

Christmas With Christ

(A Christmas Playlet)

By

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CHARACTERS

Spirit of Christmas
 Voice of Bethlehem
 Bible
 Conscience
 Selfishness
 Poor
 Orphan
 Infirm
 Heathen

SUGGESTIONS

This playlet of one act can be presented most appropriately in connection with a "Giving" Christmas. It has been written with the purpose in view of satisfying the demand for practical, inexpensive and real Christian Christmas plays. Only a few rehearsals are necessary. If one verse of each song is sung, the play will require about 25 minutes. Young ladies about the age of sixteen years should be selected for the characters Spirit of Christmas and Voice of Bethlehem; a young man for Selfishness; smaller children taking the parts of Poor, Orphan, Infirm and Heathen. Let the first four characters be dressed in white and Selfishness in gaudy colors. The remaining four characters can be represented by one or more scholars and should be dressed in harmony with their names; let them come forth from the audience.

All songs can either be sung as solos, or by choir. Place cross, the only stage equipment necessary, in a position easily reached by those who later come forth with gifts. In smaller schools, all scholars may come forward, whereas in the larger schools, each class may select one of its members to bring gifts to the foot of the cross. The finale can be made most interesting and highly inspiring.

Christmas With Christ

O little town of Bethlehem,
 How still we see thee lie;
 Above thy deep and dreaming sleep
 The silent stars go by;
 Yet in the dark street shineth
 The everlasting Light;
 The hopes and fears of all the years
 Are met in thee tonight.

(Enter VOICE OF BETHLEHEM)

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
 Descend to us, we pray;
 Cast out our sin and enter in;
 Be born in us today.
 We hear the Christmas angels
 The great glad tidings tell,
 O come to us, abide with us,
 Our Lord Emmanuel.

VOICE OF BETH: I am the Voice of Bethlehem which spoke many years ago, bringing that heavenly message to the lowly shepherds as they were watching their sheep during the night. I spoke to their affrighted hearts; "Fear not for behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."—It was I who said; "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will to men." It was a message not only for those shepherds, but for all future generations; and on this birthday of the Heavenly King, I ask, Has all the world heard my message? Does it truly know me, the Voice of Bethlehem? Does my beautiful anthem penetrate the noises of the busy life? I often wonder whether my voice has lost its clearness and whether my message brings as much joy to human hearts today as it did to those shepherds. Ah, 'tis true men do not know the true spirit of Christmas unless they know me, for where I am there always enters the wonderful Spirit of Christmas.

Holy night; peaceful night!
 All is dark, save the light
 Yonder where they sweet vigil keep
 O'er the Babe, who in silent sleep
 Rests in heavenly peace,
 Rests in heavenly peace.

(Enter SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS)

Silent night, holiest night!
Darkness flies, all is light,
Shepherds hear the angels sing:
"Alleluja! hail the King,
Christ the Saviour is here,
Jesus the Saviour is here."

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Hail, sweet voice of Bethlehem. Many years have passed since first we met and since then have remained inseparable friends. We have been sent to work hand in hand in bringing joy to the world. Without you Voice of Bethlehem, the world can never know me, I who am the Spirit of Christmas. Pray tell me on this Christmas day; Why is it that the birthday of the Christ-Child is so often misunderstood and therefore inappropriately celebrated?

VOICE OF BETHLEHEM: May it not be that men have been trying to separate us? They want you, Spirit of Christmas, but I, the Voice of Bethlehem, am often forgotten.

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Impossible! Were we not both present on that memorable night in the little town of Bethlehem? Were we not both sent out by the Heavenly Father? "What God hath joined together let not man put assunder." So we shall always remain united friends; "Wither thou goest I shall go." But perhaps the world has forgotten your message and its true character.

VOICE OF BETHLEHEM: To be sure, I spoke of the greatest gift to the world, a Saviour. Likewise of the worship of the shepherds; and of the presents of the Wisemen, the gold, the frank-incense and the myrrh. It was an occasion of giving.

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Truly that is the spirit of Christmas. Those men knew me, for only those who give to the Christ can make my acquaintance. Is there not some plan whereby all men can be reminded how to be happy on Christmas-day?

VOICE OF BETHLEHEM: Yes. God has plans for everything, men need only trust and obey. When God planned to make the world happy and to help it understand Christmas, he did not forget to write a book; men call it the Holy Bible and when it is given its rightful place, it helps us in our ministry of scattering Christmas joy. Oh! that men would see its open pages.

Holy Bible, book divine,
Precious treasure, thou art mine:
Mine to tell me whence I came,
Mine to tell me what I am.

(Enter Bible with open book in hand.)

Mine to chide me when I rove;
Mine to show a Saviour's love;
Mine thou art to guide and guard;
Mine to punish or reward.

BIBLE: Hail! good comrades. My joy I bring to you. Though many hearts and homes do not care for me, still I rejoice on this day because I have helped to preserve life's greatest story. The Love of God, when "He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

VOICE OF BETH: Thou hast been true to thy mission. Thou hast proclaimed the message of Bethlehem and therefore the source of the spirit of Christmas. But what of the many who have not heard of the Christ-child; hast thou kept thy message from them?

BIBLE: Not so. Do I not say: "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found" and "Search ye the scriptures for in them ye think ye have eternal life and they are they which testify of me." I speak to such who let me speak to them and give him confidence who places confidence in me.

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Continue with thy message precious Bible; thou wilt help many to find me.

VOICE OF BETH: Pray tell, precious Word; thy work is indeed a difficult one. Thou art often abused and neglected. Whom hast thou to help thee? Dost thou work alone?

BIBLE: Never. For in the heart of everyone, my author has placed a small voice. This voice is called Conscience; she is my attendant and like myself is often unnoticed. She is faithful for even on this day she is eager to tell the secret of happiness to those who are here present. True Christians will gladly welcome her when she comes and speaks.

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
Thou art the Potter, I am the clay!
Mould me and make me, After Thy will,
While I am waiting, Yielded and still.

(Enter CONSCIENCE)

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!
Search me and try me, Master, today!
Whiter than snow, Lord, Wash me just now,
As in Thy presence Humbly I bow.

CONSCIENCE: Glory to God. You and I, friends, are co-laborers for the Master; each of us has been sent on a beautiful mission. We toil day after day, but on this Christmas

night when many are so richly blessed, it seems that everyone ought gladly heed our message in order to understand His birthday and to know you, Spirit of Christmas.

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Ah, how often I wish the world would know me better. I am sure it would if it followed the leadership of your voice, Conscience. Pray tell me, good friends, how are you helping men to find me, the Spirit of Christmas?

VOICE OF BETH: I tell of the beautiful gifts; of the Saviour; of the peace and good will which he brings to men.

BIBLE: When all my pages are summarized, they say: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

CONSCIENCE: As for me, no matter where men may be, I am always with them, pleading and asking, have you no gifts for the Christ? You give to your friends on Christmas day but will you come empty-handed to the Christ-child? I still remind men of that heavenly admonition, "Freely ye have received, freely give."

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: And still I am known to only a few? How can it possibly be when you are proclaiming your story?

CONSCIENCE: Listen, Spirit of Christmas. Bible will agree with me when I say, we have a terrible foe; he has kept men from finding you. He lives with men and influences them. He is the greatest enemy of the Christ. He is the root of all kind of evil.

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Can it be that men will listen to that foe? Has he made people happier than we? Come, tell us Conscience, who is this terrible foe?

CONSCIENCE: His name is Selfishness and when he comes and makes his power felt, it seems that we labor in vain. He is a deceiver and tries to make men forget Christ.

(Enter SELFISHNESS at opposite end of platform always facing audience and speaks while entering)

SELFISHNESS: What is that I hear? Men should give to the Christ? Men ought to keep what they have. I say do not give or give as little as possible. I am the real friend of men.

BIBLE: That is our awful foe.

CONSCIENCE: That is the enemy of Christ.

VOICE OF BETH: My message did not know of any selfishness.

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: If men are influenced by that person, surely they will never know me.

SELFISHNESS: Ah, how great is my power and influence. Though many are in need of help, why should others help them in the name of Christ? Let us think only of ourselves.

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Something must be done.

VOICE OF BETH: Will not my wonderful story make men respond? What more could God do than to give His only Son?

BIBLE: Surely God has given His beloved Son to be born to the world. There was a star placed in the heavens, telling men that this Son had come to help them in the great battle of life. On that Christmas night God unveiled His beautiful service-flag in the heavens and through me the message has come to the world that this Son has given His life for men that they might live. The Christmas star tells of Christ's service but this star has been transformed into a cross and tells of the great victory. The star was the seed but the cross is the unfolded flower.

CONSCIENCE: Ah, men ought to remember the star and the cross; the wonderful life and the victorious death.

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: I am not happy without the spirit of sacrifice. I loved the Christ in the manger and therefore I love the Christ on the cross.

CONSCIENCE: But what shall I tell men? Can they still give in Jesus' name?

BIBLE: Yes, Conscience, tell them that I speak the thoughts of the Christ. He loved and helped men, especially the poor, the widows, the sick and those who are in the darkness of doubt and sin. Helping the needy is helping Christ, for has He not said: "Inasmuch as ye do it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye do it unto me."

VOICE OF BETH: That is in perfect accord with my Christmas message.

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: If men knew you, Spirit of Christmas, they would surely know the Christ.

SELFISHNESS: Oh, how it annoys me to hear of giving, always giving. Keep what you have.

CONSCIENCE: Giving to the needy is truly giving to Christ.

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: That is my spirit; I want people to give their heart, their all to Christ.

SELFISHNESS: Men and women ought to think only of themselves; that spirit of giving is intolerable to me, it is overdone, and I know that many think just as I do.

BIBLE: "Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not to me."

CONSCIENCE: I must tell that to all, for just a moment ago I saw and heard many in distress.

SELFISHNESS: Distress? Why should I care about those in need? Forget the helpless.

CONSCIENCE: In these restless times, does not the star of Bethlehem and the cross on Calvary make a special demand upon the followers of the Master? Are not the helpless appealing to the cross? Are not knees bent and hands folded in prayer, pleading?

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: What a most wonderful opportunity for men to know me.

BIBLE: Yes, the Master is pleading with His disciples in the name of His cross. He gives to the needy through those who truly believe in Him.

SELFISHNESS: I will tell men that they can be Christians without giving generously to those for whom Christ is pleading. I can get many to follow me by telling them that they are saving and economical.

BIBLE: Come comrades, let us go nearer to the cross, for only there will men understand us and learn to know God and the spirit of sacrifice.

(All move near the cross except Selfishness)

Beneath the cross of Jesus
I fain would take my stand,
The shadow of a mighty Rock
Within a weary land;
A home within the wilderness,
A rest upon the way,
From the burning of the noon-tide heat,
And the burden of the day.

Upon that cross of Jesus
Mine eye at times can see
The very dying form of One
Who suffered there for me:
And from my smitten heart with tears
Two wonders I confess:
The wonders of His glorious love,
And my own worthlessness.

VOICE OF BETH: How wonderful!

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: It tells of the greatest spirit of giving; the giving of the most wonderful life.

BIBLE: But it also pleads for those who plead to it with outstretched hands. Look! here comes such of whom Christ spoke when saying: "The poor ye have with you always."

Love thyself last. Look near, behold thy duty
To those who walk beside thee down life's road;
Make glad their days by little acts of beauty,
And help them bear the burden of earth's load.

(Enter POOR standing with outstretched hands before the cross)

Love thyself last. Look far, and find the stranger
Who staggers 'neath his sin and his despair;
Go lend a hand and lead him out of danger,
To heights where he may see the world is fair.

CONSCIENCE: I have often reminded men of the poor.

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Ah, how I love the poor. I never fail them.

SELFISHNESS: I have no time for the poor. Let them take care of themselves; it's their own fault.

BIBLE: "Blessed is he that considereth the poor."

(Enter ORPHAN reciting verses 1, 2, 3, of Psalm 23 and appeals to the cross)

CONSCIENCE: The orphans also appeal to the Christian world by way of the cross.

BIBLE: "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction."

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: That is my spirit, the spirit of Christmas.

SELFISHNESS: Let someone else take care of the orphans. Everyone has enough to do with his own children.

I need Thee ev'ry hour,
Most gracious Lord;
No tender voice like Thine
Can peace afford.

I need Thee, O I need Thee,
Ev'ry hour I need Thee;
O bless me now, my Savior,
I come to Thee.

(Enter: INFIRM)

I need Thee, ev'ry hour,
In joy or pain;
Come quickly and abide,
Or life is vain.

I need Thee, O I need Thee, etc.

VOICE OF BETH: What a sad sight but how wonderful to know that the sick and afflicted can find help at the foot of the cross. Surely the strong and healthful who believe in this cross will help the afflicted who believe in the same cross.

SELFISHNESS: Why should I care about the infirm and those who have lost their health?

O Zion, haste, thy mission high fulfilling,
To tell to all the world that God is Light,
That He who made all nations is not willing
One soul should perish, lost in shades of night.

Publish glad tidings, tidings of peace;
Tidings of Jesus, redemption and release.

(Enter: Heathen)

Behold, how many thousands still are lying,
Bound in the darksome prison house of sin,
With none to tell them of the Savior's dying,
Or of the life He died for them to win.

Publish glad tidings, etc.

(Or some other missionary hymn).

BIBLE: Behold the Heathen, longing for help, light and salvation. "God willeth that all men should be saved and come to the knowledge of truth."—"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

VOICE OF BETH: How can men help but bring this precious message to the heathen.

CONSCIENCE: I often long to plead for the heathen but men will not let me speak.

SELFISHNESS: I do not believe in bringing the Heathen to Christ. I have no use for missionary work; it is a waste of time and money; we ought to keep everything here at home. So long as a man has the blessings of the Gospel for himself, why should he worry about the rest of the world?

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Surely men who love the cross of Jesus will not listen to that misleading voice.

CONSCIENCE: I know many who do; they have no use for the message of sacrifice in behalf of missionary work; their love does not extend beyond their own home.

(As POOR, ORPHAN, INFIRM and HEATHEN appeal to the cross with outstretched hands)

VOICE OF BETH: What a great opportunity for the Christian world. Behold how all the world looks to the cross. I

spoke of peace on earth and good will to men, but God is expecting and waiting for all believers to help bring these blessings; they will if they know you, Spirit of Christmas. Pray tell us how all the world can best celebrate this Christmas day and thereby learn to know you.

(Spirit of Christmas steps forth facing audience)

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Heretofore many people have thought that by exchanging presents with their friends, they were celebrating Christmas in the right way; but is that truly the real spirit of Christmas? At Christmas time we should think especially of Christ and His wonderful cause. If some have forgotten this, then let them learn today what Christmas really is. Let those who love the Christ and know me, come now and bring their gifts beneath the cross; such gifts will help to make many happy. I hope that you all have caught the real spirit of Christmas and will come now and give to the Christ by giving to the needy. Let none listen to the old foe Selfishness but let this birthday of Christ and His message find the rightful place in the heart. "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me."

O come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him Born the King of Angels;
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord.

Sing, choirs of Angels, Sing in exultation,
Thro' heaven's high arches be your praises poured;
Now to our God be Glory in the highest;
O come let us adore Him, etc.

(While gifts are being brought to the foot of the cross, Selfishness leaves stage)

(After all gifts have been presented, Spirit of Christmas speaks as follows):

That is the true spirit of Christmas for Selfishness has disappeared and the spirit of Christian sacrifice has conquered and reigns. Let this spirit abide forever.

FINALE.