

GIVE US BACK THAT NIGHT!

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STORY

In this moving and unusual reading you can show your congregation just how much they value Christmas by taking it away. Three Non-Believers explain away Christmas, eliminating first the shepherds and Wise Men from the manger scene and finally Joseph, Mary, and the Christ Child. When they've eliminated everyone, all that's left is a void, an awful emptiness. The Believers, however, show how that night at the stable did happen. By accepting the miracle, they give us back that night! Easy to produce, yet unforgettable.

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CAST

SPEAKING ROLES

BELIEVER #1
BELIEVER #2
BELIEVER #3
NON-BELIEVER #1
NON-BELIEVER #2
NON-BELIEVER #3

NON-SPEAKING ROLES

JOSEPH
MARY
CHRIST CHILD
SHEPHERDS
WISE MEN

STAGEHAND to move statues, if used.

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(AT RISE: The room is dark. The READERS, BELIEVERS on one side and NON-BELIEVERS on the other, stand in front of the manger scene which holds the SHEPHERDS, WISE MEN, JOSEPH, MARY, and the CHRIST CHILD. A star shines above. If statues are used rather than actors for the nativity, the statues should be between one and two feet tall. The manger should be illuminated.)

NON-BELIEVER #1: What night was this? A calm and peaceful, starry night? The perfect setting for the basis of future generations of believers?

NON-BELIEVER #2: A dirty manger bed shared with, perhaps, a cow or two? The perfect backdrop for a Prince of Peace to tiptoe in?

NON-BELIEVER #3: Is this what reasonable men believe? Could it have really been like this?

BELIEVER #1: It may have been.

BELIEVER #2: The Bible tells us so.

BELIEVER #3: And we've been taught this way.

NON-BELIEVER #1: What night was this? A holy angel whispered to those lowly shepherds to put down their rods and follow into Bethlehem?

BELIEVER #1: The humble shepherds surely could believe. They were prepared. They'd listened to the prophets. They'd watched for guidance from above. Their hopes and faith were on the birth of Christ.

NON-BELIEVER #2: Lowly shepherds following something nebulous as faith? Their sheep are left to graze untended? And these are reasonable men?

BELIEVER #2: Yes, simple shepherds, listening to an angel bringing them good news.

NON-BELIEVER #3: Take away the shepherds. They don't make sense. They don't belong with reasonable men!

(SHEPHERDS exit or STAGEHAND removes statues.)

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NON-BELIEVER #1: What night was this? Could Wise Men possibly have followed some ultra-lucent star that pointed like a giant searchlight in the heavens?

BELIEVER #1: We are told so. In the gospel. Following the Eastern Star the Wise Men made their way to Bethlehem.

NON-BELIEVER #2: Ridiculous, you know. It sounds like just a neon light ... an arrow pointing "Bethlehem This Way." How wise are Wise Men bouncing on their humped camels all night ... all day. Following this magic beam. They could have hopped a cloud, you know. You do believe in magic!

(The WISE MEN exit or STAGEHAND removes statues.)

BELIEVER #2: You're taking away the Wise Men, too?

NON-BELIEVER #3: No Wise Men would have chased a dream across the land on one calm, starry night.

BELIEVER #3: You say there was no glow from out the East. So now you'll take away the star. *(STAGEHAND removes star.)* What's next to go?

NON-BELIEVER #1: What man was this? The humble Joseph actually accepting such a fantastic story?

BELIEVER #1: But men were different then. They lived by faith. They heard the whisperings of God. They heard. They heard.

NON-BELIEVER #2: And not the mocking of his friends? "What man is this who lets his wife become entranced by some strange holy spirit?" Be reasonable. Take away Joseph. Take away the man who was too perfect in his faith to ever live in such a world as ours.

(JOSEPH exits or STAGEHAND removes statue.)

NON-BELIEVER #2: Then, too, what woman was this? An angel actually visited her and spoke? Our Mary, virginal and pure, and yet with child?

BELIEVER #3: It had to be ... that God conceived this child. It had to be a miracle.

End of Freeview

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