

# **CHAPEL**

a non-denominational comedy  
By Tyler JC Whidden

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## CAST

Josh Chapel – 30s, Comedian.

Christian Chapel – A few years older than Josh. A Preacher.

Grace – Small town charming.

Samantha Samantha – New York tough.

Father Gabriel – Catholic priest.

Matthew, Chapter 5, verses 1-3:

*“And seeing the multitudes, He went up into a mountain. And, when He was set, His disciples came unto him.*

*And He opened His mouth and taught them, saying,*

*‘Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven.’”*

## SCENE ONE

A split-scene: in one, CHRISTIAN is giving a sermon at his ministry. He is uncomfortable – not with the Message – but with the delivery. He is shaky, unsure of himself, and is, generally, just not very good at this part.

CHRISTIAN

... uh ... by the way, this wasn't ... we don't think ... like, part of His master plan or anything ... what I mean is, uh ... I don't think on the 8<sup>th</sup> day, God woke up and, uh ... just thought to Himself ... well, I mean, who else would He think to, I guess ... But, I just don't think He always wanted to ... you know, come here ... maybe He did, but ... well, it was probably pretty boring then ... but, He's God so, naturally, He had a plan ... and it's okay if He just made it up as He went along ... because ... well, we all do that ... we plan ... and sometimes those plans need ... well ... misdirection ... or, quick thinking, I guess ... just like God ... our Lord ... that's why we praise Him ...

In the other, JOSH is in the middle of his comedy routine at a nice theater – he's killing the crowd. He couldn't be more opposite than Chris. He is polished, comfortable, and a star.

JOSH

... I like to fuck like a God ... but I grew up Catholic, and there's no way my God did foreplay ...

CHRISTIAN

... So ... uh, and the Lord said ... well, He probably didn't come out and say say ... He just sort of ... alluded to, I guess. He does speak though. In our hearts. But you have to be listening ... otherwise ... you probably won't hear, I guess ...

JOSH

... I mean do you think God went down to Mary and wined & dined her? ... Do you think he brought her flowers, or asked her questions about her day, or gave her some cheesy pick up line? "Hey, Mary. Are your feet tired? – because you been running through my ethereal consciousness since the beginning of time." "Hey, Mary – you got any Supreme Being in you? Would you like some?" Hell no ...

CHRISTIAN

... but, He chose Mary ... because, she was so nice ... I mean the word we use is “good”, but ... I think in context ... that could ... it probably means she was ... you know, dedicated to her Lord who ... you know, recognized that in her ... even from afar ...

JOSH

He probably didn't even eat her out at first. I mean, he's God. He doesn't have to do all that – he can get any chick he wants.

CHRISTIAN

... so, she was listening and the Lord said to her – you are good, Mary, and you shall bear me a child – a son – and you will name him Jesus ... And, Mary, of course being the Lord's servant ... uh, well ... she didn't argue ... which, I guess, no body would have blamed her if she had ... probably ... been at least a little skeptical ...

JOSH

... He just went up to her and was like, “Boom – You're fucking pregnant – name him Jesus – don't get too attached – I'll talk to you later” ...

CHRISTIAN

And ... well, that's how ... uh ... it all started ...  
... probably ...

JOSH and CHRISTIAN standing side-by-side watching (towards the audience) as Christian's congregation hover and mingle with each other. Christian, in full minister attire stands – hands clasped – watching attentively & smiling. Josh, in shorts and a hoodie just stares out.

JOSH

... all I'm saying is, there's like twelve people here.

CHRISTIAN

I know that, thank you.

JOSH

You've been out here like five years.

CHRISTIAN

Yes.

JOSH

And this is what you have to show for it.  
Twelve people.

CHRISTIAN

This is my flock. All flocks start small then, when they spread the Word, they grow.

JOSH

Do *they* know about “spreading the Word”?

CHRISTIAN

The Truth will attract more who will attract more who will attract more. And they will all be seeking the same thing: Truth. And that is what we offer here.

JOSH

Truth.

CHRISTIAN

Truth.

JOSH

... Seriously, what are you still doing here?

CHRISTIAN

My flock.

JOSH

Dude, your flock is twelve fucking people – and that one over there ain’t gonna make it to next Sunday.

CHRISTIAN

Mrs. Walsh is a spritely young woman who has survived three husbands, four children and has nearly twenty grandchildren and seven great-granddaughters. She will be gracing us with her presence for a long time, we only pray.

JOSH

Any of her great-granddaughters hot?

CHRISTIAN

Not here, please ...

JOSH

I’m just saying I haven’t seen any chicks since I’ve been here. I, literally, would see more hot chicks in one trip to my coffee shop in the city, than I have seen after being in this state for 12 hours.

CHRISTIAN

It's good to see you haven't changed.

JOSH

Thanks. It's been a struggle.

CHRISTIAN (*reaching under his robe*)

Speaking of which, here's your phone.

JOSH backs away from it like it's a  
gun.

JOSH

What is that?

CHRISTIAN

It's your phone. You gave it to me last night. Right before you passed out in my  
bathtub.

JOSH

I don't want that. Put it away.

CHRISTIAN

Josh, don't be ridiculous, please just take the phone.

JOSH

Have you been holding that under your robe this whole time?

CHRISTIAN

What is with you – it's not a grenade.

JOSH

It's not on, is it? Please tell me it's not on.

CHRISTIAN

It's not on.

JOSH

Good. Don't turn it on. Whatever you do. Don't turn it on.  
Besides, there's a passcode, so ...

CHRISTIAN

I don't want to know –

JOSH

– 69 69.

CHRISTIAN

Take the phone.

JOSH

Chris, have you ever heard the story about the little boy and the dragon?

CHRISTIAN

That's not a thing.

JOSH

There was this little village that was getting destroyed by this big, nasty, mean as hell, fat, balding, fucking Greek with greasy skin dragon, who smoked *non-filter* cigarettes by the way, and was just generally not a good dragon. Well, the villagers did everything they could to keep the dragon away from their little village. They searched high and wide for a hero to try and save them. And some tried. Some tried to beat the dragon with arrows, but the dragon lit them on fire. Some tried to beat the dragon with cannons and catapults, but the dragon lit them on fire. Until this little boy from the village – who was really funny and charming and everybody loved him because he was so hilarious – he had an idea. He realized that the dragon was attracted to the sounds of the church bells, so at night when the dragon would go out looking for a village to burn to the ground, the boy made sure all the church bells in town were silent and the dragon flew around aimlessly with nothing to burn. And the town celebrated the little boy and everybody loved him. And his jokes.

CHRISTIAN

...

...

... is the phone the little boy? –

JOSH

– the phone is the fucking dragon.

CHRISTIAN

So, you don't want the phone?

JOSH

I am not touching the phone.

CHRISTIAN puts the phone in  
JOSH's coat pocket and zips it up.

CHRISTIAN

I'll put it here for you.

JOSH

Don't put the dragon in my pocket, Chris.

CHRISTIAN

I'm zipping up the dragon.

JOSH

The dragon can not be zipped up!

CHRISTIAN

See? Isn't that better?

There are no such things as dragons.

JOSH

So says the guy selling angels and gods.

CHRISTIAN

*Your* fantasy life seems to be working well for you.

JOSH

Okay ... don't go below the belt. You've been living here for five years and you're preaching bullshit to people in a deli. *Twelve* people, I might add.

You know, 15 years ago I was performing to twelve people ... and then 15 years ago – minus one day – I never had to again. No, sir. You won't see me in Cedar Falls or anywhere like that ever again. You ...

... You been here five years and you've got 11.5 people – I'm not counting Mrs. Walsh as a whole no more – I don't give a fuck how many great granddaughters she's got ... unless they're hot ... are they hot? ...

CHRISTIAN

I guess people out here are looking for more than half-price appetizers and penis jokes.

JOSH

"Penis jokes"? What are you, seven years old?

I tell dick jokes, motherfucker. And funny ones, at that. That shit got me on Late Night.

What did you ever do? With all your preaching and God-schooling and fancy fucking robes – by the way – this thing looks like it came off the costume rack at a local production of *Godspell*.

CHRISTIAN (*to one of his flock*)

Good morning, Mr. Hooper, thanks so much for coming. Yes ... thank you ... I'm glad to hear – now you take that inspiration and you tell your friends, okay? See you next week, Mr. Hooper. Thanks again ...



JOSH  
... Mr. Hooper is a fucking liar.

CHRISTIAN  
Please stop.

JOSH  
He felt “inspired” by that?  
I heard your routine –

CHRISTIAN  
– it’s called a sermon –

JOSH  
– you know what I felt? –

CHRISTIAN  
– Please don’t –

JOSH  
– I felt little angels screaming for mercy in my eardrums –

CHRISTIAN  
– Okay –

JOSH  
– Fortunately, the pain of what I was hearing kept my eyes closed to the utter discomfort of watching you squirm for the next word –

CHRISTIAN  
– as if you could do better –

JOSH  
– but it’s cool, because your target audience – Mr. Hooper – felt “inspired.”

CHRISTIAN  
I didn’t ask you here, you know.

JOSH  
No, you woke me up from a very comfortable sleep to force me here.

CHRISTIAN  
You were asleep in my bathtub.

JOSH

Sometimes I do that when I'm drunk, goddamn it.

CHRISTIAN

- don't say "goddamn" - this is my church -

JOSH

- your church? It's a fucking deli that smells like they haven't removed the meat in five years.

CHRISTIAN

This is my church and these fine people come here to see me and accept what I have to give them - I'm sorry it's not some fancy New York City cathedral with high-rise stained glass windows or plush leather seating with lower lumbar support or marble flooring that matches the marble altar or LED chandeliers that hang down over the hundreds of parishioners who congregate there on a weekly - if not, daily - basis or gold plated bowls to hold the holy water for all the classy people of New York City to dip their pristine fingertips and bless their lily-white foreheads -

- Mrs. Walsh! How great to see you again! Why thank you - it's only a pleasant sermon if fine folks like you are present to accept the Word of God. Yes, it is wonderful of him to come and visit ... if not completely under-dressed.

JOSH

Good morning, Mrs. Walsh - I've heard so many wonderful things about you. And how are your seven great-granddaughters? ... oh, now, I bet they're just as beautiful as you once were - the little heartbreakers ...

CHRISTIAN

... I'm the older one, Mrs. Walsh -

JOSH

- And I'm the one who puts out -

CHRISTIAN

- (That's inappropriate) -

JOSH

- You have any family reunions coming up, Mrs. Walsh? -

CHRISTIAN

- Thanks again for all your support, Mrs. Walsh. Is Mrs. Brennan giving you a ride home or should I ask Grace to give you a lift? ... Okay, now ... see you next week ...

Do you *have* to talk to her like that?

JOSH

What? -- I was being charming –

CHRISTIAN

– Also, I really wish you would wear something a little more appropriate if you're going to come to my ministry.

JOSH

I haven't unpacked yet, Chris, because I just rolled into town last night. I didn't know I'd be woken up at ungodly hours so I could watch you trip over your tongue for 45 minutes.

CHRISTIAN

A pair of shoes that wouldn't normally be left at a beach would have been the least you could do.

JOSH

Well, would you rather I come barefoot?

CHRISTIAN

Luke, Chapter 10.

JOSH

Huh?

CHRISTIAN

It's from the Bible.

JOSH

I know what it's from.

CHRISTIAN

Jesus asks his followers to forego all their possessions – they're money and their shoes – to spread the Word.

JOSH

Yeah, I remember. Is that what you want? You want all these people to go barefoot and spread your message across Wyoming?

CHRISTIAN

I must talk about that chapter twice a month. One day, they'll get it.

JOSH

I'm sure they will – until then, it's work boots and mud trails.

CHRISTIAN

You slept in the bathtub, I guess you couldn't actually bathe this morning?

JOSH

Oh, sorry, I didn't know the Pope was coming in today to order a sandwich.

CHRISTIAN

Don't bring the Pope into this, it's not a Catholic church.

JOSH

Yeah, no kidding.

CHRISTIAN

It is not a Catholic church by choice, Joshua.

JOSH

I know I know, you left the Church. Blah, blah, blah. Congratulations, you're the only Catholic priest who didn't get caught finger-banging an altar boy. Shall I slow clap for you? (*begins clapping*) –

CHRISTIAN

– Must you talk like that?

JOSH

I'm not talking – I'm clapping. For my big bro who branched out on his own. Went solo and started – what do you call this place again?

CHRISTIAN

Please stop clapping.

JOSH

All Souls something or other?

CHRISTIAN

The Church of Being.

JOSH (*stopping clapping*)

Jesus, that sounds like a cult.

CHRISTIAN

You think all religions sound like a cult.

JOSH

All religions *are* a cult. Most are a little more populated than this one, but I'm sure you have a plan in place to spread your "Truth." Maybe try two-for-one sandwiches. Or, dick jokes.

CHRISTIAN

It must be so convenient for you to sit there on your little non-believing high horse and make fun of people for the simple act of believing that there is something out there that wants them to be good. *Someone* out there who wants to reward them for a life of goodness. Some *being* who has a plan to give them the salvation they are all looking for.

JOSH

“Religion is the fashionable substitute for belief.”  
You know who said that?

CHRISTIAN

Oscar Wilde.

JOSH

That’s right. And he was a fucking fag, so he knew a lot about fashion.

CHRISTIAN

*Please* don’t say the F-word when you are in my presence.

JOSH

Oh sorry, princess. He was a just a regular fag.

CHRISTIAN

I know you think you are above those of us little idiots who believe in God, but you need to respect the people of this congregation, the room in which we worship, and most of all, the ministry that accepts, loves, and respects all humans regardless of race, nationality, and – believe it or not – religious affiliation and/or sexual orientation. If you cannot show even a shred of decency and respect for the values I am trying to instill here, you may go back to New York.

Awkward pause.

JOSH

... I just wanna say ... my agent’s gay, so ...  
... also, I’m a comedian, which gives me license –

CHRISTIAN

– What are you doing here, Josh?

JOSH

I can’t come and visit my big brother as he embarks on his journey to save souls?

CHRISTIAN

I embarked on this journey five years ago and didn’t hear from you, so I ask again ...

JOSH

Chris, I was very busy building my own following. I know you think that comedians just sit around all day smoking pot, drinking booze, and playing video games, but that is not the case. It's just those who answer the phone when I call.

CHRISTIAN

I'm sure your life was very stressful – no wife, no family, no job –

JOSH

– I have a job –

CHRISTIAN

Spending a few minutes on stage isn't a job.

JOSH

Oh, yeah? How much did you make last year? Because I made a shit-ton.

CHRISTIAN

What did I "make" last year?

I made a difference in people's lives, Josh, that's what I made last year.

JOSH

Bravo, Mother Theresa, we're all really impressed with your super big, broke-ass heart. I, on the other hand, lived in the real world where I made commercials, made money, made the sex with beautiful women, and I made it onto Late Night for the fifth year in a row. Not to mention I even made a movie where I play a retired baseball player who finds a new life as a cricket star thanks to his trusty female dog that can talk.

It's called, *Life's a Pitch*.

CHRISTIAN

I must have missed that one.

JOSH

Well, it probably didn't play in this village.

CHRISTIAN

I'll be sure to rent it.

JOSH

No. Don't, Chris. I will send you a copy. Because you're my brother. And I love you. By the way, you didn't tell anyone I was coming, right?

CHRISTIAN

I didn't know you were coming until you got here.

JOSH

Well, I couldn't very well call, could I?

CHRISTIAN

Because of the dragons.

JOSH

Yes, because of the dragons and, you know ... I'm not really looking to ... be noticed, okay? It's not a celebrity thing, it's just ... I'm here to see my brother, I can't be getting distracted with fans or stalkers or anything like that. You know how it is ...

CHRISTIAN

You've been in church with these folks for the past hour, did any of them seem to know who you are?

JOSH

Okay, it's not a church – it's a place where you ask if they want a pickle with that – and I have fans in lots of places, I'll have you know. When I started out, I did shows in Montana and Idaho ...  
... those are near here, right?

CHRISTIAN

Nobody knows who you are.

JOSH

Mrs. Walsh knew who I was.

CHRISTIAN

Mrs. Walsh knows you're my brother – she doesn't know what you do.

JOSH

Okay, perfect. Just ... you know, if we're out or whatever and people wanna take pictures – let's just say I *look* like the guy they're mistaking me for, but I'm not the comedian from Late Night.

CHRISTIAN

I'm sure you'll go unrecognized.

JOSH

While you've been holed up in Backwater, Wyoming, I've become a master of self-promotion – getting people to recognize me is part of the game. I trended on Twitter once.

CHRISTIAN

Because of the video?

JOSH

No, not because of the – well, I mean, *technically* because of the video, but mostly because of the work I do on stage, thank you very much.

CHRISTIAN

Not because of a video of you fornicating with a Senator's wife?

JOSH

Okay, first of all, you can't really make out my face in that video, so any speculation on the identity of the man "fornicating" the Senator's wife, is just that – speculation. Second of all, I was already on Late Night when that video came out. Twice. So ... already famous –

CHRISTIAN

– the Mayor of Sodom, everybody –

JOSH

– Did not need a video of me – but not me – putting my face into the ass of a Southern Senator's wife. Just want to make that clear.

CHRISTIAN

So, who's wife did you sleep with that made you have to hide out here in Backwater, Wyoming?

JOSH

Who said I – wow, Chris, is that really what you think of me?

CHRISTIAN

Generally speaking, history repeats itself.

JOSH

"History repeats itself" Is that how it is? You know, I am hurt by the insinuation that I have done something as immoral as sleep with a married woman again. Or, *not* again.

CHRISTIAN

You're here, Josh. You're here now – not in the last five years, but now. You tell me not to tell anyone you're here and, that you – of all people – don't want "distractions" or attention from the community.

JOSH

I have worked my fingers to the bone to get where I am today. Six shows a week, sometimes more – when I started out. I don't get weekends or holidays off – that's when I'm needed the most. I don't get to go to weddings, or see my friends' kids, or have a life of my own because I have been dedicated to my career – a career I find very rewarding both monetarily and spiritually. I think I've earned some down time.



CHRISTIAN

You're really going to lie to a minister in his own church? In the House of God?

JOSH

It's a deli.

CHRISTIAN

Josh. It's me. Talk to me.

JOSH

I'm not running away.  
If that's what you think.

CHRISTIAN

Then what?

JOSH

You promise you won't tell anyone?

CHRISTIAN

Who am I going to tell?

JOSH

I don't know – God?

CHRISTIAN

God already knows, I'm sure. And He forgives you.

JOSH

Pshaw! It's not his forgiveness I need.

CHRISTIAN

What is it?

JOSH

Okay ...  
... Let's just say ... I'm in hot water with a cold dude.

CHRISTIAN

What does that mean?

JOSH

It means ... I just need a place to lay low ... till it blows over, that's all.

CHRISTIAN

You're talking like a bad crime novel.

JOSH

Look, it's probably nothing, but in case it is something, I just need to be ... not me. For a while.

CHRISTIAN

Is your life in danger?

JOSH

No! ... probably not ... no ... pretty sure ... maybe ... no ...

CHRISTIAN

So, who is it?

JOSH

It's probably best I don't say, but I will say that the last guy who crossed this dude got his house burned down. While he was in it.

CHRISTIAN

Are you scared?

JOSH

Of course not. It's not like that. Really. It'll all be forgotten in a week or two ... a month, tops ... certainly by the end of the summer ... or holidays ... it's cool, right? If I stay here? I'll be out of your way, I promise.

CHRISTIAN

"God is our refuge and strength. A very present help in trouble."

JOSH

Was that Oscar Wilde?

CHRISTIAN

Psalms.

JOSH

I was kidding.

GRACE enters.

GRACE

Very nice sermon this morning, Father.

JOSH

There she is – hi ... how's it going?

CHRISTIAN

Thank you, Grace.

JOSH

I saw you when I got here – over by where the potato chip rack used to be.

GRACE

Father, may I have a word?

JOSH

I'm Josh – the much more successful younger brother.

GRACE

Didn't you come here in a bus?

JOSH

Yes, but the driver was cool and let me drink, so ...

CHRISTIAN

Grace is studying for the service.

JOSH

You're a little small for the Army, no?

CHRISTIAN

The ministry service.

JOSH

You wanna be a priest?  
Do you allow chick priests here?

GRACE

We're all ministers in the eyes of the Lord.

JOSH (*that was funny*)

C'mon! – that's what you're going with?

CHRISTIAN

Grace helps me with services from time to time. She is an excellent student and fine Bible scholar.

JOSH

Oh, good, then you know it's all bullshit that has been edited and re-edited for centuries in order to propagate messages of submission for the global oligarchy.

GRACE

And what do you do?

CHRISTIAN

Josh is a stand –

JOSH

– what do I “do”? I make a difference in people’s lives, Grace.

GRACE

What does that mean?

JOSH

It means I am in between careers right at this moment, but I’m actually thinking about staying here. Maybe check out the scenery. Would you like to show me your scenery – *the* scenery ... or your scenery ... I’m not saying we have to do anything, I’m just saying maybe you and me, we go out and go for a walk and talk and maybe we hit it off, maybe we really like each other, I dunno – maybe there’s a real connection – the way God intended – then maybe we tell each other our biggest secrets and, I dunno, take our clothes off and see if our bodies fit ... into your vagina –

CHRISTIAN

– JOSH! That is enough!

JOSH

I’m kidding! ... unless ...

CHRISTIAN

Go stand over there, please. And don’t talk to *anybody*.

JOSH

I’m not a child, you know, you can’t just boss me around.

CHRISTIAN

Stand over there or the next thing you get from me is a bus ticket home.

JOSH

Grace – it was really nice meeting you. I’m sorry my brother is such a wet blanket.

JOSH sulks into the corner.

CHRISTIAN

I’m really sorry about that. He’s been traveling for 3 days so he’s a little ... more himself than normal.

GRACE

Thank you, Father.

CHRISTIAN

What would you like to speak about?

GRACE

The guy from Wyoming Mutual came by yesterday.

CHRISTIAN

Yeah, I had to pick up Josh at the bus station. Sorry about that.

GRACE

He rejected.

CHRISTIAN

He did ...

Did he give a reason?

GRACE

Same as all the others. Not enough capital, not enough cash flow. He complimented the plans, though. It's all in the file here.

CHRISTIAN

Leave it there and I'll add it to the pile.

She sets the pile down next to  
CHRISTIAN.

GRACE

That was our last chance, Father.

CHRISTIAN

So it was.

GRACE

Tomorrow is the 1<sup>st</sup>.

CHRISTIAN

Okay ...

GRACE

It's just, we stand to lose the down payment and the land on the 30th...

CHRISTIAN

I understand, Grace.

GRACE

... they're going to sell the land to the next bidder.

CHRISTIAN

Right. Thank you.

... so, how did we do today?

GRACE

\$157. But there's been something going around. A bug of some sort – highly contagious. A lot of people have been home sick for a week or more. Mrs. Hensleigh said Mr. Hensleigh and the girls have been too sick to even leave their beds. Fevers, sore throats. A horrible thing.

CHRISTIAN

Oh, I didn't know.

Maybe that's what caused the low turnout this week.

GRACE

Yes, Father.

CHRISTIAN

I'll be sure to say a prayer.

\$157 – where does that put us overall?

GRACE

At \$157.

CHRISTIAN

So, we're short?

GRACE

Not including outstanding bills ... I'd say we're short by ... \$19,843 ...

CHRISTIAN

So all of it, then.

GRACE

We still have 30 days, Father.

CHRISTIAN

Thank you, Grace.

GRACE

Maybe now's a good time to think about reaching out to Father Gabe –

CHRISTIAN

– No. No ... that won't be necessary. We've been working very hard for this and praying and I believe God will reward us with an answer if he hasn't already. Have faith, Grace.

GRACE

I do, Father ... it's just ... maybe there's a way we can all get what we want ... a compromise of some sort.

CHRISTIAN

There is no compromising with that man, Grace. You know that as well as I do.

GRACE

Yes, Father.

GRACE goes to exit.

CHRISTIAN

Grace ... pick your head up. Have faith.

JOSH

What was that all about?

CHRISTIAN

Nothing. Just business stuff.

JOSH

You need something?

CHRISTIAN

From you? Absolutely not.

JOSH

Remember in high school when you wanted to try out for the school play because you said it would be a great way to meet friends?

CHRISTIAN

So?

JOSH

You were scared and you said, "I need your help."

CHRISTIAN

I never said that.

JOSH

Well, you did and you didn't.

CHRISTIAN

Nope. Just didn't.

JOSH

I said, "I can help you." And you said, "I don't need your help."

CHRISTIAN

That, I remember.

JOSH

Right, but we both know you do this reverse psychology thing on me that works every time – and the reason we know that is because you *did* need my help and talked me into it and I helped you with your monologue and you got the part even though you threw up on stage during the audition, and you made friends. And, Megan Coughlin made out with me in the dressing room.

CHRISTIAN

Because you told her we were twins and she thought you were a senior.

JOSH

Yeah. That was awesome.

CHRISTIAN

Was it awesome when her boyfriend tried to beat you up?

JOSH

It wasn't not awesome.

You always think you don't need me, but you know you do.

CHRISTIAN

Would you mind helping me with my robe, please?

JOSH begins to help CHRISTIAN get out of his robe even though, honestly, Chris doesn't need the help. There's a moment.

JOSH

"We need to lose the idea that we're God's number one priority."

CHRISTIAN

Yeah?

JOSH

That's what you said – when you began taking questions from the audience.



CHRISTIAN

They're not an audience. They're a congregation.

JOSH

Look, man, I've been doing this a long time – *that* was an audience. You're putting on a show just like I do – your delivery leaves a lot to be desired, but it's a show nonetheless – and I've never been to a mass – in all those times as kids – where a priest took questions from the audience during the sermon.

CHRISTIAN

I guess we do things differently here.

JOSH

I can do this, you know.

CHRISTIAN

Do what?

JOSH

Get people in here.

CHRISTIAN

The people will come.

JOSH

Don't be like that – I'm sorry about the shoes and the ... talking, or whatever ... you're my brother – let me get people in here.

CHRISTIAN

This is not some basement comedy club in Midtown. This is a place of worship and community.

JOSH

Look, what we do – it's the same thing – the only difference being is that I sell jokes and you sell hope. I was able to do exactly what you're trying to do.

CHRISTIAN

What you and I do, couldn't be more different. You're playing a character on stage and I'm playing me. I don't have the luxury of hiding behind a microphone and a persona –

JOSH

– no, you hide behind this robe and an altar.

CHRISTIAN

Set the robe down there please.

JOSH does, noticing the file.

JOSH

What's this?

CHRISTIAN

It's nothing. Grace left it there.

JOSH

Is this a loan application?

CHRISTIAN

Josh, do you mind? Don't read that, please.

JOSH

You need a loan? If you need a loan, you don't go to a bank. Banks don't give a shit about you.

CHRISTIAN

It's nothing. It will work itself out.

JOSH

Has that been your experience out here – everything working itself out? You need a plan, big brother.

CHRISTIAN

I thank you for your insight, as it were, but I have a plan.

JOSH

So, what is it?

CHRISTIAN

It's nothing that concerns big city celebrities here not looking for attention.

JOSH

I mean, I wouldn't say I'm *not* looking for attention ... I'm just saying, I'm not looking to be noticed. I love attention. Give me attention. What's going on here?

CHRISTIAN

It's nothing.

JOSH

Come on! I came all this way – let me into your life.

CHRISTIAN

It doesn't concern you and I don't need your help.

JOSH

If you tell me, I'll tell you why I left New York.

CHRISTIAN

I'm not interested in the sordid details of your directionless life.

JOSH

Okay! I slept with another man's wife! – Jesus.

But, in my defense, I didn't think he would really care all that much.

Pause.

CHRISTIAN

I'm going to need more information.

JOSH

Not until you tell me your plan.

End Scene.

## SCENE TWO

An empty field.

CHRISTIAN & JOSH survey the land.