

## Cheaper By The Pound

By

James E. Bogoniewski, Jr.

### Theme:

This play conveys the fact that we shouldn't give to others with the intention of making us look good. As the Bible says, we should give to others because Jesus told us to and we should be sure that the gift we give is something that we would buy for ourselves.

### Biblical References:

Matthew 7:12

So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.

Matthew 22:39b

Love your neighbor as yourself.

### Approximate Running Time:

10 minutes

### Props:

A newspaper with sale ads

A pad of paper

A pencil

### Cast of Characters:

Josh: Josh is a Christian neighbor of Doug's. Josh is involved in a food drive to support his church's food pantry.

Doug: Doug is a Christian neighbor of Josh's. He would like to help Josh out with the food drive that he is supporting but he has the wrong idea as to how he can help out.

Scene:

Doug is sitting on his front porch reading the evening paper. Josh approaches him.

Josh: Hey Doug, can I bother you for a minute?

Doug: Sure Josh, what's going on?

Josh: Did you hear about the food drive that our church is taking part in to get food for those who need it this fall [*summer, winter, spring*]?

Doug: Yeah, I did hear about it. In fact, I was just looking through the paper to see how much food we could get for our donated dollar so that we can help feed as many families as possible.

Josh: Well, that's great. So, are you going through the sale ads to see what's on sale this week?

Doug: Yep. So far I've found that potatoes are the best buy for our dollar.

Josh: Yeah, potatoes are pretty cheap. What else is on sale?

Doug: I haven't found anything cheaper than potatoes so far.

Josh: Well, I doubt that you'll find anything that's cheaper than potatoes. What else do you have on your list?

Doug: Nothin' else. Just potatoes.

Josh: Is that all you're planning on buying?

Doug: Unless I find something else that's cheaper per pound. But I doubt that's going to happen. I mean, this is a great price.

Josh: Can I ask you why you're planning on buying just potatoes?

Doug: Biggest bang for my buck.

Josh: Is that what you're shooting for?

Doug: Well, haven't you set yourself a five thousand pound goal?

Josh: Yes, that's our goal.

Doug: Well, potatoes are the cheapest food item I've found that we can buy per pound, so that's what we're going to buy to help you hit your target. See, these 100 pound bags of potatoes are only 10 dollars each. I expect that we can donate about a thousand pounds of potatoes.

Josh: Well, our goal wasn't to get five thousand pounds of the same thing. One thousand pounds of potatoes doesn't really do us all that much good.

Doug: Why not? They're versatile, they're hardy, they're a vegetable, and they're cheap. That sounds like a great combination to me.

Josh: But they're not practical.

Doug: Look, the Lord called us to be good stewards of our money, and I'm just being a good steward.

Josh: The Lord also called us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Doug: Yeah, and I am loving my neighbor as myself, I'm giving them a thousand pounds of food.

Josh: No you're not. You're giving them a thousand pounds of potatoes.

Doug: I still don't get why you're on me for giving you potatoes. You got something against the state of Idaho or something?

Josh: No, it's not that. Look, how many potatoes do you and your family eat in a typical month?

Doug: We usually go through one of those ten pound bags.

Josh: That would mean you would go through about a hundred pounds in a year, right.

Doug: Yeah, one - one hundred pound bag per year would probably do us fine.

Josh: Let me tell you a little bit about how the food pantry works. People who don't have enough money to buy groceries for their family in any given month give the food bank a call, or they stop by, and we try to give them enough food to get them to their next paycheck. We try not to give them a year's supply of one food item at a time. We do try to give them a couple of weeks' worth of everything that you'd find in your cupboard. Do you see what I'm getting at?

Doug: [*With a changed attitude.*] Yeah, I do. You'd prefer that we bought the smaller packages instead of the hundred pounders, but [*looking through the paper*] I've got to tell you, we won't be able to give anywhere near the poundage that we would have been able to give with the hundred pounders. You're chance of hittin' your target is gonna' suffer if we don't get potatoes, though. I hope you realize that.

Josh: You're still not getting my point. OK, how would you like it if you lost your job tomorrow and you didn't have any money in the bank. Before the month ended you were out of food and you didn't have any money to buy any more. You knew that your only chance for putting food on your table is the food pantry at church. How would you like it if you came by and all we had to give you was a hundred pound bag of potatoes, and we said "See ya next month." You come home and eat potatoes for every meal, every day, for a couple of weeks until you can afford to buy something else. Does that sound appetizing to you?

Doug: [*His attitude is changed.*] Not really. I doubt that I'd really appreciate having all of those potatoes after about... one day.

Josh: So, you're going to give potatoes knowing that's going to happen to someone?

Doug: No. You're right. I just can't do that.

Josh: I think it would be a lot better if you went shopping together with your wife and you each took a shopping cart. In one cart you put everything that you buy in a week, for you. You put the same things in the other cart, for the food bank. Don't you think that the recipient of that food would appreciate it much more than a bag of potatoes, which you donated because you got the best bang for your buck?

Doug: You're right.

Josh: Jesus said that we should love our neighbors as ourselves and that we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us. If you keep that in mind you're not going to give others a "second rate anything" unless you give it to yourself as well. You know Doug, the Lord has blessed you with everything that you have. Just because the Lord hasn't blessed others with the same things that He has blessed you with doesn't make you any better than they are. You know that in about ten minutes He could take all of this away from you. Then where would you be, and how would you feel if you were treated the way you were planning to treat those people who come to the food shelter?

Doug: You're right. [*Throwing the paper over his shoulder and standing up.*] And I'm going to do something about it right now. Do you have any plans for the next hour or so?

Josh: Why?

Doug: Would you like to go shopping with me?

Josh: Me? Shopping with you? Why would you want me to go shopping with you? [*Joking.*] Can't you carry all those potatoes by yourself?

Doug: No. Alice isn't home. I need someone to push the other cart. So, are you up to it? Or would you rather I pick up the potatoes?

Josh: You bet I'm up to it! Come on, I'll drive.

[*They exit together.*]

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