

Joseph's Story

By

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Theme:

This play shows the audience how Joseph may have felt as he looked back over his relationship with Christ. He struggles with the contrast of how he wanted to see Christ desire to be just like him and yet he himself wanted to be like Christ.

Biblical References:

Philippians 3:10

I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.

Approximate Running Time:

15 minutes

Notes:

This play works well in front of a large group as well as in a casual, small group setting. Period costuming can help allude to the proper point in history, but the elements of the play point to it by themselves, so the play will work well with contemporary attire. Blocking should be developed as the actor sees fit, attempting to achieve a natural motion which illustrates the text.

Scene:

Joseph is telling his story to those who have gathered to listen.

I'm just a humble carpenter. No one special. I've been that way all of my life. I grew up an average boy, with no special skills that I can remember, but I did have a way with a hammer and a nail. My parents caught on to it early. Although that is what they had been expecting. You see, my father was a carpenter, as was his father, and his father as well, all the way down our family line as far as we can remember.

As soon as they noticed that I too fell in line with the family trade, I was out working with, and learning from my father. I respected him; he was a gentle man, strong and loving. He was a kind man, a hard worker, and he never started a job that he didn't finish. The best thing that I remember about my father is that he was honest. There may have been better men around, at carpentry I mean, but none more honest, nor as fair as my father was.

I wanted to be just like him when I grew up. I can remember helping him lift lumber from the ground up to the roof of a house. I would stand on the ground looking up to him on the roof. I could see his strong figure, his kind face, and his eyes. He had warm eyes. You could see the joy in them.

I can remember how people always used to say "you've got your fathers eyes," or "you've got your fathers strength," or "you act just like your father." I never got used to it, but now that I look back upon my life, I am glad that I turned out to be just like my father. Now I am glad that he could look me in the eye and say "that's my boy." I used to hate that too. Whenever I did something to make him proud of me he would tell people "that's my boy."

I can remember dreaming of one day having a son of my own. I had hoped that he would turn out to be just like me. It would make me proud to say "that's my boy" as all the women of the village gathered around to see our newborn child. I can hear them say "he's got his father's eyes." I can imagine how my father felt when that was said about me. He probably said "that's my boy." [*Pause reflectively, then speak slowly and evenly.*] We are so alike. Now, that's what I had wished that my son would one day say about me: "we are so alike."

[*Pause, change blocking, and resume.*] I was looking forward to the day when I would be a married man. I had been raised to respect women. I was taught to treat them with love and kindness. I knew that I should take care of my wife for as long as either of us lived. I was enjoying my relationship with Mary. I was looking forward to starting my life with her. Then I had heard that she had become pregnant. [*Defensively.*] I knew it wasn't my child and I didn't want to know who the father was. I planned to divorce her quietly, no need to make things complicated. I knew the women in the village were gossiping already so I didn't want to give them more to talk about.

That night I had a dream. Well, it's hard to call it a dream really; it was as if I was awake. [*In awe.*] There was a man, well an angel of the Lord, actually, I'm sure of it - he was standing at my side. He was clothed in robes of white, a white so brilliant that the light was lighting up the entire room. He told me that Mary had conceived a child from the Holy Spirit. I didn't know exactly what that meant, but I knew that it was of God. He said that I should take her as my wife, as I had planned before, and that when she was to deliver her child it would be a son, and we were to name him Jesus, which means Christ, the Messiah.

I did what he told me to do. What else was I to do? Mary did give birth to a son and we did name him Jesus. Looking down at that child lying in the manger I had thought..."could this baby actually be the son of God?" I could see that He did look like me, and I was hoping that other people would be able to see that as well, and they would say "he's got his father's eyes." But they didn't. It was hard to believe the people that did visit him, shepherds from the fields, everyone in the village, and wise men from the East. They all said that "surely this is the son of God, the Messiah, the promised one." That chased out any doubt that had been in my mind and I realized that this was not my son, but God's son.

[*Angry.*] I felt cheated in a way. This was a moment that I had long dreamed about, and there I stood watching my dreams be crushed, as one after another the visitors came forward and praised the Lord for this child, [*easing up*] wondering if He did have his Father's eyes.

[Pause, change blocking, and resume.] Jesus grew up as a normal child, except that He was perfect. He never lied, cheated, or did anything wrong. Mary and I used to joke about having more like him, but there would never be another like Jesus.

I can remember when He was twelve years old. We went to Jerusalem for the Passover feast. We traveled with our entire family and village. Jesus would move from one part of the family to another, visiting with anyone willing to talk to him. It was common for an entire day to pass without us even seeing him, then He'd catch up with us as we settled down for the night. Well, He didn't find us the first night, but we just figured that He'd gotten interested with another part of the family and decided to spend the night with them. We knew that He'd catch up with us in the morning as He had done before, but we couldn't find him in the morning either. We asked all around, but nobody had seen him since we had left Jerusalem. Of course, we decided to go back to find him. We looked up and down the streets of Jerusalem, we went to every single place that we had been to in the few days that we were there, and we were really starting to get worried. Then we found him. He was sitting in the temple amongst the most learned, Godly men. I couldn't believe it. We were so embarrassed. We tried to get him to come out of there. Mary said, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you." But He just turned to her and said, "Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" Then we found out that He had astounded the men in the temple. We were told that He could answer any question that was asked of him and that He even knew more than those men did. We tried to convince him that He should come with us and eventually He did, reluctantly.

He had been a great child, but this, this touched my heart and reminded me that this child was God's son, not mine.

From that point on, He became more like his real Father, and less like me. It was hard to let go of such a son, but we knew that He had work to do and that the time to begin it was nearing.

It was about that time that my attitude changed as well. Instead of wanting Jesus to be more like me, I wanted to be more like him. Who wouldn't want to be? He was the perfect man. No other human being has come close to doing that which He was about to begin. [*Solemnly.*] He was to die for the sins of the world.

He knew his purpose here on earth, He accepted it, and He was willing to go through with it. Mary and I shuddered when we thought of what uncertainty was before him. We could see that He had perplexed all of his friends to the point that they had deserted him, and we knew that his views would not be popular. No matter what we knew, no matter how we feared the future, no matter how we longed to protect him from any harm, we had to let him go.

[*Reflectively.*] Now that I look back at the times we shared I realize that He had his Father's eyes, all right. I mean his real Father's eyes. To most people He looked like just an ordinary man, but those eyes, just one look into those eyes and you knew that He was more than just an ordinary man.

I always wanted my son to turn out to be just like his father. Jesus did. I was not His real father, our Father in Heaven was and is His real Father, and He did turn out to be just like Him. My only wish is that I can learn from Jesus, that I too can strive to become more like my Father. [*Raising a hand up to heaven.*] One day I shall again see Jesus face to face, and on that day I hope that He will look me in the eye and say, "That's my boy."

- CURTAIN -



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