

**613media,LLC
Contemporary Short Drama Volume 3**

**By
Bruce Hennigan
All rights reserved
Copyright © February, 2012**

I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE?

BY
BRUCE HENNIGAN
COPYRIGHT © JUNE, 2000
Keywords: Patriotism, Loyalty, Allegiance

CAST:

Bob – A modern day guy or girl
Bill – A true patriot

BOB: Hey, what are you doing?

BILL: I'm going to say the pledge of allegiance.

BOB: Oh, yeah. The pledge. I haven't done that since the first grade.

BILL: Why don't you join me?

BOB: OK. You put your hand over your heart, right?

BILL: That's right. I pledge allegiance . . .

BOB: Wait! I don't know about that word allegiance. You know, this is the twenty first century. I don't want to lose my personal freedom. That allegiance implies I might have to give up something. Let's leave it out.

BILL: Leave it out? But – all right. Let's say it your way. I pledge to the flag . . .

BOB: Wait a minute! That flag thing bothers me too. I mean, why should I pledge to a thing? Huh? After all, it is so outdated. So revolutionary warish, if you know what I mean.

BILL: So, we leave out the flag?

BOB: Yeah.

BILL: OK, I pledge – to the – of the United States of America . . .

BOB: Woah!

BILL: What is it this time?

BOB: We are far from united. We got Hispanics and African Americans and Asians and WASPS and . . .

BILL: Fine, let's get on with it. I pledge – to the – of the – of America. One nation, under God. . .

BOB: Just a minute! Don't you think that is pushing things a little too far?

BILL: What?

BOB: What about the atheists? And the agnostics? And the New Agers? And the Eastern religions? We don't want to push God on everybody.

BILL: I pledge – to the – of America, one nation --, indivisible . . . Wait! I remember. We aren't united. I pledge – to the – of America, one nation – with liberty . . .

BOB: I like that part best. Liberty. I want to be free from all that other stuff. What are you waiting for, go ahead.

BILL: With liberty and justice . . .

BOB: (Makes sound like a game show buzzer) Since when is there justice, huh? Just look at old O.J. Forget it.

BILL: I pledge – to the – of the – of America. One nation – with liberty for all.

BOB: That's it! I feel great! Don't you?

BILL: Yeah, I feel real patriotic.

BOB: You know, I feel so blessed to be a citizen of this country. I'm going to go out and do something good today. I'm going to go and invest in a new Internet stock. See you.

THE INTERIOR DECORATOR

BY

BRUCE HENNIGAN
COPYRIGHT © MAY, 2000

FOR JUNE 4, 2000

THE CONCEPT FOR THIS DRAMA IS THAT GOD MUST GIVE YOU A NEW HEART.

CAST:

WOMAN – ELEGANT, LOUD, FLAMBOYANT
 MAN – A PASTOR

WOMAN: (On phone.) Oh, Lydia, darling, I just can't wait for him to get here. They say he is the best interior decorator in the state. This old house won't be the same once he gets through with it.

MAN: (On cell phone.) Linda, tell me again the address of the woman I am to visit. Good. I just wanted to be sure. And, her daughter asked for me to see her? Great! Did you get my sermon notes typed? Good. Then I can spend as much time visiting Mrs. Goodman as I need. Pray for me. (Rings doorbell or knocks.)

WOMAN: Oh, Lydia, here he is now! Talk to you later. (Opens door.) Oh, do come in. I am so glad to see you. I've been waiting for you all day.

MAN: That's wonderful! Sounds like you're anxious to get started.

WOMAN: Oh, I am. I am so tired of the way things have been. I need a change. A big change. My husband was a little worried about it until I told him who you were. You're such a success in this town. Uh, Mister . . .

MAN: (Interrupts her.) Doctor Smith.

WOMAN: Doctor? Oh, I am impressed. I didn't know you were a doctor.

MAN: Well, I went back for a few years to get my doctorate.

WOMAN: What was your doctorate in?

MAN: Missions.

WOMAN: Missions? Well, I don't really care for the adobe and mud look, but I'll leave it up to you. I want to start with the ceiling.

MAN: The ceiling?

WOMAN: I feel like I'm bumping my head all the time. I can't get past the acoustic tile.

MAN: I understand. You feel confined, limited. You can't see the heights of heaven.

WOMAN: Oh, how poetic. I knew you would understand. And, then there's the walls. I want to get rid of them all. Open things up a bit. Air it all out.

MAN: I know how to break down those walls. I can show you how to open up your life, establish lines of communication.

WOMAN: And, I'm tired of all the dirt.

MAN: It does pile up, doesn't it? I'll show you how to clean up your life.

WOMAN: Especially when you go around all day just pounding it in. And, then there's the fountain. I want to see flowing water.

MAN: Oh, yes! The water of life, flowing freely for all, cleansing away the dirt and guilt.

WOMAN: And I want more light. It's so dark, so confining.

MAN: I can show you the light . . .

WOMAN: How much will this cost?

MAN: I don't charge anything

WOMAN: What? Oh, I understand. You make a commission off of the other things.

MAN: I make no commission. The price has already been paid. All you have to do is accept the gift. It's all free.

WOMAN: Free? Wait a minute. I don't want to be a showcase with people traipsing around asking me how I like the changes.

MAN: Telling others of the changes is essential. But, in a way, it will cost you everything.

WOMAN: Everything? And, yet, it is free? I don't understand.

MAN: If you want to change your life, you have to be willing to give up everything you are to become what God wants you to be. If you want to change your life, you have to let God give you an undivided heart and a put a new spirit in you.

WOMAN: Whatever are you babbling about?

MAN: I'm here to share God's Word with you so you can follow his decrees and become a new person.

WOMAN: You're a pastor?

MAN: Yes. Your daughter asked me to come see you.

WOMAN: I don't need you! I need an interior decorator. My house is a mess and I want to change it. Now, get out and stop wasting my time.

MAN: I don't think it is this house that needs to be remodeled. It's your heart that needs a change.

HAPPY-MART
A ONE ACT PLAY
BY BRUCE HENNIGAN
COPYRIGHT © AUGUST, 2000

TOPIC: JOY VERSUS HAPINESS

CAST:

NIGEL WRENCH, A STORE CLERK
 RUPERT NUNLEY, A CUSTOMER

NIGEL: Good afternoon. I am Nigel Wrench. How may I help you?

RUPERT: I'm Rupert Nunley, Mr. Wrench. And, I take it this is the happiness shop?

NIGEL: Yes, we are Happy-Mart.

RUPERT: I've heard some good things about you.

NIGEL: Of course. We are doing so well that just down the street we're already putting in a Super Happy Mart. So, how can I help you?

RUPERT: Well, I want some happiness. I've been quite sad and lonely lately.

NIGEL: And, just what kind of happiness are you looking for?

RUPERT: I'm not sure. That's the problem.

NIGEL: Let's see. Are you single?

RUPERT: Yes.

NIGEL: Not married, I take it. Have you considered the joys of marriage? Wedded bliss if you will?

RUPERT: Yes. I've often dreamed of taking the plunge.

NIGEL: Love and romance?

RUPERT: Yes. That would take care of my loneliness.

NIGEL: A wise choice, good sir. Marriage can be so satisfying. Love and romance and all that. (Phone rings.) Excuse me. Yes? Oh, hello, dear. What? You've had a wreck? What is wrong with you? I told you not to drive and talk on the cell phone at the same time. Who did you hit? The mayor? They'll put you under the jail? Well, maybe that is where you belong! I'll come bail you out this evening. Goodbye. (Smiles) That was the old ball and chain. Now, we were talking about marriage?

RUPERT: Maybe I should pass on finding the woman of my dreams.

NIGEL: How about a man, then?

RUPERT: (Long silence.) You're kidding, aren't you?

NIGEL: Of course, not. This is the twenty first century.

RUPERT: Perhaps I should have stayed in the twentieth. I think I'll pass. Do you have something else that might make me happy?

NIGEL: How about fame and fortune?

RUPERT: That sounds good. Who did you have in mind?

NIGEL: We could make you the next Bill Gates. Are you any good with computers?

RUPERT: I can turn on one.

NIGEL: Let's try the stock market.

RUPERT: No, I've already worked as a stocker in the grocery store. It was bad on my back.

NIGEL: I see. Perhaps you should try gambling. That doesn't require a lot of intelligence! The casinos or the lottery. Are you lucky?

RUPERT: I haven't had a date in over a year.

NIGEL: Oh, yes. We already covered that ground.

RUPERT: Look, it doesn't seem like things are going to make me happy. Perhaps you have something else?

NIGEL: Well, we do have something that is outdated. It's been lying on our clearance shelf for years. Every now and then, someone comes in and tries it. Funny thing is, we've never had anyone bring it back, no returns. But, it seems less and less in demand lately. Ah, here it is. The Holy Bible.

RUPERT: The Bible? What do I do?

NIGEL: I'm not sure. Perhaps you should read the instructions. I think it promises you will have true happiness. I personally haven't tried it so I can't vouch for its validity.

RUPERT: Great! How much do I owe you?

NIGEL: Nothing. It's free. The price has already been paid. But, if it works, why not let me know about it.

RUPERT: From the sounds of that telephone conversation you're not such a happy man, either.

NIGEL: Nowadays, who is?

RUPERT: Seems like only the people who've tried this solution. Good day.

For July 16, 2000 this drama is a bit unusual and deals with the discovery by Albert Einstein that the universe was created by God.

THE GOD OF THE EQUATIONS
BY
BRUCE HENNIGAN

COPYRIGHT © JULY, 2000

CAST:

ALBERT EINTSTEIN
VICTOR, A FRIEND

VICTOR: Albert, I've been looking all over for you. Your lunch hour is over and the boss is not going to be happy if you don't get back to work on processing all of the patent request. He's already asking, "Has anybody seen that empty headed Mr. Einstein?"

EINSTEIN: (Distracted, looks up from his papers.) What? Oh, Victor! Is lunch over already?

VICTOR: Yes, in case you haven't cared to look at your pocket watch. Now, come on before we both get fired.

EINSTEIN: Victor, you're my friend, not my mother.

VICTOR: Well, somebody has to keep an eye on you. You're always going around with your head up in the sky working on your scientific paper about your family tree.

EINSTEIN: Family tree?

VICTOR: You know, your theory of relatives.

EINSTEIN: Theory of Relativity, Victor. And my job is not as important as solving this problem I'm stuck with.

VICTOR: So what is the problem?

EINSTEIN: Victor, you wouldn't even begin to understand the problems with the theory of relativity.

VICTOR: Oh, I don't know about that. Sometimes really smart people don't have any common sense and since I'm not smart, I have a lot of common sense. Unlike a certain friend of mine.

EINSTEIN: All right. The problem is this equation. It shows the universe is simultaneously expanding and decelerating.

VICTOR: Expanding and yet, decelerating. Sounds like a big problem. As if I understand what you're saying!

EINSTEIN: Well, yes, it is a problem. You see scientists believe the universe is infinitely old and infinitely large. It has no beginning or end. It just has always been .

..

VICTOR: That isn't so, Mr. Einstein.

EINSTEIN: So you do understand the equation.

VICTOR: No. I just understand the Bible.

EINSTEIN: Don't bring the Bible up! That's my problem. If the universe is expanding and slowing down at the same time, then it is the result of an explosion. In other words, the universe had a beginning!

VICTOR: I could have told you that. Genesis 1:1. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. In the Beginning. You didn't need to look at those silly equations to know the universe had a beginning. Now, let's get back to work.

EINSTEIN: Victor, don't you see my problem? If the universe had a beginning then it had a ...

VICTOR: Beginner, right?

EINSTEIN: Right! The scientific world is not going to like this at all. It means the universe was created by God.

VICTOR: And, you should be so surprised?

EINSTEIN: I am surprised to find it right here in these equations. I've got to do something about this.

VICTOR: Why not just tell the truth? Get the scientific community to admit it was wrong. Isn't science all about looking for the truth?

EINSTEIN: I wish it were that simple, Victor. You're talking about doing away with centuries of higher thinking not to mention the problem this presents to evolution.

VICTOR: Well, all I've got to say, Mr. Einstein is you should have taken a look at the Bible before you started getting all upset about this theory of relativity. It says in Romans, "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – his eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse."

EINSTEIN: VICTOR, I can't say that in a scientific paper. I've got to figure out a way around this equation or I'll never amount to anything in the field of science. I'll be stuck as a patent clerk for the rest of my life.

VICTOR: Mr. Einstein, maybe you should stick to the truth. It's staring you right in the face in those blessed equations of yours. God created the universe. I don't know how but I know that if you look at those equations hard enough, the truth will keep coming right back at you. And, you can't ignore the truth, Mr. Einstein. God made the universe whether your precious scientists want to believe it or not.

EINSTEIN: If I can just divert attention to something else. Maybe I can get people to pay attention to this other equation.

VICTOR: Which one?

EINSTEIN: $E=mc^2$

VICTOR: It'll never catch on.

(He exits).

FINAL ANSWER?
A ONE ACT PLAY
BY BRUCE HENNIGAN
COPYRIGHT © MAY, 2000

TOPIC: THE MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT WHO AND WHAT GOD IS.

CAST:

REGIS PHILBIN
MANFRED PEASLEY
LARRY

REGIS: Good evening, this is Regis Philbin, host of 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire' and tonight's contestant is Manfred Peasley. How you doing, Manfred?

PEASLEY: Great, Regis. Just, great.

REGIS: Well, on yesterday's show, you made it to \$125,000 and you are just three questions away from being a Millionaire. Are you ready to play?

PEASLEY: Let's do it, Regis.

REGIS: All right. Your question: Who is God? A: The Big Man Upstairs B: Whoever you want Him to be C: A Myth D: An alien from Saturn

PEASLEY: Gee, that's a tough question, Reeg. But I think the answer is A.

REGIS: A? Is that your final answer?

PEASLEY: Yeah, I'm going with A.

REGIS: Right! You've just won \$250,000 and you are only two questions away from being a Millionaire. Do you want to go on?

PEASLEY: You bet, Reeg.

REGIS: OK. Here's the next question. Who is God?

PEASLEY: Regis, that's the same question as I had before.

REGIS: Don't interrupt me, Manfred.

PEASLEY: Sorry.

REGIS: A: A spirit that permeates the universe. B: An Old Man in a Big Chair C: The Planet Earth D: The Force

PEASLEY: That's odd. The question is the same but the answers are different.

REGIS: I don't make up the questions, Manfred. I just host the show. What is your answer?

PEASLEY: I'll guess I'll pick B.

REGIS: B? Is that your final answer?

PEASLEY: Sure.

REGIS: You're right again! You've won \$500,000 and you are one question away from \$1 million, Manfred. How does it feel?

PEASLEY: Good.

REGIS: All right. Here's the last question. Who is God? A: Goddess of the Forrest
B: Chance C: There is no God. D: George Burns

PEASLEY: Uh, Regis, this is the third time in a row I have had this question. And yet, each time the answers are different.

REGIS: Talk to the research staff, Manfred. I just want an answer.

PEASLEY: Gosh! I'm really confused, now. I have one life line left, right?

REGIS: Yes. You can phone a friend. Who are you going to call?

PEASLEY: I guess I'll call Larry.

REGIS: All right. We'll get Larry on the line. Hello, Larry, this is Regis Philbin of 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire' and we have your friend Manfred Peasly here who needs a little help.

LARRY: Sure, Regis. Hi, Manfred.

PEASLEY: Hey, Larry. Let me read you the question and then the answers.

REGIS: You have thirty seconds, Manfred.

PEASLEY: (Reads question and answers.)

LARRY: Well, I hate to tell you this, Manfred old boy but none of those answers are correct.

PEASLEY: What?

LARRY: The only way you can know God is to know who Jesus Christ is. And you've got to stop focusing on your self and start focusing on the personhood of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Only then can you get your eyes off of your selfish interpretation of the person of God and find out who He truly is.

PEASLEY: Larry, I don't have time for a Sunday School lesson.

LARRY: Well, it seems to me you have only two choices. Pick one of those answers that the world is telling you is correct or choose to believe in Jesus Christ, the one person

who represents God. Seems to me you can be a millionaire or you can inherit all of eternity with God.

REGIS: I'm sorry, Manfred. You time is up. What's your answer?

PEASLEY: Gosh, Regis. None of these answers seem right. Maybe Larry is right. Maybe in order to know God I need to stop focusing on society's idea of God and start focusing on Jesus Christ.

REGIS: You're going to miss out on a million dollars, Manfred.

PEASLEY: Maybe eternity with God is worth a lot more. I don't know.

REGIS: That your final answer?

PEASLEY: I want to make sure and make the right choice. (Turns to audience,) Jesus Christ or the world? What is your final answer?

FRIENDS IN A LONELY WORLD

BY

BRUCE HENNIGAN
FOR JUNE 18, 2000

THIS TOPIC DEALS WITH THE TRUE MEANING OF FRIENDSHIP. SIX PEOPLE ARE INVOLVED AND MAY BE ALTERNATED. EACH HAS THEIR BACK TURNED TO THE AUDIENCE AS NUMBER 1 GOES TO THEM AND ASKS HIS QUESTION. AFTER THEIR EXCHANGE THE PERSON TURNS HIS BACK TO THE AUDIENCE AGAIN.

1: Hi. I'm lonely. Will you be my friend?

2: Yeah, sure. Whatever you say. I'll be your friend. All you have to do is take one of these pills. It'll make you a new man. And, when that one wears off, you'll need another one and then you'll be my friend forever.

1: No, thanks. I don't want that kind of friend. Hi. I'm lonely. Will you be my friend?

3: You bet I will. Speaking of bet, let's go to the boats. I know this slot machine that is way overdue for a jackpot. We can sit in front of it all day. By the way, can you loan me twenty bucks?

1: No, thanks. Excuse me. Will you be my friend?

4: Friend? You want me to be your friend? Are you kidding? Wait! Are you interested in investing in a new IPO on this internet site I'm building. You could be the next Internet millionaire. All it will cost you is everything you own.

1: Sounds too risky. No, thanks. Hi. I'm lonely. Will you be my friend?

5: Dude! You got a friend in me! Yeah, let's me and you dance the night away. We can party until the sun goes dark. It's time to party!

1: That's not what I had in mind. Sorry. Hi. I'm looking for a friend . . .

6: You've come to the right place. I have lots of friends and I would be glad to be your friend. You can come to our church and find lots of friends.

1: Church? You've got to be kidding. Why would I want to come to a church filled with self righteous people and hypocrites?

6: And those people aren't hypocrites? Didn't they promise to be your friend for something in exchange? They would never accept you just the way you are.

1: And people in church would accept me?

6: We're not perfect. That is why we come to church. Church is a place for people who need help. People who need God. People who need each other.

1: At least you're honest about your shortcomings.

6: If you are looking for friends in a lonely world, you can always find friends at church. And, you start off by making friends with the ultimate friend, Jesus Christ. He will accept you and love you just the way you are. If you find a friend in Jesus, you will never be lonely. And, if you come to our church, you will find lots of friends of Jesus. All you have to do is join and become one of us. Simple.

1: No money or drugs or partying?

6: No. Jesus wants to invite you to his feast. We are waiting to be your friend. Won't you come and join?

THE UNWELCOME VISITOR**By****Bruce Hennigan****Copyright © July, 2000****CAST:****ANNA****MARTAMEUS****SARA**

(Martameus and Anna are huddled in a dark room. There is a loud knock at the door and they flinch in fear.)

ANNA: Father, someone is knocking at the door.

MARTAMEUS: I know it! Don't make a sound. It may be one of the soldiers come to arrest us.

ANNA: What will they do to us?

MARTAMEUS: You saw what they did to the Master.

ANNA: No, I didn't, Father. You wouldn't let me go out to help him. We've been hiding in the dark all day.

MARTAMEUS: They crucified him, my child. We don't want to be crucified! (A knock.) There it is again.

SARA: Martemeus! Are you there?

ANNA: Father, that voice sounds so familiar.

MARTAMEUS: It may be a trick. Let me look through the peep hole. (He goes over and looks through hole.) No! It cannot be!

SARA: Martameus, open the door.

(He opens door and a woman comes in dressed in white linen. Her clothing moves in the wind. Martemeus grabs Anna and they cower in fear.)

MARTAMEUS: Anna, get behind me. It is a ghost, a spirit from the grave.

SARA: It is only I, Sara.

MARTAMEUS: Sara! How is this possible?

SARA: Why are you hiding in the darkness, Martameus? Anna, why are you hiding behind your father?

ANNA: Mother, is that you? The last time I saw you, you looked so old and so sick.

MARTAMEUS: Sara's body was wasted by disease. You cannot be my wife.

SARA: I am young and healthy. Again.

MARTAMEUS: (Tentatively comes to her and Martameus stops her.) Anna, don't go any closer.

ANNA: But, it is mother. And, she is beautiful.

MARTAMEUS: You asked me why I was hiding in the darkness. Haven't you seen what is going on out there? There are soldiers in the streets, blood flowing on the crosses. Sara, they have killed the Master.

SARA: And you deal with this by hiding in our house?

MARTAMEUS: I was afraid. I didn't want to end up like Him. What would Anna do without me? Sara, if it is you, why are you here?

SARA: I have come to give you hope.

MARTAMEUS: (Crosses to a window, throws it open and points up the hill.) Our hope was nailed to that cross, Sara. Jesus Christ is dead.

SARA: And, yet, here I stand.

MARTAMEUS: What are you telling me?

SARA: Death is not the end, my husband. I have come to tell you that one can rise from the grave. Do not give up on the Master. For, He will never give up on you. You can find hope and forgiveness and a reason to live.

ANNA: (Comes over to her and Martameus does not stop her.) If you are my mother, then why don't you stay with us?

SARA: I can only stay for a while, my daughter. I am here on this day because the miracle of miracles has occurred. Death has been forever conquered and sin no longer holds dominion over man. The Master is the first fruits of the resurrection and soon He will take us to be with the Father.

(She kneels and reaches out to her daughter.) But, most importantly, I have come to give your father hope and to tell you to live for the Master.

(They embrace and Martemaus comes over to them, reaching out to touch her head.) Martameus, I must go now to be with the Master. But, remember there is hope beyond the grave; there is forgiveness to light your darkness; and there is a reason to live.

(She reaches out and touches his face.) Remember, my dear, I love you. Always. And, one day, we will meet again.

(She exits down the aisle and Martameus and Sarah hold each other.)

THE ORIGINAL STORY: THE VISITOR by Bruce Hennigan

A knock at the door. Martameus looked up from the darkness of the room. The knock came again, insistent, unrelenting. Fear filled his heart and he shuddered. Outside, the sky hung like clotted blood. Rain cascaded from swollen clouds, and the earth trembled as if in labor. He did not want to open the door. He did not want to embrace the unknown. He huddled closer to the meager light of his lamp, pulling his shawl and cloak about him against the cool, damp air.

Who was at the door? A friend? Unlikely. A stranger? Perhaps. A foe? Certainly. In these times, to answer the knock at the door was folly. It might let in death. *Rap, rap, rap.*

"Martameus, let me in." A faint voice. He glanced up from his corner at the rough hewn wood of the door. Thunder shook the walls again. Could it be? Impossible! He stood shakily and crossed to the door. His hand, shaking with fear, reached to the latch.

The door swung open on a gust of rain-filled wind and she stood there. White linen draped her figure, hanging from her head, wet with rain. Her face gleamed in the lamp light with moisture and she stepped into the warmth of his home.

"Martameus." Her voice was soft.

He fell back away from the door, stumbled on the soft rug, fell against the table. The lamp light guttered in the wind and the room was cast into stark shadows. Lightning spilled in through the door, knife edged, cutting away the blackness.

"Sara?" He mumbled, his hand to his mouth.

She moved past him to the lamp and orange light filled the room again. "Close the door," She said.

He shook his head in confusion as he shut the door against the wind and rain. "I do not understand."

She turned to him, crossing the dirt floor gracefully. The white linen fell away from her head and he saw her face, soft, radiant. Her eyes glowed with life, her cheeks ruddy.

"I came back to tell you." She reached out to touch his cheek.

He pulled away fearfully, his fingers touching the spot on his cheek where her warm hand had caressed. "How can this be?" He whispered, feeling the hardness of the door bite into his back.

"I cannot stay long." She came nearer. "Why are you hiding?"

"Hiding?" He managed through numb lips. "Have you seen what is going on out there?" He motioned toward the door.

"Yes."

"We all had to run. Hide. There were soldiers everywhere. They would have killed us." He stopped, shame silencing his rambling. He pushed past her and went to the only window in the room. He unlatched the bar and allowed the wooden panels to swing inward. The rain had slackened, the thunder abating. Across the wind swept streets, clouds threw hesitant shadows. He squinted into the wind toward a distant hill that overshadowed the city. "He's up there. Now. Nailed to that cross. What was I suppose to do? I can't fight all of Rome."

He felt her hands on his shoulders, warm, reassuring. "I came to tell you there is hope."

He turned to her, and her face was a plane of murky shadows. "I came to tell you there is more. Do not hesitate to believe that one can rise from the dead. Do not give up on Him. He will not give up on you."

Martameus' heart pounded and tears swelled in his eyes. "But, I let him down! All of us did."

She smiled. "There is forgiveness, Martameus. You will see. Forgiveness and hope."

She turned and started for the door, casting a lingering look around the room. "You've let this house get filthy, Martameus and I've been gone only two weeks. But, do not despair. There are more important things in life. And, in death."

He ran to her and stopped as she opened the door. Outside, the wind had ceased, the rain no longer fell, and sunlight streamed in the alleyway. "Remember that I love you." She whispered, reaching out to touch his lips with hers. "And, there is hope."

She turned and started down the alleyway, leaving him alone in the doorway. With tears in his eyes, he watched her begin the long walk back to her tomb and clung to the knowledge that death, this day, had been forever defeated.

Matt. 27:52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

Matt. 27:53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

WHO WON THE ELECTION?

BY
BRUCE HENNIGAN
COPYRIGHT © JULY, 2000

TOPIC: ELECTION AND FREE WILL

ANGIE
BERTHA

ANGIE: Hey, girl. I've been looking for you!

BERTHA: Hi, Angie. I see you've still got my Bible.

ANGIE: Yeah, I've been reading it for the past few weeks. I hope you don't mind.

BERTHA: No. You can have it. I can always get another Bible.

ANGIE: You know, my life has changed so much since I started reading the Bible. But, I'm having some problems understanding a few things. Can I ask you some questions?

BERTHA: Sure.

ANGIE: All right. Now, right here it says that we can go to heaven if we win an election. But, who votes for us? Is it a popularity contest? Or, maybe a beauty contest? Of course, if it's a beauty contest, then I should have it made.

BERTHA: Win an election? Let me see. Oh, you're talking about the elect. There's no election, silly. The elect are the people chosen by God to inherit His kingdom.

ANGIE: So, when does he 'elect' us?

BERTHA: Before the world was made.

ANGIE: But, we weren't here, then.

BERTHA: That doesn't matter. God has foreknowledge of the future.

ANGIE: Foreknowledge? Isn't that a golfing term? You mean God played golf before he made the world?

BERTHA: No. That's not what I mean. God existed before the creation of the universe and yet, He knew everything that would happen in the future. Right down to the good and the bad things we would do.

ANGIE: You mean He knew about the apple and Eve and all that and he still made us anyway? Seems like he could have avoided all that trouble if He knew what we were going to do.

BERTHA: Well, God loves us in spite of the choices we would make, good or bad. He just wants us to seek His will.

ANGIE: He has a will? But, I thought God could never die. Why does he need a will?

BERTHA: God's will is His desire for our lives. He has a plan for us. And, we should try and learn His will for our lives.

ANGIE: But, if we are elected by His foreknowledge to do His will then what is there for us to decided about? It seems we don't have a choice in anything.

BERTHA: We do have a choice. We have a free will. We can choose to disobey God and live out of His will.

ANGIE: God's will, my will! Sounds like a windmill going around and around and around. I am so confused.

BERTHA: I know it's a bit confusing. It's hard to understand that God has already chosen was is best for us and yet gives us the right to disobey Him. Only, when we do, we aren't very happy.

ANGIE: Oh, look! There's that new guy from accounting. Everyday after lunch he goes and gets a cup of coffee and sits out on the patio. (Pause) You aren't related to him, are you?

BERTHA: No. And, I heard he is not married.

ANGIE: Good! He is so good looking. Hey, I think I get it, Bertha. You see, if I have foreknowledge he is going to the coffee pot and if I elect to meet him there then it must be God's will that we have a date this weekend! I just love the word of God! Thanks for explaining it all to me, girl. I got to go fulfill my destiny.

BERTHA: I don't think that is what God meant. But, I'm sure there is someone who can explain it all.

TWINKIE DISCIPLINE

BY

BRUCE HENNIGAN
COPYRIGHT © MAY, 2000
FOR MAY 21, 2000

TOPIC: THE TRUE COST OF DISCIPLINE AND COMMITMENT

CAST: Two joggers getting ready for a race

LARRY
BRUCE

LARRY: (Comes out and does stretches, etc. getting ready for a race. Bruce comes out and watches.) Hey, great day for a race isn't it?

BRUCE: Yep, it sure is.

LARRY: You here for the race?

BRUCE: Sure am.

LARRY: Me, too. I haven't run in a race in over two years.

BRUCE: I come every month for the race.

LARRY: Every month? Wow, you must really be disciplined.

BRUCE: Yep, sure am.

LARRY: Well, why don't you join me?

BRUCE: Excuse me?

LARRY: You know. Stretching? Warm up for the race?

BRUCE: You're right. I have to warm up. (He takes a twinkie out of his pocket and begins to open it. Larry reacts with surprise as Bruce eats the Twinkie.)

LARRY: That's how you warm up?

BRUCE: For every race.

LARRY: Oh, I get it. Carbo loading. But, I thought you were supposed to do that for marathons. This is only a six mile race.

BRUCE: I do it for every race.

LARRY: Oh, yeah. Discipline, that's right. So how far do you run each day.

BRUCE: The same amount. Come rain or shine.

LARRY: Wow, you are disciplined. I let the least little bit of rain and cold keep me in the bed in the mornings. I only manage four to six miles a day.

BRUCE: (Takes out another Twinkie.) Can't let rain stop you. No sirree. Can't let a little cold stop you. You've got to be disciplined.

LARRY: You're really putting those Twinkies away. Doesn't that cramp your style?

BRUCE: Oh, no. See. My arm works just fine.

LARRY: I was talking about your legs.

BRUCE: I don't need my legs to eat Twinkies.

LARRY: Wait a minute, you are going to run in this race, aren't you?

BRUCE: Run? Are you crazy!

LARRY: Then why are you here?

BRUCE: To be a part of the race. To get in on the action. Can't let life pass you by.

LARRY: But, you aren't going to run? Have you pulled a hamstring?

BRUCE: Nope. Can't do that eating a Twinkie.

LARRY: How far do you run each day?

BRUCE: I don't run. If I run each day, I won't be free. I need my freedom. That's is why I don't run.

LARRY: You don't run? And you expect to be a part of this race? You're out of your mind. You have to train each day. You have to get up and run six miles each day. You have to watch what you eat. You have to sacrifice. You have to be disciplined to run in this race.

BRUCE: I am disciplined. There are certain parameters to my life that are unchangeable and I have a rigorous discipline.

LARRY: Let's hear it.

BRUCE: I never run. I never walk fast. I never sweat. In fact, I try not to move any more than I have to. And that gives me the freedom to have my Twinkies. And, I eat at least two dozen Twinkies each day. Now, that's a disciplined life style.

LARRY: Not if you're going to run in the race!

BRUCE: But, I'm here for each and every race. I put on my running clothes and I get the tee shirt.

LARRY: But, you're not a part of the race! You're just a spectator. If you want to get the most out of this race, just like life, you have to be disciplined. Only when you are disciplined for life will you find true freedom. Look at you. You're a slug! You can't

even move. Seems to me your trapped by your freedom while I am freed by my discipline. Hey, there's the gun. I'm off. (Runs off the stage.)

BRUCE: (Tries to move and then shrugs and eats another Twinkie.)

THE TOUGHEST ANSWER

**BY
BRUCE HENNIGAN
COPYRIGHT © JULY, 2000
FOR JULY 30, 2000**

TOPIC: WHY DO BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE?

CAST:

**SON
DAD**

(Father walks out on stage and son is carving a piece of wood with a knife.)

DAD: Hey, son. What are you doing?

SON: Does it matter?

DAD: It matters to me.

SON: I'm carving something.

DAD: What?

SON: Just something. I just wanted to do something.

DAD: I'm sorry about what happened and I don't know how to explain it.

SON: Don't worry, Dad. I don't expect you to have the answers.

DAD: Sometimes bad things just happen.

SON: Yeah. They just happen. Good people just happen to get killed. It's just so unfair! Why did he have to die?

DAD: I wish I had some answers. Maybe one day we'll understand why he had to die.

SON: You know, they killed him. It's all their fault. Why did they always kill the good people?

DAD: It just seems that way, son. Good and bad people die. It rains on the just and the unjust.

SON: I guess you're going to tell me next that one day I'll understand. One day I'll look back on this and learn from it. One day I'll understand why bad things happen to good people. But, not this time, Dad. He didn't have to die. He was good. He was the best of us killed by the worst of us.

DAD: I know.

SON: Why did he have to suffer so much? Huh? Why couldn't his death have been quicker? Why couldn't he have died in his sleep or something?

DAD: Suffering is part of our existence. We can't get around it.

SON: So, being good doesn't protect you from suffering? Then, why be good?

DAD: Because who we are on the inside might make a difference in eternity.

SON: Well, I want to be happy now. Here. On planet Earth. With my friend. I don't want to have to wait until I see him someday in heaven!

DAD: I wish I could give you some answers why your friend had to die.

SON: (Puts the stick with another stick and holds it up in the shape of a cross.) Why did they have to nail him to a cross?

DAD: I'm not sure, son. But, somehow, I think the answer to all your questions is right there in your hands.

RATS
(RELIGIOUS ARTIFACT TELESHOPPING SHOW)

BY

BRUCE HENNIGAN
COPYRIGHT © SEPTEMBER, 2000
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

A VIDEO SCRIPT
Can be done live

CAST:

PETUNIA PRIMROSE – Jean Brown
PROFESSOR AMBROSE CHAPEL – Perry Ramsey

CALL IN VOICES
BEULAH MAR PICKFORD
ROBERT

SCENE 1

CREDIT ROLLOVER OF LOGO FOR RATS
FADE UP ON PETUNIA

PETUNIA: Good evening, holy shoppers. I am Petuna Primrose and I want to welcome you to the religious Artifact Teleshopping Show. (Credits fade up with letters spelling RATS and a fake phone number.) Today, we are so excited to offer you the latest products from the distant past. My guest today is Professor Ambrose Chapel of Bogusarian Seminary.

(Camera pulls back to include old, dowdy Professor Chapel with reading glasses perched on his nose.)

CHAPEL: Thank you, Petunia.

PETUNIA: So, Professor Chapel, tell our viewers what our first product is.

CHAPEL: Well, the very famous organization, Humanistic Ongoing Archeological Expedition has kindly donated three products today for sale.

PETUNIA: That's H, O, A, X. right?

CHAPEL: (Letters fade up as subtitle HOAX with web site.) That's right. They find religious artifacts and prepare them for consumer purchase. You can check out their website. WWW.hoax.com.

PETUNIA: And, our first product is right here. (She holds up a zip lock bag containing a piece of cloth.) Now, this piece of ancient cloth is from a larger cloth and it has been carefully segmented into small pieces. (She holds up a ruler.) Each piece is exactly three and one half inches square and one sixteenth of an inch thick. And included in each package is a certificate of authenticity signed by Professor Chapel.

CHAPEL: That's right. The larger cloth was located by HOAX just weeks ago. They have verified it is the cloth used to wash the disciple's feet at the last supper.

PETUNIA: (Excitedly.) No! The very same cloth?

CHAPEL: Yes. If you look at the close-up of cloth fragment number 12X you'll see this stain. (Close-up of brown smudge on cloth.) This is where the disciple John wiped gravy from his mouth.

PETUNIA: No! Oh, this is so exciting! We have a phone call. Hello, this Petunia Primrose.

BEULAH: This is Beulah Mae Pickford from Hog Waller, Arkansas. Professor Chapel, just how do we know this is the genuine article?

CHAPEL: Well, if you look at cloth fragment number 32X. (Holds up cloth in close up.) You'll notice this piece of toenail. See right here? This is the actual toenail of Peter. He must have had a hangnail when his feet were washed.

BEULAH: Petunia, this is so exciting. Do you think the cloth has any special properties?

PETUNIA: Well, I've heard that if you hold the cloth against the area of your body in which you have an affliction, you can be healed. (Makes a grand healing gesture.) Or, if you have some unconfessed sin in your life, just wipe the cloth across your heart and the sins are gone!

BEULAH: Wait a minute. I just tried a new cleanser last week on those pesky sins and it worked better than anything I've ever used.

PETUNIA: And, what is the name of this cleanser. Maybe we can get it on the show.

BEULAH: The blood of Jesus.

PETUNIA: Oh, well, that's nice! (Hangs up phone quickly and moves on.) So, holy shoppers, give us your credit card information and you can own this very piece of cloth with Peter's toenail. And, to the rest of our viewers, make those calls real quick because we only have 132 pieces of this cloth. So, call 1 800 RATS4YU right now.

(Fade out)

RATS2

PETUNIA: Petunia Primrose here of the Religious Artifact Teleshopping Show, or RATS. We're back with more of our special religious artifacts brought to the light of day by a special organization that is dedicated to making humanity better. That's Humanistic Ongoing Archeological eXpedition. Or, HOAX. What is next Professor Chapel?

CHAPEL: Well we have only twenty-five of these. (He holds up a small bottle of wine.) As you can see on the label, this is Cana Wedding Wine. Now, you've heard of the wedding at Cana?

PETUNIA: No! That's not the wedding where Jesus performed his first miracle, is it?

CHAPEL: That's right! He turned water into wine. And we have twenty-five bottles of this very special wine on sale tonight.

PETUNIA: Where on earth did HOAX find these bottles?

CHAPEL: On the Titanic. Perfectly preserved. You can even see the dregs in the bottom of the bottle from the leftover grape fragments of grapes grown in first century Palestine.

PETUNIA: Yes, I see them.

CHAPEL: Now, we happen to have one bottle open for you to taste. (Chapel pours some into a cup and hands it to Petunia.)

PETUNIA: Oh, this is so exciting. (She sips the wine and gags, trying to hide it, hamming it up for the camera, eyes watering and in aside to Chapel says – this tastes like vinegar. Finally regains her composure and holds up the cup.) Delightful. It would go with any meal. Or, salad. We have a caller. Hello, this is Petunia Primrose of the Religious Artifacts Teleshoping Show. Who are I talking to?

BARNEY: Barney Farquar, here. Petunia, I just have a simple question. If that there wine was made from the miraculous conversion of water into wine by Jesus and not from ordinary grapes, why would there be dregs in the bottle?

PETUNIA: (looking helplessly at Professor Chapel.) I'd direct that question to our expert.

CHAPEL: I think the dregs are there because of radioactive decay of Argon and Kryptonite at the bottom of the ocean in the cargo hold of the Titanic and these, uh, decays brought on a cascade of, you know, molecular stuff so that the impurities appeared out of nowhere, so to speak.

BARNEY: Sounds like you been drinking too much of that wine, Professor. I'll pass on the wine. I'd rather be filled with the Spirit than drunk with wine.

FADE OUT

RATS 3

PETUNIA: Petunia Primrose here on the Religious Artifact Teleshopping Show. We've had such an exciting evening and we've sold out of our Disciple Foot Washing Cloths and our Cana Wedding Chapel Wine. But, we have one last item supplied to us by the Humanistic Ongoing Archeological Expedition. Professor Chapel?

CHAPEL: Well, Petunia, HOAX has discovered that throughout the ages a rare phenomenon has occurred. As you know, the ancient civilizations used pottery made from clay. What we have discovered is that like the scratches made on a long playing record, voices speaking at the time the pottery was being made were etched into the surface of the pottery. If you use a finely tuned laser on the surface of pottery, you can actually hear the words and songs of these ancient people. So, what HOAX has done is taken these pottery shards and compiles songs, stories, and prayers from throughout human history and placed them in a subliminal fashion. They have placed it all on this CD. We call it G.O.D. or God On a Disk. You can use this to put a screen saver on your computer or put it in your CD player and let it play in the background.

PETUNIA: God On a Disk? You mean we don't need church anymore?

CHAPEL: That's right! No more sermons, no more Sunday School, no more sins and forgiveness. All you have to do is slip in the CD and let it do all the work for you. God on a Disk. A perfect gift to find God in the new age.

PETUNIA: This is marvelous. Oh, I see we have a caller. Hi, this is Petunia Primrose.

ROBERT: This is Robert from Shreveport, Louisiana and I had the opportunity to use one of the prototype discs.

PETUNIA: Oh, that is wonderful, Robert. How has it been?

ROBERT: Well, I must confess all it does is just sit there. When I play my CD all I hear is background noise. And, it doesn't meet any of my spiritual needs. In fact, it doesn't do anything. So, I want to return it.

PETUNIA: Oh, my! We've never had a product returned on the air.

CHAPEL: Surely you've given it a chance to show you God?

ROBERT: It didn't show me anything. In fact, I went looking for God and I didn't find Him in a box or on a CD. I found Him in the place I least expected to.

PETUNIA: Where did you find Him?

ROBERT: On a cross.

(Petunia and Chapel look at each other and fade out.)

I WON'T LET GO
BY
BRUCE HENNIGAN
COPYRIGHT © OCTOBER, 2000

TOPIC: SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND BAD HABITS

RICK
DOCTOR

Rick is sitting in a chair center stage with a coat on, his right arm tucked inside the coat. Doctor comes in.

DOCTOR: Uh, Mr. Rick McCoy? I'm Doctor Phillips. (Extends his hand to shake Rick's and Rick shakes his hand with his left hand.)

RICK: Pleased to meet you.

DOCTOR: So, Mr. McCoy, what seems to be the problem?

RICK: Well, uh, last week my good friend Arnie told me I needed to get help. And, then I heard this sermon by Reverend Mark Sutton and I've decided I need to get help with my problem.

DOCTOR: I see. And, just what is your problem?

RICK: Uh, this. (He takes out his right hand and there is a bottle stuck to it.)

DOCTOR: An empty bottle?

RICK: Well, it wasn't empty yesterday. I've almost drunk everything that's in it.

DOCTOR: Are you dehydrated? Do you need some fluids?

RICK: No! I can't let go of the bottle. (He opens his hand and the bottle stays stuck.) It just stays there. See?

DOCTOR: Hmmmm.

RICK: Look, do you doctor's have a special class on mumbleology or something. You always say "Hmmmm".

DOCTOR: Sometimes we say, "Uh Huh".

RICK: So, what can I do to get rid of this?

DOCTOR: Surely the bottle doesn't stay there all the time. Isn't there something you can do to make it come loose?

RICK: Yeah, when it's empty, the bottle comes loose only when a full bottle is right next to it. Then, the full bottle sticks to my hand.

DOCTOR: So, you drink it?

RICK: Yeah. And, I can't stop drinking from the bottle.

DOCTOR: You mean, you won't stop drinking from the bottle.

RICK: Can't, won't what's the difference?

DOCTOR: Oh, there's a big difference.

RICK: Look, I'm just tired of my past and I want a new future. I want to be free from this.

DOCTOR: Then, turn loose of the bottle.

RICK: I can't.

DOCTOR: You won't.

RICK: I can't.

DOCTOR: You won't.

RICK: Look, forget about it. I'll go see someone else. Someone with surgical skills.

DOCTOR: Mr. McCoy, sit down. It is no accident you came to see me. You see, your problem is not a physical problem. It is a spiritual problem. And, I am a Christian called by God to be a doctor. So, while I may not have the surgical skills to amputate your right hand, I do have the spiritual skills to help you put down the bottle.

RICK: So, what do I do?

DOCTOR: You have to let go of failure and grasp freedom. God holds out His hand to you and will give you freedom from slavery to your past. All you have to do is take God's hand.

RICK: But, I can't. My hand is filled with this bottle.

DOCTOR: No, you won't let go of the bottle and take God's hand. My prescription is prayer. Just talk to God and ask him to help you let go of your past. Go ahead. He's listening.

RICK: I'm not too good at praying.

DOCTOR: Don't worry. God is very good at hearing.

RICK: (bows head.) Hey, God, it's me Rick McCoy and I'm tired of my past. I can't – (looks at Doctor who shakes his head) I mean, I won't let go of it. I want to let go of my failure and grasp the freedom of the future. Please help me to let go of this bottle. (He looks up and the bottle is still in his hand.) See! It didn't work.

DOCTOR: Rick, open your hand and let God put his hand in yours.

RICK: (Opens hand and the bottle falls out.) It worked! The bottle is gone. You did it!

DOCTOR: No, God did it. He gave you freedom from your past. But, let me warn you. When you go home, your hand will want to grasp the other bottle. Every day, you must reach out and take God's hand. If you do that, He will keep it filled with good things, the things He has for your future and you can let go of the failure of your past. And that is my prescription, a daily dose of letting go of the past and grasping the future.

HELPLESS
BY
BRUCE HENNIGAN
COPYRIGHT © SEPTEMBER, 2000

TOPIC: FRIENDSHIP

CAST:

Arnie, a friend of Rick
Rick, a victim of addiction

Arnie walks onto stage as if he has come into house. When Rick appears, he is nasty looking and unkempt carrying an empty bottle he drops out of sight when he sees Arnie.

ARNIE: Rick, are you home?

RICK: (Dishevelled and unkempt.) Uh, yeah. I'm here. Oh, hey Arnie. What are you doing here?

ARNIE: Rick, you look horrible! Are you sick?

RICK: No, man. I'm fine. So what are you doing here?

ARNIE: I came by to check on you. You've missed three days at work. The guys were getting worried.

RICK: I've just been catching up on my sleep. Taking some time off. That's all.

ARNIE: (Sniffs.) Smells like you've been drinking. It's only 8 in the morning.

RICK: Uh, that's my cough medicine. Yeah. It smells funny.

ARNIE: You just said you were feeling fine. Why do you need cough medicine?

RICK: I'm feeling fine, now. Since I took the medicine, yeah. That's it.

ARNIE: Rick, I've been your friend for a long time. I know when you're lying. What are you doing? Drinking too much? Taking drugs?

RICK: I'm not doing any of that! I'm just fine. OK?

ARNIE: Rick, you need help.

RICK: Help? I need help? Well, big buddy of mine who is going to help little old Rick? Huh? These friends of mine from work, where are they? Tell me, just how many of my 'buddies' really asked about me? Huh? I bet none of them even miss me. They're probably glad I'm not around.

ARNIE: Look, Rick, I care about you. I'm your friend. Yeah, the other guys really didn't ask where you were. But, I'm here. I want to help.

RICK: What can you do to help me? You don't know what my life is like.

ARNIE: I know you used to be happy. You used to live in a big house and drive a nice car. You used to have a family . . .

RICK: That's enough, Arnie! You self righteous . . . Get out of my house. Go back and tell my buddies I'm doing just fine without them. And, I can do just fine without you. The last thing I need is somebody rubbing my nose in my past. I don't need my old house. I don't need my family. And, I don't need you!

ARNIE: But, you do need your booze and your stash of drugs, don't you?

RICK: (Pushes Arnie back and tries to take a swing at him. Spins around and collapses in Arnie's arms. Arnie helps him up and Rick slaps his hands away.) Leave me alone, Arnie. Nobody can help me. Not you. Not your buddies. Not even God. If He even exists. Just get out of here and leave me alone.

ARNIE: Rick, there is help. And, you need to get it.

RICK: Get out! (screams loudly) Leave me alone to die as I please. (Arnie exits and Rick collapses onto stage, sobbing.) There's no one to help me. I'm beyond help. I'm helpless. (Pulls envelope of cocaine out of pocket and discovers it is empty. Frantically searches his pockets for some more.) No! There's nothing left? Where's my bottle? It's gone, too. Can't even get help from my bottle. I might as well just lay here and die. There's no help for me. No help.

(This is open ended and serves to lead into a sermon.)

