

THE MIRACLE METHOD

A short drama
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ADVISORY WARNING: None.

PREMISE: Jesus has sent out the twelve; Peter and Andrew accept the hospitality of a wealthy businessman, but he thinks they're just trying to sell their con.

LENGTH: ~850 words

GENRE: Satire.

CHARACTERS:

SIMON PETER: Committed and savvy.

ANDREW: Passionate and earnest.

EZRA: Opportunistic.

This sketch was first written in January 2023 as part of a series on Matthew's gospel and money.

*I welcome development feedback, particularly from those with an interest in Christian theatre. Please reach out via the blog here:
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THE THREE MEN ENTER A SPACIOUS, WELL-FURNISHED HOUSE.

- ANDREW: (APPRECIATIVE) Wow, you have a wonderful home!
- EZRA: Why, thank you!
- PETER: Again, thank you so much for hosting us.
- EZRA: Oh, it's nothing, you're very welcome. Sorry, your names again were (TO ANDREW) Andrew and... (LOOKS AT PETER)
- PETER: Peter.
- EZRA: Right.
- PETER: If it's easier, just call me Simon.
- EZRA: Oh no, Peter is great. The Rock! Very... macho. (BEAT) So, what was it you said brought the pair of you to my town?
- PETER: Well, we were sent here. By our teacher.
- ANDREW: We're here to proclaim the good news of the kingdom of heaven.
- EZRA: (NODDING) Right.
- PETER: The kingdom *from* heaven, you could say.
- EZRA: And your teacher is?
- ANDREW: Jesus.
- EZRA: (PAUSE) Son of...?
- PETER: Oh, uh, he's the Jesus from Nazareth.
- EZRA: (BLURTING, HALF GUFFAWING) Naz— (QUICKLY COVERING HIS DISGUST AND SURPRISE; PRETENDING TO SOUND INTERESTED) Nazareth! (PAUSE; TRYING TO SOUND POLITE) I can't say that I've heard of him.
- ANDREW: Well, so far, he's been preaching mainly in Galilee.
- EZRA: Oh, I see.
- PETER: But the crowds have been flocking to hear him. (BEAT) We were two of his first disciples.
- EZRA: And he's sent you out to proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is... near.

ANDREW: Yes.

EZRA: (BEAT) Is that it?

PETER: What do you mean? God is coming to his people and it's good news for the sick, the outcasts and the disadvantaged.

ANDREW: Jesus has given us authority over every ailment, be it physical, mental or spiritual. And we're here to share God's favour with everyone, young and old.

PETER: Angels have been waiting centuries for this moment in history and now it's come, and we're here to tell you how it can change your life.

EZRA: (NOT IN ANY WAY CONVINCED) Wow, that's incredible. (HE MEANS THIS) I love your passion. (TRYING TO TALK AS ONE CON ARTIST TO ANOTHER) So... tell me... where's your donkey?

PETER: Uh... we don't... we don't have a donkey.

EZRA: Then where's your box of tricks?

ANDREW: What do you mean?

EZRA: Come on! I know this gig. You're talking to a pro here.

PETER: A pro... what, you're a pro-phet... a prophet?

EZRA: (LAUGHS OUTRAGEOUSLY) Yeah, I'm a prophet.

ANDREW: (EARNEST) Then you already know how the scriptures have foretold the coming of God's anointed one?

EZRA: (THINKS ANDREW IS PUTTING ON AN ACT) Oh that's classy—but seriously, where's all your gear?

PETER: I don't know what you're referring to.

EZRA: You want people to sign up to your scheme? You gotta look the part! You gotta show them what it's done for you. It's like this.

(CLEARS THROAT, IMPERSONATING SOMEONE DOING AN ADVERTISEMENT) 'Before, I was a washed-up fisherman in the back-end of nowhere, but now I'm a wealthy landowner. Just look at my clothes, my wares, my jewellery! And I'm willing to share the secrets of my success with you.' (POINTS WITH BOTH HANDS AT PETER AND ANDREW)

LONG PAUSE.

ANDREW: I think there's been some kind of misunderstanding.

PETER: Yeah, just so we're clear, we don't have any money with us.

ANDREW: Or a spare tunic, or sandals.

PETER: Or staff. (BEAT) And by that, I don't mean people, I mean walking staff, like a wooden stick.

PAUSE.

EZRA: This Jesus guy really stitched you up, didn't he? (BEAT) Look, I can see your energy, your enthusiasm. That can't be taught, you either have it, or you don't – and you have it. But if you wanna make a living from this 'kingdom of heaven' spiel, then you're gonna need a different method. Now I can help with that. I can teach you my method and if you follow it, if you follow it right, then you could have a house just like this.

PETER: You're trying to recruit us?

EZRA: Well, yeah! You were trying to recruit me!

ANDREW: We're sharing the good news of the kingdom of heaven.

EZRA: (SCOFFS) As told by some bloke from Nazareth. Aren't you embarrassed, even just a little bit? Be honest.

PETER: We're not here to peddle some kind of get-rich-quick scheme.

EZRA: No?

ANDREW: No.

EZRA: What about miracle cure?

ANDREW: No! Well, actually, yes.

EZRA: Ah-ha!

PETER: No, we mean real miracles. Like, cleansing people from leprosy, casting out unclean spirits.

EZRA: Seen it before.

ANDREW: Jesus has raised people from the dead.

EZRA: (FIXES HIS GAZE ON ANDREW) Now that's what I'm talking about! The way you said that! No irony, no hesitation. You could convert a pagan to your cause!

ANDREW: You still think we're putting on an act?

EZRA: I know a con when I see one. The question is, do you see an opportunity when it's staring you in the face? Because I promise you, I could make you very, very rich. And I'm willing to bet, that's the one thing this Jesus fella has never promised you. Am I right?

PETER: Yeah, you're right. And yet, so wrong.

ANDREW: Thanks for your hospitality, but we'll find somewhere else to stay.

EZRA: If you insist. Your loss!

PETER: No. Your loss.