

I Need a Vacation
Version II

By

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Theme:

This play portrays an all too familiar situation that occurs in churches all across the world: people's reluctance to dedicate themselves to faithfully tithe to their church. Other expenditures are given a higher priority than the tithe and the church ends up with a portion of what is left over after we have spent our money on things of this world.

Biblical References:

Malachi 3

2 Corinthians 9

Approximate Running Time:

10 minutes

Props:

2 mock Petty Cash Forms. One blank form and one filled out.
A desk with various papers and opened books
2 chairs

Cast of Characters:

Josh: Josh is a Christian man who is a member of the church that PASTOR pastors. He takes his faith seriously and lives out the walk of a Christian. He faithfully tithes to his church. He has found out that a friend has benefited from not tithing and his jealousy spurns him to confront his pastor.

Pastor: Pastor is the pastor of a Bible believing church. He believes that he must invest himself into the personal lives of the members of his church if he is to effectively minister to the church members.

Scene:

A desk with various papers and opened books appears at center stage. There is a chair behind the desk and one alongside of it. There is one addressed envelope on the desk that contains an invitation for Josh and his family to spend the week at the "Get Away" lodge with the pastor and his family. As the play opens we see that Pastor is sitting at his desk working on his next sermon. Josh barges into the pastor's office without knocking or announcing that he is there.

Josh: Who do I talk to about cutting a check around here?

Pastor: Excuse me?

Josh: [*Impatiently.*] I said, who do I talk to about cutting a check around here?

Pastor: Either myself or any other member of the board. Why do you ask?

Josh: I've got some money coming to me.

Pastor: Oh, I see.

Josh: Do you have a few minutes to write me a check or should I look for a member of the board?

Pastor: [*Putting his things aside.*] No, you don't have to look for a member of the board, I can write the check for you. I just need to see the receipt before I give you a check.

Josh: I don't have a receipt yet.

Pastor: Then you'll have to fill out one of these petty cash forms. [*Reaching for the form.*]

Josh: Don't bother. I already have one of those. [*He digs it out of his pocket and hands it to the pastor. He is hesitant, unsure of what the pastor will say when he reads the request.*]

Pastor: [*After reading the form.*] I'm sorry Josh, but I can't give you petty cash for this.

Josh: Why not?

Pastor: Why not? Because the church does not offer financial support to its members so that they can take vacations.

Josh: Sure it does.

Pastor: No, it doesn't.

Josh: Yes it does. Well, at least I know that it has done it in the past for other church members.

Pastor: Josh, I don't know where you're coming from, or where you got the idea that I'd give you six hundred dollars out of petty cash so that you and your family can go on vacation. And I sure don't know how you got the impression that we've done it for anyone else.

Josh: [*Sitting down in the open chair.*] Look, I was talking to Sam the other day and he was telling me how he got behind in his tithe because of all of the times that he missed church the past couple of months. He told me that he sat down and did the math and that he found out that the amount of tithe that he missed was equal to the amount of money that he spent on his vacation. By my reckoning that means that you paid for his vacation and now I want you to pay for mine.

Pastor: Oh, now I get it. And you're gonna tell me that because of the fact that you've been here every Sunday this summer, and because you've faithfully tithed each week, the church owes you a vacation?

Josh: That's the way that I see it.

Pastor: Well, I can certainly see your point of view, but the church hasn't in the past, and cannot in the future pass out money for its members to go on vacation. My vacation isn't even paid for by the church, we're certainly not going to be financing laymen's vacations.

Josh: Well can I ask you to refund the last six weeks of tithing that I've given the church?

Pastor: Well, I must say that this is a first, too. I'm sorry Josh, I'm not in a position to make such decisions for the church. I'm sure that you could bring your case before the board at next month's meeting and see how they react, but I'm quite sure that they'll say the same thing that I just said.

Josh: It's just not fair. I can't afford to take a nice vacation this year because of the money that I've donated to this church and I have to sit at home and watch all of my friends have a good time on the money they didn't give to the church.

[*In the next portion of dialog, both characters are talking to themselves, but making an effort to let their 'thoughts' be heard by the other, hoping their 'thoughts' will persuade the other to see things his way.*]

Pastor: [*In a tone of pity.*] That's sad.

Josh: I know, isn't it?

Pastor: That's just too bad.

Josh: If I'd only thought of it before I sealed the envelope.

Pastor: To think that an upstanding member of our congregation...

Josh: Then I'd be able to live it up for one little week out of the entire year. Is that too much to ask?

Pastor: A man of God...

Josh: But instead I have to sit at home and take a make believe vacation.

Pastor: Who is faithful to his wife and kids...

Josh: And to think about my wife and kids. They won't have a vacation this year either. Deprived of an American right just because their dad gave all of their money to the church.

Pastor: Who faithfully gives of his time, his resources...

Josh: We may be able to head to Cedar Point for a couple of days, but that's about it.

Pastor: And money...

Josh: It's a waste of a summer, that's what it is.

Pastor: Would think that he's getting the raw end of the deal because he's giving his money to the work of the Lord, which has eternal consequences, rather than spending it on things of this temporal earth.

Josh: Not like the other men of this church who can afford to take their families on week long getaways like the ones that you see on covers of brochures of travel agencies. [*He gets caught up in his description. He stands and acts out each of the different scenes that he is describing. Pastor just sits back and watches the show.*] To run along beaches of crystal clear waters while the sun sets in a spectacular display of reds and oranges, to ride horseback along some of the most beautiful paths within this beautiful country of ours, to hang glide in the grand canyon, to sky dive out of an air force jet, to scuba dive amongst sharks, to walk the historic mall in this nation's capital, to visit some of the greatest historic landmarks this country has ever created, to...

Pastor: [*Having had enough.*] Are you through yet?

Josh: [*Realizing what he is doing. Sitting down abruptly.*] Uh, through with what?

Pastor: This adolescent self-attended pity party that you're throwing.

Josh: Uh, yes, I guess that I am done.

Pastor: Did you hear anything that I just said to you.

Josh: [*Ashamed.*] Uh, no, not really. I was a little caught up in the, uh, scenery.

Pastor: What I was trying to say was that you should be glad that you didn't fall into the sin of taking money from the Lord to spend on your own earthly desires.

Josh: Is that what I was doing?

Pastor: If you're willing to tell me that you would rather spend your money on some sort of a spending frenzy than to know that your money was at work within God's kingdom, then I'll write you a check for the six hundred dollars right now.

Josh: You will?

Pastor: Yes, I will.

Josh: But what about the board?

Pastor: I'll explain it to the board.

Josh: [*Excited.*] That's great.

Pastor: Slow down. I didn't say that I was going to write the check. I said that I would write the check if you're willing to tell me that your temporary pleasure is more important to you than the work of the Lord.

Josh: [*Ashamed.*] Well, if you put it that way, it isn't that important. But I would like that check.

Pastor: If you're willing to tell me that your family is truly going to suffer by not being able to visit the hottest places going, instead of doing something simple and spending time with your family, then I'll write you that check.

Josh: Well, I'd hardly call it 'suffering.'

Pastor: If you're willing to tell me that you really want to take this money out of the Lord's hands so that you can spend it, I'll write the check.

Josh: No, I can't take six hundred dollars from the church so that I can go on vacation. I just can't do it.

Pastor: Then why did you really come here?

Josh: I thought that I wanted to. I really did. I thought that I had it coming to me. But now I don't. You've shown me how greedy I was being.

Pastor: I thought that you'd change your mind after you had a chance to think about it. This church needs more men like you. Men who are willing to recognize that the Lord's work is more important than the worldly desires of our hearts.

Josh: Thanks. Look, I'm sorry about the selfish way I acted here today. Will you forgive me?

Pastor: Sure I will. Not only that. We've been planning a trip out to Pam's parents' house. They have a cottage on the lake. If you and your family would like to join us I'm sure that we can find room for you.

Josh: Now that sounds like a great idea. We get a vacation and the Lord keeps His money. Now that's an easy decision to make. When would this vacation be?

Pastor: Well, actually we're planning on leaving this Monday. Is that too little notice for you?

Josh: No, at least I don't think that it is. If I was willing to come here and ask you to give me money I don't think that it'll be too hard to go home and convince my family that we should spend a few days at your parent's cottage. [*The two stand and shake hands.*] How can I possibly thank you?

Pastor: You already have. Now go home and get your family ready for the trip and try to keep yourself from being bitter about the financial decisions that your friends make.


Josh: Consider it done.

Pastor: I'll have Pam call you later with the details.

Josh: Thanks again, Pastor.

[He exits.]

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