

THE CHURCH CLINIC

A Short, Humorous Allegory

Updated By Susan Shore

*from the original written
by Mrs. E. B. Wilson*

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SYNOPSIS

Every church must have willing workers to thrive. But many church members suffer from common ailments. Here, at a special clinic, some of these ailments are presented. Luckily, as we see in this humorous allegory, they are all curable.

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

(3 m, 8 w)

MEDICAL STAFF:

NURSES: Named Hope and Faith

DR. LEVEL-HEAD: Woman, down-to earth

DR. STRONG-HEART: Man, eccentric

PATIENTS:

MRS. OVER-SENSITIVE: Looks for ways to be hurt

MADAME U.R. Highbrow: Extremely snobby!

ELDER OVER-PIOUS: Cantankerous

MRS. ROUND-TUIT: Procrastinates

MRS. WILLING-WORKER: An ideal church worker

IMA GOSSIP: Sees and reports all

SAM WEALTHY: Money is his only concern

SPEAKER: For prologue and epilogue

TIME: The present.

PLACE: A special clinic for sick church members.

PLAYING TIME: About 20 minutes.

COSTUMES

Dress and manner should suggest the weakness indicated by the name of the character. For example, Mrs. Over-Sensitive carries lots of tissues or a long handkerchief for her easily shed tears; Mrs. Highbrow, ultra stylish clothes, may include an oversized hat; Elder Over-Pious, old-fashioned, somber clothes, may carry a cane; Mrs. Round-Tuit, s-l-o-w moving; Mrs. Willing-Worker, pretty outfit, great attitude; Mrs. Gossip, carries along a notepad and pencil and, for added humor, a pair of binoculars hanging from her neck; Sam Wealthy, large dollar signs sewn on clothes where normal designer labels would go.

Each patient goes out changed and cured. Nurses and Dr. Level-Head wear typical professional uniforms but Dr. Strong-Heart is a little eccentric with wild hair, thick glasses, lab coat flapping open. For surgery he wears gloves which are obviously too big for him. He may use a foreign accent for humor.

SETTING

Upstage left is the waiting room with several chairs. Patients enter exam area from this side. Doctors enter from the other. Center stage is an exam table with two chairs downstage of it. Downstage right is the doctors' desk with patient charts, pencils, etc. Out of sight but easily available in a desk drawer are the surgery props.

PROPS

Patient charts; Polaroid camera as the X-ray unit; large picture of zig-zag line with smaller lines coming off it; bottle of tonic; two books; picnic basket; calendar; 2 white sheets; large knitting needle as hypodermic needle; bulky, oversized gloves or mittens; "surgical" tools as toy hammer and saw; wallet, checkbook, and large money bag; and large, white scarf as bandage.

PROLOGUE

SPEAKER: Gracious audience, for a short length of time, a group of players will present a good-natured allegory in which each character represents some common weakness frequently found in church members. These weaknesses are not restricted to any one denomination or special locality.

Our players hope to serve this play seasoned with kindness and sympathy, and filled with laughter, but they desire to give you far more than entertainment. They wish to leave a moral - that your church depends on your active service, your participation, to remain vital. Now, we present, THE CHURCH CLINIC. *(Exit SPEAKER.)*

(AT RISE: MRS. OVER-SENSITIVE, MADAME U.R. HIGHBROW and ELDER OVER-PIOUS are seated in the waiting room. HOPE enters from SR and arranges articles on doctors' desk; FAITH enters from SL and looks at the charts.)

FAITH: Good-morning, Nurse Hope. Here we are ready for another busy day in the Church Clinic. *(Pointing in direction of waiting room.)* The office is full of patients waiting to get into the clinic. I think Mrs. Over-Sensitive should come first. She's very upset. She is almost hysterical over slights she thinks she has suffered. I'll bring her in at once.

(FAITH brings in MRS. O-S from waiting area and gives her a seat in front of the exam table. DR. L-H enters from SR.)

FAITH: *(Addressing DR. L-H.)* Dr. Level-Head, Mrs. Over-Sensitive is very anxious to see you. I told her I'm sure you can help her.

MRS. O-S: I have had to sit and wait and wait. Both of your nurses have slighted me. I ought to have known if I came here I should be mistreated.

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MRS. O-S: *(Continued. Takes HER tissues and cries loudly.)* WAA!! WAA!! Who are you anyway? I came here to see Dr. Strong-Heart.

DR. L-H: *(Cordially extending HER hand to MRS. O-S.)* Dr. Strong-Heart is away for the morning. He needed some time away from the Church Clinic. I am Dr. Level-Head. Why don't you tell me some more about your problems. Are you busy and happy in your church life?

MRS. O-S: Well, there is simply nothing right with the church ... or with the church women... or with the church men! I am going to quit the church. I have done more than my part. I am slighted at every turn. *(Counting the slights off HER fingers.)* I have lived in this town nearly two years and never been invited out to a single church home for supper; I have never been asked to put on a Christmas program; sing in the choir; act as Sunday school superintendent; teach Bible class; run a rummage sale; head a church bazaar - *(Pause for a big breath.)* - AND my husband has never been asked to act as a pallbearer at a church funeral! We are ALL SIMPLY LEFT OUT OF EVERYTHING! WAAA!!! *(Loud crying and tissues create a flurry.)* I am simply going to quit the whole church - and, and -

DR. L-H: *(Interrupts HER.)* Your case is a very, very common one. You have a chronic case of self-itis. You carry your feelings around exposed to all kinds of imaginary slights. You think too much about yourself. *(Addressing the NURSES.)* Nurses Hope, get the X-ray ready for taking a picture of this patient's spiritual spine. Nurse Faith, position her in the chair. You must both help with this.

(FAITH helps MRS. O-S sit straight in the chair as HOPE takes an "X-ray" with a Polaroid camera. SHE hands DR. L-H the "X-ray" who takes it to the desk where SHE studies it and gives a non-committal "Hmmm.")

MRS. O-S: Is it serious, doctor?

End of Freeview

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