh, "Oh Joseph, you and your dreams," and then they would tip me *outrageous* sums, pat my back and say, "we will be back tomorrow."

Dreams. They can change your life, you know.

Dreams saved my son's life. If the Almighty hadn't sent angels to speak to me in dreams, well for one, I would have never married Mary. She was damaged-goods if you know what I mean. It was shameful. Marrying a woman who was already pregnant? My parents were disgraced. I was embarrassed. But I was told the child was God's, the baby was to be named Jesus, and he would save us all from our sins. Well, I didn't understand all that, but I understood my job. Marry Mary. Simple as that.

For two, Jesus wouldn't have made it to his second birthday because that psychopath Herod would have got him if the angel hadn't tipped me to run for Egypt. I tell you, that was a rough thing to explain to the Missus in the middle of the night.

And for three, we would never have ended up back in Nazareth. That time the angel said, go back to Israel as Jesus' life was no longer in danger, but when we got there, Herod's son was in charge and I was given *another* dream to keep a healthy distance, and Galilee seemed like the best choice.

Did I ever wonder, why didn't God just take away the bad guys instead of ping-ponging us around the region? You bet I did. Did I ever wonder why I couldn't just have a simple life, selling falafel and making big tips? Absolutely. Would I trade my role in God's son's life for my comfort? Not. For. A. Moment.

God's plan for his life included my life. And I bet you my best falafel recipe that it includes yours.

My wife says I'm a dreamer. I say, I'm a follower.

LIGHTS OUT

Scene 3 - Mary

PLAY NARRATION 2

Narrator:

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called^(b) the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail."

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

(Mary is on stage as the lights come up, kneading dough)

LIGHTS UP

Mary: It was a strange time you know. There was so much that couldn't be written down. So many stories that the men didn't think mattered. The women too from what I could see. How could the thoughts and actions of a young girl possibly have anything to do with the future of the nation? Of all the nations? Why, I myself didn't understand these things until years after they happened.

Here's the truth of it. No one would have expected me, Mary, the fourth daughter in my family and by far the *least* attractive, to be given anything of any special importance to do. I didn't think it myself. Given my plain features, my mother always wanted me to spend more time on my appearance. I knew I didn't look like the other

girls, and yes, it bothered me, but I always felt when I prayed that somehow it didn't matter.

I think the day Joseph asked my father for my hand in marriage was the happiest day in my *mother's* life. Relief that I was pretty enough, someone wanted me. I was also relieved to think of a life without the constant reminder that my value was dictated by my beauty, and I was found wanting.

And of course, you know the part of my story where the marriage was almost dissolved before the wedding day, but God in his wisdom had chosen the right man for me. A man that also listened to the value God gave him ahead of our superficial culture.

But can I tell you the day true healing came for me? *(She stops kneading the dough and sits down in a chair)* My sweet boy Jesus was 4, playing at my feet as I was preparing for the Sabbath. I was feeling behind with the preparations, underslept from a week of family obligations, saddened by my sisters' *many* suggestions for affordable beauty treatments and generally disappointed with myself. I could feel the hot tears just behind my eyes ready to explode at the slightest provocation, when Jesus found a broken piece of pottery with his little knee hidden under the mats. His blood was spilling out onto the kitchen floor and he was looking up at me with pleading eyes to help him.

Motherhood can be a wonderful distraction from a personal pity-party. I scooped him up, bandaged his knee, and bestowed kiss upon kiss to his tear stained cheeks. At the last kiss, he took my face in hands, like this and just held it. "Mommy, you are beautiful. Mommy, how did God make you this beautiful? Are all the other mommies jealous?"

Well, the gates holding back my tears collapsed. I managed to blubber out, "oh son, you think I'm beautiful because I'm your mommy. It's sweet, but I'm very average. Below average really."

Jesus never let go of my face. He looked into my eyes, and with the intensity of thunder crashing over the open sea, said, "Mommy. God sees you the way I see you. You. Are. Beautiful." And then he hugged me for a long time. I could feel every unkind word, every hurtful comment, every judgemental glance, melting away like a dream you can't remember, even when you try.

She sighs, wipes her eyes, smiles and stands up.

Needless to say I wasn't quite ready for the Sabbath when it came, but from that moment I saw myself and all women differently. Not as meat to be stacked up, compared and priced accordingly, but as uniquely crafted creatures, *including* our warts and our wounds, seen as priceless through the eyes that matter most.

That wasn't the last time my son's blood brought healing but that is a story for another day my friends, and I am once again behind in my Sabbath preparations so you'll have to excuse me. *(She returns to kneading her dough)*

LIGHTS OUT

Scene 4 - The Shepherds

PLAY NARRATION 3

Narrator:

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while^a Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

(Jim is on the stage with sheep. Shepherds (Child 2, Child 3, Child 4 and Child 5) enter with Stan. Option to have Stan and Jim speak with Texan accents.)

LIGHTS UP

Stan: Hey there Jim, what's the rest of the day looking like for you?

Jim: Same as everyday Stan, make sure the sheep get the grazin' they need, round them up before bedtime, tuck in and hope for a night of uninterrupted sleep. The wolves haven't been bad lately. You?

Stan: Yep, same same. We've got a mama sheep just about ready to pop so could be a sleepless night for me and the gang here, but we'll see. Could be a few more days yet. *(Gang nods along.)*

Child 2: How are ya finding the summer for stench?

Child 5: Worse than last year?

Child 4: Better?

Jim: Hasn't been too bad. Not too bad at all. I find the worse we get, the better the sheep behave. We start to smell like fellow sheep. You know, family.

Stan: I hear you, I hear you. Same for us through spring, but summer is another story. Whoooe. It gets something fierce through August I tell you.

Jim: Last summer, the smell of my own tunic woke me from a dead sleep because I was sure something had died. When I realized I couldn't get away from it, I stuck a couple fig slices up my nose to get back to sleep.

Child 2: That's a good trick Jim.

Child 3: A very good trick.

Child 5: I'll try that this summer.

Stan: Whenever I get back to town my own wife won't come within 20 feet of me. It's a terrible feeling Jim, after being away for so long.

Jim: Ah Stan, that's rough.

Child 2: That is rough.

Child 5: Really rough.

Child 3: Rough.

Child 4: Rough.

Stan: It's coming on five years now since

Jim: Yeah. I know.

Stan: There isn't a day that goes by that I don't think about it.

Jim: Same here.

Child 2: Do you think we'll ever see something like that again?

Stan: I can't believe we saw it in the first place. My wife is still jealous. Always asking me to describe it.

Child 3: It just seems like we were chosen you know?

Child 2: Of all those people with nobler blood and more money living in Bethlehem, *we* got to see, *we* got to hear.

Child 5: Why us?

Jim: I can tell you this, there's no man or woman on earth that has ever heard music so sweet as that.

Child 2: Or seen light as bright.

Child 3: Or a message as hopeful.

Child 4: Or beings that terrifying.

Child 5: I'll never forget what you said Jim.

Jim: (*Looking quizzical*) "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened...?"

Stan: Well that too, but no. How hearing a message from heaven makes the smelliest day, sweet.

Child 3: What did you mean by that?

Jim: Well, as you know, these days herding sheep range from exciting and exhilarating to downright dull. But the smell is almost always present.

Child 5: What does that have to do with angels?

Jim: Remember they said "peace on earth to those on whom his favour rests." We are in God's favour because we got to hear the message. And anyone who gets to hear *that* message is blessed, on the days that smell like roses, and the days that smell like sheep poop.

Side conversation ...

Child 5: I never thought sheep poop smelled that bad.

Child 3: You've clearly been out here too long.

Stan: I couldn't agree more Jim. It's a privilege to be part of God's story. And we are still part of it because we can keep telling people what we saw.

Jim: Amen to that Stan. Amen to that.

LIGHTS OUT

Scene 5 - The Wise Men

PLAY NARRATION 4

Narrator:

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi^(a) from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.'^(b)"

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

(Gaspar and Balthasar are onstage waiting when the lights come up. Eventually Gaspar becomes impatient. Option to have all Wise Men speak with British accents.)

LIGHTS UP

Gaspar: Balthasar! Brother. Where is Melchior?

Balthasar: Not here yet, friend.

Gaspar: While I recognize he is important and no doubt has many matters to tend to, I do wish he would simply make plans that agree with those many matters, accordingly.

Balthasar: It's always been his way Gaspar. I've been thinking of creating a new expression to describe him. Something like, you can't teach an old dog new tricks.

Gaspar: It's too depressing, it will never catch on. It reminds me both that dogs get old and that I might as well despair when I'm old that I'll never learn anything new.

Balthasar: I find it rather clever. One of those sayings that truly captures your issue with Melchior. You want him to be that which he is not, and likely never will be, even with your best attempts at training.

Gaspar: Well, we shall see about that when he arrives.

Melchior arrives, clearly rushing.

Melchior: Gaspar! Balthasar! Dear brothers. Please accept my most humble apologies. I was caught up in a debate in the temple about the passage from the ancient Hebrew text that took us on our journey to Bethlehem all those years ago. The fool was saying it hasn't happened yet, and I had to demonstrate patience and intelligence to carefully lead him through the texts we found to correct his unsound conclusion.

Balthasar: Was he convinced in the end?

Melchior: Difficult to say. You know how arguments go. It's rather a challenge to admit one is wrong after arguing one's point for an hour.

Balthasar: Quite true. Quite true. It's almost as though, you can't teach an old dog new tricks?

Melchior: Ah! A new quip Balthasar! I say, I like it. Though I'm not sure you've used it quite correctly.

Gaspar: Even so, hour-long arguments can always be continued at a later date, and we've been waiting for you brother!

Melchior: I truly am sorry Gaspar, and it wouldn't have been so bad if there hadn't been such a camel-jam. Both of the main routes were detoured for construction, sending all the camels down a single lane not meant for more than one camel at a time. I say, I do wonder they don't plan these things a little better. At any rate, the whole thing left me rather exhausted.

Gaspar: It's always something with you. Never your fault.

Melchior: Now now, Gaspar, I do sense this has bothered you more than it should. Is something at all the matter?

Gaspar: Well if you must know, I arranged for us to meet today as I'm feeling quite out of sorts and I thought you two may be able to help.

Belthasar: Ah brother, do tell us your troubles, and we will give our wisest of wisemen responses.

Gaspar: It's just, well, do you remember how we felt all those years when we were carefully searching the ancient texts, it was tedious I know, but there was a sense of adventure in it! Like we were being guided to find something extraordinary. And then when the star appeared, remember the excitement we felt? Taking off into the great unknown, waking each morning with purpose in our hearts and a light to follow. By the length of my beard, we had audience with kings! Both the evil Herod, and then the young king and his parents, all awestruck by *our* knowledge and the message for *their* lives. Meaning! My friends, we had meaning! And what now? Our days are spent convincing young men that we have *already* met the Messiah and getting stuck in camel-jams. What is it all for?

Belthasar: (*with compassion*) Ah friend. You have lost your way, it is true.

Melchior: Belthasar is right. You have mistakenly believed there was only one purpose for your life dear Gaspar, and that purpose has passed.

Gaspar: Well tell me it hasn't! Tell me there are adventures to come! Tell me of stars we must follow! Tell me ... tell me ... I am needed ... or I swear I will die of boredom.

Belthasar: Well I'm not sure about being *needed* Belthasar, but you are most certainly *wanted*.

Melchior: Do you remember Gaspar, how each morning of that journey, you would wake with the dawn, do your morning stretches, read the ancient texts, then wake Belthasar and I to encourage us to continue our journey?

Gaspar: Lord knows you two would sleep until the noonday sun if I let you.

Belthasar: And do you remember how Melchior would frustrate you with his long conversations in the villages we passed, chatting with anyone who would give him a tip about local culture?

Gaspar: Aye. I never met someone with so much capacity for idle chatter. (*Melchior nods along*). But I'll admit those tips made for some delicious meals and comfortable beds.

Belthasar: And now friend, you still rise early to stretch, you still search the ancient texts to find wisdom, you still have the capacity to encourage us on our journeys, and by gum, you are still frustrated by Melchior! You see! The more things change, the more they stay the same.

Gaspar: What can I say, you can't teach old dogs new tricks?

Melchior: Bravo! Bravo!

(All men chuckle then pause reflectively, remembering the journey to Bethlehem, and collectively sigh.)

Melchior: It was the journey of our lives was it not? It was the best time of my life...

Gaspar: ...so far. Come! Let us return to the temple and find your young fool who needs a proper understanding of the ancient texts.

Belthasar: Yes! Let us find the *young* dog and teach him some *old* tricks!

(They exit laughing and slapping each other on the back.)

LIGHTS OUT

Scene 6 - Elisabeth

PLAY NARRATION 5

Narrator:

In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.

An angel of the Lord appeared to Zechariah, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. He will be a joy and

delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

LIGHTS UP

Elizabeth:

Have you ever felt like you are on the right path, the path God called you to, perhaps even the path you wanted, but you feel like a failure? Like you gave up on yourself somehow?

I can't tell you how many baby showers I went to, how many of my friends had become grandmothers many times over, and each time, they would greet me with a look of pity in their eyes, that would sometimes spill out into words that I'm sure were intended to console but often felt like judgement.

“You're so lucky you never had babies, you kept your figure.” Or “you're so lucky you've had so much good sleep, no crying baby to console.”

I don't judge them though. They didn't know any better. People often think they need to speak, not realizing friendship can also be nurtured in silence.

Silence was my specialty. I would often sit for hours in the early morning, listening for God, not because I was always hearing his voice, but just so that I would be present if he *wanted* to speak. Once little John came, I became like most mothers, sleeping when I could and not getting up any earlier than was absolutely necessary.

I remember when the cousins got together, my challenge for the day would be as simple as trying not to get frustrated with all the talk of poop and bums and burps and poop and bums and burps. Children never fatigue on bodily functions.

I often grew resentful, which made me feel deeply ashamed, as God had blessed me with this child. It's a sacrifice to invest in someone else's life you know, even your own son. I missed my quiet mornings. I missed feeling like I had a choice.

But, here's the truth of it, I *did* have a choice. I chose *how* I spent my days, even when the activities available to me were limited. My choice was in my attitude, towards God and man. Each morning I was given the choice again, live for God or live for Elizabeth. The reach of *my* kingdom would be exactly one lifespan.

For a time, God's call was to raise my son well. Teach him the good path and help him to discern *his* calling by telling him the stories surrounding his birth. It may seem

obvious to you, looking back, but at the time, it was not so clear to me. I had to choose it, just like you have to choose your path each day.

I'll leave you with this: the best things often come from the hard things. God knew how to use my days better than I did and I am deeply satisfied.

LIGHTS OUT

Scene 7 - Welcome to Our World

PLAY WELCOME TO OUR WORLD by Chris Rice

Tears are falling, hearts are breaking
How we need to hear from God
You've been promised, we've been waiting
Welcome Holy Child [Repeat: x1]

SLIDE with Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus

Hope that You don't mind our manger
How I wish we could have known
But long-awaited Holy Stranger
Make Yourself at home
Please make Yourself at home

LIGHTS UP on Jesus with Child 1, bible open on Child 1's lap as they talk

Bring Your peace into our violence
Bid our hungry souls be filled
Word now breaking Heaven's silence
Welcome to our world [Repeat: x1]

LIGHTS OUT

Fragile finger sent to heal us
Tender brow prepared for thorn
Tiny heart whose blood will save us
Unto us is born [Repeat: x1]

BLACK SCREEN

So wrap our injured flesh around You
Breathe our air and walk our sod
Rob our sins and make us holy
Perfect Son of God [Repeat: x1]
Welcome to our world

Kids gather on stage in the dark. LIGHTS UP and bow.

The End.

A Word from the Author

If your congregation has used this script, please consider [donating to my writing endeavours](#). I would *love* to write full time and produce more cheese-free, Christ-honouring content.

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OUTTAKES not yet performed - Simeon's story:

Narrator:

When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"^[a]), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."^[a]

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss^[a] your servant in peace.
For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel."

The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

**Lights up*

Simeon: Oh hello there. I wasn't expecting anyone for tea today but let me put on the kettle. (*slowly moves to put the kettle on*) I don't move around as quick as I used to, but I tell you, by the grace of God my mind is sharper than it's ever been.

I'm sure you're here to hear about that day in the temple courts yes? Well, I'd be pleased as punch to tell you about it. I was going about my regular day. Wake up, pray for God to make this day what he would with my life, pray for my family and neighbours, and pray for the consolation of Israel, my people.

What's that?

Eh?

Speak up now.

Consolation of Israel. Well you see, us Jews had been waiting for a long time. A very long time, for the Messiah.

Eh?

What's that?

The Messiah. You don't know? Well, the Messiah is the chosen one. Anointed by God. We were all waiting. Waiting and waiting. Have you ever waited for something or someone longer than you wanted to? Speaking of waiting, is that kettle ever going to boil? Oh, heh heh, I lit the wrong pot. Mind the smoke. (*Coughs*) There we go. It will be done in a jiffy now.

What was I saying? Oh yes, waiting. You know, I think sometimes God makes us wait because growing the character of the Almighty in our lives takes time. Have you noticed when you get what you ask for immediately, you immediately forget that you needed it?

The human soul is like the perfect cup of tea, it needs a rolling boil and time to steep to create deep, rich flavour. Add a pinch of suffering and a spoonful of grace to your story and voila. There's a soul I'd like to spend eternity with.

My goodness how I get carried away. You asked about that day in the temple. Well, one morning while I was praying for Israel, God let me know, deep in my spirit, that one day I would hold his child in my arms. This was years and years ago now. I'll admit to you, I doubted the truth of it at times as my knees got weak, and my back started to ache. And that morning wasn't a special morning. There was no star, there was no prompt, I was just doing my normal routine. Would you believe, God let me see his face in the mundane of my daily routine? And you know, since then, I've realized more fully that God has always been with me in the mundane of my daily routine.

There was never any lack of God in my days before I held that baby, but I was not as present to his presence. That was the lesson for me in the temple that day. As I said to Mary, “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed.”

The thoughts of my own heart were more deeply revealed *to me*. Day in and day out, breath for each hour, new lessons to learn, friends to bless, strangers to make into friends. Less worrying about tomorrow, find the calling for today, today.

And right now, my calling is to pour you that cup of tea my friend. A little honey in yours?

**Lights fade.*

Director's Summary:

Here are the key messages each character is conveying:

- Joseph: Sacrificing what I want for God's plans; his story, is worth it.
- Mary: God heals our wounds.
- Shepherds: Even seeing angels doesn't take away the challenge of day to day living. It's a choice to believe God loves you and wants to include you in his story.
- Wisemen: There is still purpose for your life, even if it feels like the pinnacle has passed.
- Elizabeth: God's kingdom involves sacrifice but the outcome is lasting and deeply satisfying.
- Outtake - Simeon: God can meet us in the mundane of our daily routine.