

## BESIDE THE HEART-SHAPED SEA

An Easter Play by Jewell Ellen Smith

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Time: From about 27 to 30 AD

Place: Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee, the hills nearby. And, Jerusalem.

Plot: Well-to-do Fisherman Zebedee of Capernaum dreams of having a large fleet of fishing boats on the Sea of Galilee; but his dream is shattered when his two sons desert the fishing trade to become followers of an unusual carpenter, Jesus of Nazareth, who has come to Capernaum and is creating something of a sensation as he heals the sick, performs miracles, and teaches that the kingdom of God is at hand.

Finally, after Jesus the Christ is crucified and resurrected, Zebedee comes to understand God's love for man. Then, he declares, as he talks to the Sea of Galilee:

"O Heart-Shaped Sea, you are the most fortunate sea in all the world.... This day, the Son of God, the Risen Christ, walked along your shores!

"And, O Sea of Galilee, I am the most fortunate man in all the world. The Son of God, the Risen Christ, chose my two sons to walk with Him."

Theme: God is Love.

Length of Play: about one hour.

Number of Players: Some 50 men, women and children. Many players will do two--even three--roles.

Background Scriptures: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Isaiah 53

Principal Events Dramatized: (One parable: Rich Man and Beggar)

1. Healing of Centurion's servant
2. Restoring the sight of a blind boy
3. Casting demons out of wild man hiding in the tombs

4. Part of the Sermon on the Mount
5. Blessing the Little Children
6. The Christ and the two thieves carrying their crosses to Calvary.
7. The burial. (pantomime) Guards flee when angels come.
8. The women bringing spices to the tomb—encountering angels.
9. Christ appears to Mary Magdalene
10. The Christ serves breakfast beside the Sea of Galilee.

The Characters (in the order of their appearance):

### ACT I, Scene 1

Zebedee, a veteran fisherman of Capernaum, father of James & John.

Kish, Zebedee's hired servant.

Salome, wife of Zebedee and the mother of James & John.

Hashub, a Capernaum boat builder.

Clopas, blind servant boy of boat builder. (can be played by woman)

### Scene 2

A Certain Rich Man

Rich Man's Cup Bearer

Rich Man's Three Friends:

Rich Man's Two Servants (women, no lines, only a few shrieks)

Lazarus, a poor beggar covered with sores

Four Stretcher bearers (only spokesman has lines)

A dog

Rich Man's Gatekeeper

Dancing Girl

First, Second, and Third Devils

First, Second, and Third Angels

Father Abraham

### Scene 3

Centurion Atticus, a Roman Army officer stationed in Capernaum

Christ Figure

Disciples:

James, the son of Zebedee and Salome

John, the younger son of Zebedee and Salome

Simon Peter, formerly a fishing partner of Zebedee

Andrew, Simon Peter's brother

Roman Soldier, a soldier under the command of Centurion Atticus.

#### Scene 4

Wild Man, a mentally ill man, the cousin of Hashub the boat builder  
Three Swine Herders

#### ACT II, Scene 1

Mothers from Capernaum, a group of women who want Jesus of Nazareth to bless their small children.

First Mother

Second Mother, with one infant, two small children, and a girl named Naomi.

Third Mother

Fourth Mother

Fifth Mother, with six small children.

Capernaum Man and his Wife

Jairus, a citizen of Capernaum

First and Second Friends of Jairus

#### Scene 2

Crowd of People, including Disciples Thomas, Philip, Nathaniel; Little Boy, Small Girl

#### ACT III, Scene 1

(no new players)

#### Scene 2

First, Second, Third, and Fourth Roman Soldiers

Old Deaf Man, Old Blind Man

Four Followers of Jesus: Mary Magdalene, Joanna, The Other Mary, Salome  
(while in Jerusalem)

First and Second Thieves

Three Grieving Women, from Capernaum

Simon of Cyrene, a resident of North Africa, visiting in Jerusalem

Alexander, older son of Simon of Cyrene

Rufus, younger son of Simon of Cyrene

#### Scene 3

Joseph of Arimathea, a ruler of the Jews and a friend of the Christ.

Nicodemus, a secret follower of the Christ in Jerusalem.

Two Roman Soldiers, guards assigned to the tomb of the Christ.

First and Second Angels

## SCRIPT

### ACT I

*Scene 1. It is mid-afternoon in Capernaum. Fisherman Zebedee is at his boat, beside the Sea of Galilee--whistling as he mends nets. He stops now and then to talk to Kish, his hired servant, who is in the boat, mending nets. Zebedee is in a happy mood, as if he didn't have a care in the world.*

ZEBEDEE: Ah, Kish, there's no place in the world like Capernaum! No sea like the Sea of Galilee!

KISH: *without looking up* Yes, Sir.

ZEBEDEE: *looking toward the sea* Sometimes, I Like to talk to this old sea. Tell it things. Ask it things.

KISH: *looking intently at Z.* Talk to the sea?

ZEBEDEE: Sure. How old are you now, Kish? You've been working for me two years, I know, but I never can remember just how old you are.

KISH: *proudly* I'm sixteen now, Master Zebedee. And every day I'm learning more and more about fishing--don't you think?

ZEBEDEE: You're doing fine, Kish. Pretty soon you'll be as good a fisherman as James and John. I taught those two fellows how to fish before I taught them how to walk!

KISH: Yes, Sir. *Shakes net, finds another place to mend.*

ZEBEDEE: My father taught me how to fish before I could walk. *stops mending, but holds net in hand as he reminisces.* My earliest recollection is of sitting right along here--in a boat with my father--and hearing him sing an old song as he washed and mended his nets. I can't remember the words--except one line. *Breaks into singing.*

"The Sea of Galilee was made for you and me ..."

I wish I could think of the rest of it. It told sort of an old legend about the day God made our sea.

KISH: *much interested* A legend?

ZEBEDEE: It was a tale, and, a folk song--all about how God made the Sea of Galilee in the shape of a man's heart.

KISH: *quite eagerly* I know it's 13 miles long and seven miles wide--in the widest place--but I sure didn't know it's shaped like our hearts! *Pats hand against chest in area of heart*

ZEBEDEE: It is. It's heart-shaped. The legend went that--

Now, son, remember this was just a legend. The real and true record of how The Lord our God made the heavens and the earth is written down in the sacred Books of Moses. He made it all. And on the Sabbath he rested.

But the legend said that after God finished the Earth he looked at it and was very pleased and thought that it was pretty.

But when he took a second look at one spot down here in Galilee, he said to himself: "There's something missing right along there. I believe I'll put in a beautiful little sea. And I'll shape it like a man's heart."

So, God reached down and scooped out the place for the Sea of Galilee. And he made the waters of the Jordan River flow into it! And he filled it full of fishes! And that's how--

*Salome approaches with two large and cumbersome baskets of food and interrupts Zebedee's story-telling when she calls for Kish.*

SALOME: *calling loudly* Kish!

KISH: *jumping out of boat* Yes, Ma'am!

SALOME: Come help me with this food! *Sets baskets down, rubs right hand against left arm.* My arms are about to break off!

*Kish hurries to get largest basket.*

ZEBEDEE: *Tossing aside net and going to help Salome* Ah, Salome, We didn't see you coming. You're early this afternoon. *picks up basket* My goodness, this is heavy. What on earth have you fixed for our supper?

*All walk on toward boat*

SALOME: Just the usual bread and cheese and fruit and stuff. Well, I did pack in some extra grapes and dried figs. When you all are fishing all night I know you get plenty hungry--especially the boys. *looks around* Where are James and John?

ZEBEDEE: *with a wave of the hand* They're on down the way--around the bend, where Simon and Andrew have their boats tied up. The prophet from Nazareth is down there. And James and John think they have to hear every word he says.

SALOME: Well, I know you think they ought to be here helping you.

ZEBEDEE: Yes, they should be here, mending these nets. This one I'm working on has forty holes in it.

*Salome comes close enough to boat to see a batch of fish in the bottom of the boat. She is surprised that they were not sold with the morning catch.*

SALOME: *lifting up mesh container of fish.* What're these fish doing here? Couldn't you sell 'em? Or, is something wrong with 'em?

ZEBEDEE: *taking fish turning them around and admiring them.* Oh, no! They're fine fish. Nice fish. Nice as any we ever caught. *sets fish down, turns to Kish* Kish, maybe you ought to go get James and John. Tell 'em their mother has already come with the supper baskets and that I want to sail early this evening--before sunset.

KISH: Yes, Sir. *starts to leave, but comes back--hesitant about the favor he wants to ask.* Master Zebedee?

ZEBEDEE: What is it, Kish?

KISH: Sir, if this man named Jesus--You know who I mean, that carpenter from Nazareth--The one who--

ZEBEDEE: Yes, I know who you mean.

KISH: Sir, if he's there, sitting in Mister Simon's boat, telling those good stories, and if there are droves and droves of people crowded 'round him, and if I can't see Mister James and Mister John right away-- and-- and-- and--

ZEBEDEE: And, can you stay and listen to just one story?

KISH: *with surprise* Yes, Sir! How'd you know what I was gonna say?

ZEBEDEE: *with a laugh* It must be that I can read your mind, Kish. One story, now mind you. Just one. Then you hurry back.

KISH: *much delighted* Thank you, thank you, Master Zebedee! I'll hurry! And when I get back, I'll tell the story to you and Miss Salome,--word for word! *runs off.*

SALOME: Zebedee, I've been thinking. Maybe it would be a good thing for James and John to become followers of this new prophet. He might--

ZEBEDEE: No! No! I won't have it! John, you remember, was a follower of John the Baptizer. And what happened to him? King Herod has him locked up! And it wouldn't surprise me one bit if he chopped off his head! Something like that is bound to happen to this new prophet.

James and John have got to stick to fishing! I won't let them be as foolish as Simon Peter and Andrew.

SALOME: What do you mean?

ZEBEDEE: Simon Peter and Andrew are leaving the fishing trade to become disciples of this Jesus of Nazareth. Simon came and told me himself--just before noon today.

SALOME: *With some dismay* I can't believe it! Why-- I-- I--

ZEBEDEE: It's true. And Simon seemed so happy! He said that this Jesus invited him and Andrew.

"Come and follow me! And I will make you fishers of men!"

Those were his words. And I know--as well as I know my name is Zebedee--that he will invite James and John the same way, So--

SALOME: From what I hear, everybody in Capernaum is talking about him. And you've said yourself that when he teaches in the synagogue, he speaks with authority about the kingdom of God.

ZEBEDEE: Oh, I have nothing against him, personally. It's my fishing business that I have to think about.

SALOME: What will you do about Simon Peter and Andrew? You've been in partnership with them for years.

ZEBEDEE: I've got a plan, Salome. I can get along without Simon and Andrew, but I'm ruined if James and John leave me!

So this is what I'm going to do: I'm going to have two new boats built--one for John, one for James--nice, big boats. Fancy!

And I'll buy Simon's boats, if he wants to sell. And I'll show James and John how we can build up the biggest fishing operation on the Sea of Galilee. I might even put in facilities for drying and salting my own fish!

SALOME: I had no idea you were thinking of such as this.

ZEBEDEE: I'm expecting a boat builder to come this afternoon to give me an estimate. Those nice fish I saved are for him.

SALOME: Then you think that when James and John see the boats being built, that they will lose all interest in helping this prophet from Nazareth spread word about the kingdom of God?

ZEBEDEE: Sure they will! Fishing is in their blood--just like in mine!

*Zebedee sees boat builder and his apprentice coming. Apprentice carries a bundle of sail cloth samples and is holding on to the sleeve of his master's cloak and walking cautiously.*

Ah, here comes the boat craftsman now. I see his servant boy is bringing cloth samples. So, I can even pick out the sails today. That's great!

SALOME: *with concern* The boy walks like he's blind, Zebedee!

ZEBEDEE: *somewhat surprised* Well, yes, he does walk like a blind man. *looks more closely* Yes, the poor lad is blind. *goes to greet man and boy* God's peace to both of you.

HASHUB: God's peace to you and yours, Honorable Zebedee.

CLOPAS: God's peace, Sir.

HASHUB: I must apologize for being late.

ZEBEDEE: You're not so late. I'm still mending my nets.

HASHUB: It was on account of my sick, demented cousin. He got loose again, and ran away. None of us could hold him!

SALOME: *with sympathy* Your cousin ran away?

HASHUB: Yes, Ma'am. The poor fellow is possessed with some kind of demons, I guess. He's crazy as a lunatic. We keep him chained but today he broke the chains again and got away. He ran up into the hills and hid among the tombs--like he always does.

ZEBEDEE: We're sorry to hear this.

HASHUB: It can't be helped. *brightens tone* Well, let's talk about these fishing vessels you want me to build. *turns to Clopas* Clopas, unroll the sail cloth samples.

*Clopas spreads out three grades of sailcloth. Salome is much interested and comes to feel each piece, but Zebedee is anxious to get on with plans for the boat hulls.*

ZEBEDEE: We can look at the cloth later. Come on over here and let me show you how big I want the boats made. As I told you earlier, I want them to be identical.

*Men go to boat. Salome and Clopas keep looking at sailcloth.*

HASHUB: Of course you'll want me to use the best oak and cedar, won't you?

ZEBEDEE: The best you can get. My sons, James and John, will be--

*Kish comes running up, much excited. He interrupts Zebedee.*

KISH: They're coming, Master Zebedee! They're coming! Mister James and Mister John! And Jesus, the carpenter-prophet man! They'll be here in a few minutes!

ZEBEDEE: *somewhat annoyed at Kish's interruption* All right, Kish.

KISH: I'm ready to tell you the story. It's a good one!

ZEBEDEE: Not right now, Kish. Can't you see I'm busy?

KISH: *crestfallen* But, Sir, it's all about heaven and hell. *brightens tone* And our Father Abraham, too.

*Zebedee ignores Kish, continues talking to boat builder as the two climb into the boat.*

ZEBEDEE: Now I want the mast made a bit different from this one--so that the sails can be a good bit fuller, and taller... *voice trails off*

*Spotlight shifts to Salome and Clopas as she calls to Kish*

SALOME: *calling out* Kish! Come over here and tell the story to Clopas and me.

KISH: *with much delight* Yes, Ma'am. *hurries over* I'll sure tell it. I can remember the whole thing, and--

*Stops abruptly when he notices that Clopas is blind; he points to Clopas, then touches his own eyes with a finger, and silently forms these words so Salome can read his lips: "Is he blind?" Salome nods her head, begins talking.*

SALOME: Kish, this is Clopas, who's going to help build some new boats for us. Clopas, this is one of our fisherman boys, Kish.

*Boys nod to each other and speak at about the same time.*

CLOPAS: God's peace, Kish.

KISH: God's peace to you, Clopas. *Eagerly* Do you like to hear stories?

CLOPAS: I sure do! And the longer they are, the better I like 'em.

SALOME: Before you start telling the story Jesus told, maybe we'd better explain to Clopas who Jesus is.

KISH: He's a carpenter. But more than a carpenter. He's a-- He's a-- a teacher. But more than a teacher. He's-- *turns to Salome* Ma'am, you tell who he is.

SALOME: Well, Clopas, this wonderful storyteller we're talking about is very unusual. His name is Jesus. He's from Nazareth. He goes about helping people and telling them about the kingdom of God. He says the kingdom is at hand.

And he teaches in the synagogue. Everywhere he goes, people flock to hear him talk. Some folks say he is a prophet--like the prophets of old. Maybe Elijah, come back to earth.

I don't know about that. I just know that when he speaks, he makes everything so plain because he tells short stories--or parables--to show what he means.

KISH: I could sit and listen to him all day.

SALOME: Go ahead Kish, and tell us the story you heard him tell today.

*Zebedee and Hashub come up behind group and sit down, unnoticed.*

KISH: *rubbing hands together, with pleasure.* Sure! *changes tone slightly.*

There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple, and fine linen! And he fared sumptuously every day. His table was just loaded down with good stuff.

*Main stage curtain opens on Scene 2 and Kish keeps talking--momentarily--until audience can take in the rich man's feast table and can see Lazarus brought to the gate on a stretcher. NOTE: Kish and all players in Scene 2 would do well--and would enjoy--to read this parable in Luke 16:19-31.*

And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, who was laid at his gate, full of sores.

And all that the beggar wanted was to be fed with the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. Every day... *Voice trails off, Scene 2 action continues.*

## Scene 2

*Scene 2--The Rich Man and three of his friends are seated at a banquet table, eating and talking and laughing and drinking--having a hip-hip-hooray good time. The cup bearer is standing by, wine pitcher in hand. Two other servants scurry to and fro, bringing in more and more food.*

RICH MAN: *laughing loudly, and turning to his nearest companion as he slaps his fist on the table.* By the beard of Abraham, don't tell any more tall tales! You'll have me splitting my sides! *Rubs his side, laughs some more.*

*All companions laugh loudly*

*Rich Man turns to cup bearer.* Don't just stand there, boy! Pour us some wine! *holds out glass.*

CUP BEARER: *nervously* Yes, Sir! Yes, Sir! Right away, Sir! We've got plenty wine!

*Fills glasses of all, starting with R. M. Four men continue eating, laughing, drinking as spotlight picks up stretcher bearers bringing Lazarus to the Rich Man's gate and setting him down. Lazarus is clad in rags, his arms, feet and legs wrapped in bandages.*

LAZARUS: Please just set me down here by the gate--in the usual place.

*Men ease stretcher down.*

STRETCHER SPOKESMAN: Will you be all right, Lazarus?

LAZARUS: Yes, I'll be all right. And I sure thank you--all of you. You're very kind. *turns to look around* Did my little dog follow me today?

SPOKESMAN: Yes, here's your dog. *leads small dog to Lazarus, who pats him on the head* We'll be back to get you, at sundown.

*Stretcher bearers leave.irate gatekeeper walks out, looks down at Lazarus.*

GATEKEEPER: *in scolding but not harsh tone* Beggar, here you are again! I told you yesterday not to come back! The Rich Man doesn't like for you to be lying out here at his gate, begging all the time.

LAZARUS: *raising up on one elbow.* I won't hurt anything. Just let me have the crumbs that fall from the Rich Man's table.

GATEKEEPER: *grudgingly* If you didn't look so pitiful, and if you weren't covered with sores, I wouldn't fool with you, beggar man. But I'll go see if I can get you some leftovers.

LAZARUS: Thank you, very much.

GATEKEEPER: *leaving, shaking his head and talking to himself* That beggar Lazarus is not going to last much longer.

*Lazarus lies back, closes his eyes. Spotlight shifts to Rich Man's table, where the feasting is still in progress. Rich Man is now half drunk.*

RICH MAN: *leaning toward his companions* How 'bout it, fellows? Would you like to see a dancing girl dance?

1<sup>ST</sup> FRIEND: Yeah! Let's see some dancing!

2<sup>ND</sup> FRIEND: Bring on the dancer!

3<sup>RD</sup> FRIEND: Sure thing! I like to see dancers dance! Really dance!

RICH MAN: Then, by the beard of Abraham, you three gentlemen are going to see some real dancing! *turns to cup bearer* Don't just stand there, boy! Go find a dancing girl! Get some music makers! *Cup bearer hurries out. Rich Man notices Gatekeeper coming in.* What do you want?

GATEKEEPER: Sir, I was just--

RICH MAN: *interrupting* Is that beggar Lazarus at my gate again?

GATEKEEPER: Well, yes, Sir, he is. Could I please take him just a few crumbs?

RICH MAN: *roaring out* By the beard of Abraham, no! That wretched beggar doesn't deserve my food!

1<sup>ST</sup> FRIEND: *picking up his plate.* Here, Gatekeeper, take the poor wretch these scraps on my plate. I'm stuffed. *reaches to platter in center of table, picks up a beef short rib that has lots of meat on it.* This bone here ought to please him.

RICH MAN: *standing up, hollering out, and grabbing for the bone* Don't you dare! That bone's got meat on it. Give it to me! *gets bone, sits back down, and starts chewing off the meat--as if he were starving to death.*

*Gatekeeper slips out. There's music in the background. A dancing girl comes swishing in and dances before the men. The Rich Man's friends clap their hands, stamp their feet and thoroughly enjoy the performance. Just before the brief dance is ended, the Rich Man slumps over on the table--dead. But nobody notices. His*

wine glass is dumped over, but he still clutches the bone in his hand nearest the audience. Dancing Girl finishes her dance, bows to the men and then runs up to speak to the Rich Man.

DANCING GIRL: *enthusiastically* Sir, did you like my dance? Was it-- *dancer screams out*

CUP BEARER: *bending over Rich Man and feeling his brow* He's dead!  
*Bedlam breaks out. Dancer and servants scream again, run out. Three Friends scramble to their feet, crowd around Rich Man.*

1<sup>ST</sup> FRIEND: What'll we do?

2<sup>ND</sup> FRIEND: Let's go get help.

3<sup>RD</sup> FRIEND: We'll have to go tell his family.

1<sup>ST</sup> FRIEND: Let's go, then!

*Three Friends hurriedly exit, right stage. Three Devils enter from left and converge on Rich Man. CURTAIN on main stage. Spotlight turns to Lazarus, who is now standing up beside his stretcher--with three angels in attendance.*

3<sup>RD</sup> ANGEL: Lazarus, we've come to take you to heaven.

LAZARUS: Today?

2<sup>ND</sup> ANGEL: Yes, Lazarus, today. Your Father Abraham is waiting.

1<sup>ST</sup> ANGEL: You have been a good man, Lazarus. You have trusted in the Lord your God. So He has sent for you.

LAZARUS: I'm ready to go.

2<sup>ND</sup> ANGEL: You will rest in Abraham's bosom--forevermore.

*First and Second Angels lead Lazarus away. Third Angel lingers, stoops and speaks to the dog of Lazarus.*

3<sup>RD</sup> ANGEL: Little Dog, don't worry. Your master's going to a place where he won't have to beg, or be sick, or be hungry any more. And you'll be all right. His friends will come get you--before the sun goes down.

*Third Angel leaves. Lights direct audience attention to set depicting hell. Three Devils lead in Rich Man, who is now in heavy chains.*

RICH MAN: *moaning and groaning and dragging his feet* Oh! Ohhhh-hhh-hh-h!  
Where are we? Where're you taking me? Ohhh-hh-hh-h!

1<sup>ST</sup> DEVIL: You foolish man! We're down in hell!

2<sup>ND</sup> DEVIL: Where'd you think you'd go when you died?

RICH MAN: I didn't think about going anywhere! Oh-h-hh-hhh-h! Gim'me some water! *pants* My tongue! I'm dying of thirst! Water! Lem'me have some water!

3<sup>RD</sup> DEVIL: Sit down! And hush! There's no water down here! There's nothing down here but fire and brimstone and fools like you.

*Devils set Rich Man up on stool, secure his chains, and sit down to guard him.*

*Curtain on main stage opens, just as Three Angels usher Lazarus in to Father Abraham.*

1<sup>ST</sup> ANGEL: Honorable Abraham, here is Lazarus.

*Abraham holds open his arms, embraces Lazarus in bear hug.*

ABRAHAM: Ah, my son, welcome to heaven.

LAZARUS: You are Father Abraham, aren't you?

ABRAHAM: Yes, my son. I've been here a long time. Come, come, sit beside me.

*Turns to angels* Put a robe on Lazarus. And play on the harp for him.

*Two sit side by side. One angel puts white robe on beggar. Another plays her harp (Note: a flute may be substituted for the harp.) for him. Spotlight shifts back to Rich Man in hell.*

RICH MAN: *pointing up to Lazarus and Abraham.* Look. Look. It's that beggar, Lazarus! And Father Abraham! *raises voice to call loudly* Father Abraham! Father Abraham! Can you hear me, Father Abraham?

*Abraham walks over to edge of stage, looks down into hell area, speaks very calmly.*

ABRAHAM: Yes, Rich Man, I can hear you.

RICH MAN: Father Abraham, have mercy on me! Send Lazarus down here with a little water to cool my tongue. I'm tormented in this terrible place. Lazarus could just dip the tip of his finger in water and put it on my tongue.

*Illustrates by sticking out tongue and touching it with his forefinger.*

LAZARUS: *quite willingly* I'll go take him some water, Father Abraham.

ABRAHAM: No, son. I'm sorry. *turns again to Rich Man* That can't be, Rich Man. Remember how on earth you had nothing but good things? Lazarus had nothing but bad. Now, he is comforted. And you are tormented.

Besides, there's a great gulf fixed between us and you. Nobody can come from hell up to heaven. Nobody can go from heaven down into hell.

RICH MAN: Then, Father Abraham, I beg you to send Lazarus back down to earth--to my father's house. I have five brothers. And he could testify to them and keep them from coming to this place of torment.

LAZARUS: I'll go back and tell 'em--if you want me to.

ABRAHAM: No, no, my son. *turns again to Rich Man* Your brothers have the words and the warnings of Moses and the old prophets. It's all in the sacred writings. They can learn of God from the writings.

RICH MAN: No, Father Abraham, they won't pay the holy writings any attention. But if some one went to them from the dead, they would repent, and change their ways and serve God and not come here!

ABRAHAM: If your brothers won't hear Moses and the prophets, they wouldn't be persuaded, though some one rose from the dead!

*Sits back down by Lazarus, harp music continues briefly.*

End of Scene 2

*Lights dim. Curtain closes. Spotlight returns to boat set, and this constitutes the beginning of Scene 3. There is no break.*

### Begin Scene 3

*Scene 3--Immediately after the Rich Man and Lazarus parable, at Zebedee's boat beside the Sea of Galilee. Kish has just finished telling the parable--as he heard the Christ tell it earlier in the day--and those who have listened are: Salome, Clopas the blind boy, Hashub the boat builder, and Zebedee. Centurion Atticus is approaching--walking briskly and obviously much upset. Only Salome sees him coming.*

ZEBEDEE: *getting up* Kish, that was a remarkable story!

KISH: Oh, Sir, I didn't know you were listening. I thought you were still down at the boat.

HASHUB: I never heard a story like that in my life!

SALOME: *Looking toward centurion Zebedee*, isn't that Roman soldier coming yonder the centurion that built the synagogue?

ZEBEDEE: *somewhat surprised* Yes! It's Centurion Atticus. A highly respected Roman! *goes to meet Centurion A.* Good Day, Sir!

CENTURION: *Out of breath* Good day, Honorable Zebedee. Excuse me for interrupting like this! I'm looking for the prophet from Nazareth. I have to find him! I was told he often comes here to the seaside. Have you seen him?

ZEBEDEE: Not today, Sir. But we're expecting-- Ah, he's coming now!

*Enter Christ Figure, James and John, Simon Peter and Andrew.*

CENTURION: *highly pleased.* This is most fortunate!

ZEBEDEE: Those men with him are my two sons and my friends Simon Peter and Andrew.

CENTURION: Could you please introduce me to him--as quickly as possible?--I want him to help my servant! He's at the point of death.

ZEBEDEE: Of course! Come! *ushers Centurion toward approaching group.*

*Salome, Hashub and boys have been looking at the sail cloth samples again; but when Christ Figure and Centurion meet, they ease themselves over to listen. Hashub leads Clopas.*

ZEBEDEE: Jesus of Nazareth, Sir, this is the honorable Atticus, the centurion who built our synagogue for us.

*Centurion bows*

CHRIST FIGURE: God's peace to you, Centurion. I have heard much mention of you in Capernaum.

CENTURION: *very seriously* Sir, I came to beg a favor. My servant Felix, who is very dear to me--he's almost like my father--is sick unto death. Will you heal him?

CHRIST FIGURE: Yes. If you have faith, I will heal him. Come. Is your house nearby?

CENTURION: Ah, Sir, my house is not far from here, but I am not worthy for you to come under my roof.

You are a great physician, sent from God. Just speak the word here. And my servant will be healed.

CHRIST FIGURE: Centurion, you have that much faith in me?

CENTURION: Sir, you are one with authority, even as I am. As a Roman Centurion, I have ten Centuries--with one hundred soldiers each--under my command. When I say to one group 'do this,' they do it.

And when I say to another group 'do that,' they do it.

Also, my servants. When I say 'go,' they go. When I say 'come,' they come.

So, Sir, you have only to command this great sickness to leave my poor, dear servant and it will leave. And he will live!

CHRIST FIGURE: *turning to companions* I have not found faith like this, no, not in Israel. *Turns to Centurion* Be it unto your servant, according to your faith.

*Pauses, gazes up in to the sky, folds hands for a silent prayer, turns again to Centurion.*

Your servant's illness has now gone.

CENTURION: Ah, thank you, Great Master!

*Bows, then straightens up, salutes C. F. with the Roman Army salute, wheels around and strides away. Before Centurion gets off stage, a running soldier rushes to meet him.*

ROMAN SOLDIER: *quickly saluting and speaking between gasps for breath.* Sir!

Your servant! He's well! Just this minute he got up! He's well!

*Centurion and Soldier hurry away. All bystanders register amazement, saying the following things--all at the same time. C. F. walks down to boat, leaving group talking among themselves.*

Zebedee: This is astonishing! I thought he was just a gifted prophet. I didn't know he performed miracles.

Hashub: It's amazing! *grabs Zebedee's arm and pulls him aside.* Honorable Zebedee, who is this man Jesus?

James: *hurrying to join C. F.* Master, it must be that you have all power!

John: *going with James* Master, every day you amaze us!

Simon Peter: *to Andrew* He is like no one we've seen before.

Andrew: He is anointed by God.

Kish: He's a miracle worker!

Clopas: What happened?

*Salome quickly leads blind and confused Clopas aside.*

CLOPAS: *to Salome* Ma'am, what happened? What did he do?

SALOME Clopas, Jesus did a wonderful thing! He healed a sick man over in the city--simply by saying the word, here by the sea!

If he can do that, Clopas, he can heal your eyes! And make you see!

CLOPAS: *eagerly* Oh, Ma'am, I wish he could! But I was born blind.

SALOME: Come on, let's ask Jesus. *leads Clopas toward C. F. At same time, she calls John.* John!

JOHN: *turns* Yes, Mother? *comes back to Salome.*

SALOME: Ask Jesus of Nazareth if we could speak with him.

JOHN: But, Mother, he's about to go into the city.

SALOME: It's for Clopas, here.

JOHN *noticing blind boy for first time* Oh. *pauses* I see. Sure, I'll speak to the Master. *hurries back to C. F.* Master?

CHRIST FIGURE: Yes, John?

JOHN: My mother would like to talk with you, before you leave. It's about a blind boy.

CHRIST FIGURE: A blind boy? *looks around* Bring him to me.

*Salome hurries over, leading Clopas. Others gather around.*

SALOME: Jesus, Sir, this is Clopas, who helps his master build boats. He's blind. Please have mercy on him and heal his eyes!

CHRIST FIGURE *with utmost gentleness, kindness* Come here, my son. *reaches out, puts both hands on Clopas' shoulders* So you are Clopas, and you build boats.

CLOPAS: Yes, Sir.

CHRIST FIGURE: Clopas, do you know who I am?

CLOPAS: No, Sir. But I can tell that you're somebody wonderful.

C. F.: Clopas, do you know who God is?

CLOPAS: Oh, yes, Sir! God is the Lord in heaven--the God of our Father Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of us all.

C. F.: If I told you that God sent me into the world so that the blind may receive their sight, and the lame walk, and the lepers be cleansed, and the deaf hear, and the dead raised up, and that the people may hear the good news of salvation--would you believe me?

CLOPAS: Yes, Sir. I would believe you.

CHRIST FIGURE: God sent me, Clopas. He sent me to do all those things. And more.

Close your eyes, son. *places tips of fingers on boy's eyes, lifts head and prays* Our Father in Heaven, bring glory to Your Name through this young boy. Give him light in his eyes. Give him peace, and give him faith to know eternal life. Amen. *drops hands from boy's eyes*

CLOPAS: *crying out, joyously* I can see! I can see! I can see everything! *kneels before C. F.* Master! Master! Thank you!

*Bystanders gasp in amazement, murmur approval. Boat builder Hashub runs and kneels beside Clopas, at feet of C. F.*

HASHUB: Oh, Master, you have the power of God in your hands! I beg you to come heal my cousin! I beg you! He's possessed by demons!

C. F.: Where does your cousin live? *helps Clopas and Hashub to stand.*

HASHUB: He lives in the area of the Gadarenes. *Gad'-a-reens* But this morning he broke his chains and ran into the hills. He's up there somewhere, hiding.

He cuts himself with stones and screams and cries out--day and night.

Sir, No man can tame him, but you could make him well. Couldn't you?

C. F.: Come, let us go and find him.

JAMES: Master, John and I know those hills of the Gadarenes.

SIMON PETER: Master, this place is on the other side of the sea. Let's go in my boat.

*C. F. leaves, all others--except Zebedee and Salome--follow. Kish runs back to Zebedee.*

KISH: *eagerly* Master Zebedee, can I go with 'em to look for the poor crazy man?

ZEBEDEE: *with a tone of resignation* I guess so, Kish. I guess so. Go on with 'em. *Kish hurries to catch up with the group. Z. and Salome walk slowly back to the boat. By his very walk, it is evident that Zebedee is once more dejected over his sons. Spotlight stays with Zebedee and Salome.*

ZEBEDEE: *sitting down near boat and automatically picking up a net.* Oh, Salome, Salome, what will I do? Did you see my boys? They just ran off to look for that crazy man without saying one word to me!

SALOME: Zebedee, don't worry so.

ZEBEDEE: What's to become of my fishing business?

SALOME: But, Zebedee, this Jesus is--

ZEBEDEE: I know. I know. This Jesus is like no one we've ever seen before. I have to admit that he is no ordinary prophet.

SALOME: He's more than a prophet.

ZEBEDEE: As I watched him heal that blind boy, I thought to myself He's-- He's-- He's sent here by God. Maybe, through him, God is visiting His people!

SALOME: Yes. I had the same feeling.

*Zebedee puts aside the net, picks up container of fish from the boat.*

ZEBEDEE: Let's go home, Salome.

*Two leave. Lights go out. End of Scene.*

ACT I, Scene 4

Scene 4--Christ Healing the Demoniac. Note to players: Please read Mark 5:1-21; Matthew 8: 28-34; Luke 8:26-34. This will help you get the feel of this miracle.

*Scene 4: Just before nightfall, the following day, in the hills where the demoniac man is hiding among the tombs and rocks. There are many shrubs and boulders in the area. As the curtain opens, the lunatic is hiding behind a large boulder. He screams as if in pain and then creeps out, looking in all directions. His clothes are tattered, his hair unkempt, his bearded face bloody and dirty. On his legs are streaks of blood, and about both ankles are remnants of a broken chain. He holds a jagged rock in one hand. When the demoniac sees the Christ Figure and his companions approaching, he becomes highly disturbed.*

WILD MAN: *screaming* Don't come near me! Don't come near me! *leaps behind a rock*

HASHUB: We won't hurt you! It's me--your Cousin Hashub, from Capernaum. And some friends.

WILD MAN: *peeping from behind rock* I know you, Cousin Hashub. And I know this man in the white robe. *points directly at C. F. and advances a few steps toward him*

You're Jesus, the Son of the most high God! That's who you are!

CHRIST FIGURE: Son, what is your name?

WILD MAN: My name? Just call me Legion! A Roman Legion! Six thousand soldiers! For I have a legion of demons down in me! *Knocks his fist against his chest* Six thousand demons!

CHRIST FIGURE: If you trust in me, I will command the legion of demons to leave you.

*Wild Man kneels before C. F., lifts arms to plead.*

WILD MAN: Oh, Master, I, myself, wish you would send them away. But they cry out "No! No!" Hear them? *heightening his voice to speak as the demons* "No! No! Don't send us away! What have we demons to do with you, Jesus, you son of the most high God? We adjure you by God, that you torment us not!"

CHRIST FIGURE: Come out of this man!

WILD MAN: *speaking as the demons* "Don't send us out into the sea! Don't! Don't! Just over the hill there's a herd of swine. Let us enter the swine! We beg! We beg! We beg!"

*Wild Man resumes his natural voice.*

Please, Master. Send the demons into the swine! For my sake! Please!

CHRIST FIGURE: It shall be so. Legion of demons, go to the swine!

*Wild Man falls prone at the feet of Jesus, and lies there, as if dead. C. F. kneels beside him, lifts his head in his arms.*

CHRIST FIGURE: *turns to companions* Give me some water to bathe his face. *James unfastens flask of water at his belt. John quickly takes off his head cloth. They pour the water on the cloth and C. F. uses it to soothe the face of the Wild Man. At the same time Hashub wraps his cloak about his ragged cousin. C. F. and companions raise Wild Man to his feet.*

WILD MAN: *now in his right mind.* Master, you have saved my life!

You have sent the demons away. Let me come with you and be your disciple!

C. F.: *with much compassion.* No, my son. It is better that you return to your own house and your own city and tell what a great thing God has done for you. God has had compassion on you.

WILD MAN: I will, Master! I will! Every day of my life I will tell it! I'll tell my friends! And I'll tell it in the ten cities of Decapolis!

*Three swine herders come rushing around the corner, waving their arms, much excited. They're on their way into the city to report what's happened to their swine. They stop talking among themselves and stop to relate the strange event to the CHRIST FIGURE and his followers. All speak fast, breathlessly, and with a measure of shock.*

1<sup>ST</sup> SWINE HERDER: *panting and highly excited* Strangers! *Gasps for more breath* Let us tell you what happened! You won't believe it! *gasps* But it happened! Our swine! They all just drowned! *keeps breathing heavily.*

2<sup>ND</sup> S. H.: Ever' last one of 'em! They jumped in the sea! *still out of breath* Not three minutes ago!

3<sup>RD</sup> S. H.: *also panting* Strangest thing you ever saw! *gasps* The three of us were just standin' there, talkin'--like always. An--

1<sup>ST</sup> S. H.: We'd just fed the whole herd. Fed 'em plenty!

3<sup>RD</sup> S. H.: *still breathless* An' all of a sudden they started squealing and carrying on! An' next thing you knew they went runnin' down to the bluff and just dived over!

*Bends himself over and waves arms to show how swine went over the cliff*

2<sup>ND</sup> S. H.: Ever' last pig went over! The big 'uns! The little 'uns! The middle sized 'uns! There was one big splash! SHEWWW-WW-W- W EEW! *imitates enormous wave created, shakes his head* Two thousand swine gone! I could'a cried!

1<sup>ST</sup> S. H.: I'll tell you this: I been herdin' swine for forty years, and I never saw nothin' like it! *comes directly to Wild Man* Stranger, did you ever hear of such a thing?

WILD MAN: *calmly* No. I never did. But I can tell you why your swine went over the cliff and dived into the sea. The demons that were in me went into your swine.

ALL SWINE HERDERS: *horrified* Demons?

WILD MAN: Yes. Just few minutes ago, my Lord, here, *motions toward C. F.* cast a Legion of demons out of me, and they drove your swine into the sea.

*All Swine herders gasp in disbelief, show great fear.*

2<sup>ND</sup> S. H.: May God have mercy on us!

1<sup>ST</sup> S. H.: *coming to C. F. and pointing his finger.* Stranger, we don't know who you are! But leave! Leave these hills of the Gadarenes.

2<sup>ND</sup> S. H.: Yeah! You'd better leave. *still somewhat out of breath* We don't want nothin' to do with a man who's got power over demons!

3<sup>RD</sup> S. H.: *grabbing the sleeves of his two companions.* Come on, let's us leave here!

*Swine herders hurry off. Curtain closes.*

End of Scene 4 and ACT I

## Begin ACT II

*Scene 1--More than two years later, shortly before the Passover festival. It is mid-afternoon at Zebedee's fishing wharf on the Sea of Galilee. Zebedee sits alone in his boat, a fishing net across his knees. But he is not mending it.*

*Instead, he stares toward the sea. And, at the half-finished boat which lies rotting not far from the boat in which he sits. Zebedee's dream of building a fleet of fishing boats has been shattered, for his sons have become disciples of Jesus of Nazareth--as he feared they would do.*

*As the afternoon wears on, now and then two or more residents of Capernaum pass by--on their way to hear the Christ, who is teaching on a hill not far from the seashore. Zebedee takes no notice of the passersby, unless they speak to him.*

*He talks to himself, and to the sea, as he waits for Salome to bring his supper basket.*

ZEBEDEE: Ah, Sea of Galilee, listen to me. *pause* I want to ask you a question. You Heart-Shaped Sea, did your heart ever break? *pause*

No. No. Of course not. You are shaped like a man's heart, but your heart has never been broken.

Sure, the storm winds rage, and make your waves roll high. Gales come and your waters beat against the shore. But this does not break your heart.

Heart-Shaped Sea of Galilee, it takes sons to break your heart.

You have no sons.

No sons to leave you.

No sons to follow a mighty prophet sent here by the LORD.

When he said "Come, be fishers of men," my two sons forsook all and went with him.

*A young girl and two mothers--one carrying an infant, the other leading two small children--come by and stop.*

1<sup>ST</sup> MOTHER: *calling* Fisherman, Sir?

ZEBEDEE: *turning around* Yes?

1<sup>ST</sup> MOTHER: We're looking for the prophet--Jesus of Nazareth.

2<sup>ND</sup> MOTHER: Have you seen him pass this way?

ZEBEDEE: Yes, he's on over the way there. *gives a wave of the arm* Half the people in Capernaum are over there, too. Even my hired servants.

1<sup>ST</sup> MOTHER: Thank you very much. We want him to bless our children. *Group starts moving on*

YOUNG GIRL: Mother, am I too old and too big to be blessed?

2<sup>ND</sup> MOTHER: Of course not, Naomi.

YOUNG GIRL: Good. I was a little bit worried.

2<sup>ND</sup> MOTHER: *to other mother* Do you think we ought to wait for the other women and their children? Or, should we go on?

*Three other mothers and six children come into view.*

1<sup>ST</sup> MOTHER: There they come. Let's wait. *raises hand to beckon to second group* Come on! The prophet is over this way. *points*

*All mothers and children move on together and exit out door on right of stage. A Capernaum Man and his wife pass by Zebedee's boat, talking to each other, paying Zebedee no attention.*

CAPERNAUM MAN: There's no way to count the miracles Jesus has performed!

WIFE: Is it true that he has raised a man from the dead?

C. MAN: Yes. It's true. It happened in the village of Nain. I know a man who saw it.

*Man and Wife move on. Jairus and two friends pass by, stop briefly to talk to Zebedee; for Jairus and Zebedee are well acquainted.*

JAIRUS: Zebedee? *Zebedee looks up, smiles and lifts hand in recognition.* Could you please tell us where the Nazareth Prophet might be teaching this afternoon?

ZEBEDEE: Yes, Honorable Jairus. He's not far over that way--just over the crest of the hill.

JAIRUS: Thank you.

*Men move on, talking as they go.*

1<sup>ST</sup> FRIEND: Have you all heard that not long ago this Jesus healed ten lepers? All at the same time!

2<sup>ND</sup> FRIEND: My brother saw him do that. In the past few years he's healed all manner of diseases.

*Three men move on. Spotlight picks up Salome, who is on her way to take Zebedee his supper basket. She stops to rest, and, to think out loud.*

SALOME: *setting basket down.* Whew! This long walk to take Zebedee's supper every afternoon just about gets me!

I hope I find Zebedee in a good mood. Poor man. He worries so. I've got to figure out exactly how to explain my plan for James and John to him.

Zebedee may not want me to speak to Jesus about James and John--about their future. But I think I ought to. A mother should look out for the future of her children.

Maybe when I tell Zebedee what I overheard this morning, down by the synagogue, he'll think my idea is all right.

*Picks up basket, resumes walk. Zebedee sees Salome approaching, climbs out of boat to meet her and to take basket of food.*

ZEBEDEE: Ah, here you are, Salome, with my supper basket. *Peeps into basket*  
Full of good stuff--as usual.

SALOME: Well, I don't know how good it will all taste. But I tried!

ZEBEDEE: That's what you always say.

*Two settle themselves down. Zebedee begins mending nets.*

SALOME: *seriously* Zebedee, this morning when I went to buy bread, and was passing by the Synagogue, there were three men--strangers--standing right at the Synagogue steps. They were talking fast and waving their hands. I still don't know who they were, but they must have been from Jerusalem.

Anyway, I wanted to hear what they were saying. So, I pretended I was an old, old woman and went creeping by. *gets up, shows Zebedee how she walked like an aged, crippled woman.*

ZEBEDEE: You didn't!

SALOME: Yes I did! And quick as I could buy my bread, I went creeping back--in the other direction!

ZEBEDEE: What'd they say?

SALOME: They were saying that the fame of Jesus of Nazareth has spread everywhere! Through all Galilee, all Judaea, even beyond Jordan.

And, that in Jerusalem there are many, many people who want to make him king!

ZEBEDEE: *with much surprise* Make him king?

SALOME: Yes! King! Get rid of the Romans! Set up a new kingdom! Then, the oldest looking one of them said something I couldn't quite understand.

It was about the high priest in Jerusalem wanting "one man to die--rather than have the whole nation perish." I don't know what he meant.

ZEBEDEE: *shaking his head* I don't know either. But there have been revolts against the Romans before. None of them last. There has been one group of patriotic zealots after another--hundreds killed--much blood wasted. Rome has a mighty army. Poor Israel nothing.

Salome, we'll never be free of the Roman yoke. Not in our lifetime.

SALOME: You can't tell what might happen. Just suppose the people did make Jesus of Nazareth our king! Think how great that would be for James and John!

ZEBEDEE: What do you mean?

SALOME: They could have important positions! One could sit on his right hand! The other on the left! He admires both of them. I know that!

ZEBEDEE: Salome, you are a typical mother! You want the best for--

*Zebedee interrupts himself when he sees James and John hurrying toward the boat-coming from the direction of the place where Jesus is teaching.*

Well, well, look who's coming! The Sons of Zebedee themselves!  
*Much pleased, Zebedee and Salome go to greet their sons. All exchange warm embraces.*

SALOME: James and John!

JAMES: Hello, Father! How are you, Mother?

JOHN: Mother! How are you? It's good to see you, Father!

ZEBEDEE: Boys! Boys! It seems such a long time since we saw you.

JAMES: We came to get you. Both of you.

JOHN: We want you to come hear Jesus teach! He's right over there.

JAMES: He has such wonderful things to tell us! You've got to come!

SALOME: Let's go, Zebedee!

ZEBEDEE: Well, I'll go with you--this one time. Though I should stay here and mend nets.

JOHN: We'll help you mend nets, Father--when we get back. We haven't forgotten how.

ZEBEDEE: You're staying in Capernaum tonight?

JOHN: Yes, Sir. And tomorrow we start out for Jerusalem for Passover. This year, Jesus wants to get there a few days before the festival begins.

JAMES: Just this morning he received word--actually it was a warning--that he shouldn't go to Jerusalem at this time. But he is going.

*All walk on--toward place where Jesus is teaching. James and Zebedee walk in front. Salome and John keep talking, briefly.*

SALOME: I've been trying to get your father to go to Passover this year, but he won't talk about it.

JOHN: It's always such a wonderful time. I'm looking forward... *voice trails off*

*Main stage curtain opens--showing the Christ Figure seated and teaching a crowd of people gathered 'round him. Zebedee, Salome and their sons sit down quietly at the edge of the crowd. This marks the beginning of Scene 2. There is no break. The Christ Figure is speaking.*

ACT II, Scene 2: Part of Sermon on the Mount, Blessing Little Children  
*Scene 2--on a hillside near the Sea of Galilee, outside Capernaum. The Christ is seated in the midst of a crowd, which includes: Mothers of Capernaum and their children; Capernaum Man and Wife; Jairus and Two Friends; the disciples Simon Peter, Andrew, Thomas, Philip, Nathanael; Little Boy, Small Girl; and Zebedee, Salome, James and John. All are attentive as the Christ speaks.*

CHRIST FIGURE: Verily, verily I say unto you: keep the commandments of God.

JAIRUS: *seated near C. F.* Master, tell us, which is the greatest commandment?

C. F.: The first, and greatest, commandment is this: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and with all thy strength." *Cf. Matthew 22:37; Mark 12:30, 33; Luke 10:27*

And the second commandment is like the first: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

Moreover, I say unto you all this commandment: "Love your enemies. Do good to them who hate you." *Luke 6:27*

*Crowd shows much surprise. A murmur of disbelief sweeps through group.*

JAIRUS: Master, love our enemies? This is a hard teaching!

CROWD: *murmuring, in unison* Very hard.

C. F.: Do unto all men as you would have them do unto you.

Be merciful, as your Father in heaven is merciful.

Judge not, and you shall not be judged.

Condemn not, and you shall not be condemned.

Forgive, and you shall be forgiven.

Give, and it shall be given unto you--good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over.

For with the same measure that you measure out to others, it shall be measured to you again.

*(For above, See Luke 6)*

Be pure in heart. For "blessed are the pure in heart; they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God."

Be the salt of the earth. Be the light of the world. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." *Cf. Matthew 5*

*Crowd murmurs its approval.*

JAIRUS: Master, these are marvelous teachings.

CROWD: *in unison, but subdued tone.* Marvelous!

ANDREW: *standing not far from C. F.* Master, tell us this: who shall be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? *Cf. Matthew 18:1-4*

*Christ Figure looks over the crowd, spots a small boy.*

C. F.: *to little boy* Come here, Little Boy. *beckons*

LITTLE BOY: *gets up* Me, Sir? *Mother gently urges her son forward*

C. F.: Yes, come to me for a minute.

*All mothers whisper their pleasure to each other. Little Boy goes to C. F., who takes him up in his lap.*

C. F.: Verily, verily I say unto all of you that "except you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.

"Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

*C. F. leans over and whispers in Little Boy's ear.*

LITTLE BOY: *looking up at C. F.* God loves little boys?

C. F.: Yes, my son, He does.

*Small Girl approaches C. F.*

SMALL GIRL: Sir, does God love little girls?

C. F.: *reaching out for girl.* Yes, my child. *Sets her on other knee, and bends to speak to both children*

*Audience attention is distracted--toward Mothers. They begin getting up. First Capernaum Mother moves toward Simon Peter and speaks to him, rather loudly.*

1<sup>ST</sup> MOTHER: *firmly* Sir, would you please move? We Mothers from Capernaum want the Prophet to bless our children.

SIMON PETER: *with surprise* Why, lady! You-- You-- You don't know how busy--

1<sup>ST</sup> MOTHER: There are five of us who've brought our children! To be blessed!

2<sup>ND</sup> MOTHER: We know he's sent by God.

SIMON: *speaking fast, with little patience* True. But now, ladies, let's be reasonable. The Master is busy! He's teaching about the kingdom of God!

3<sup>RD</sup> MOTHER: *to Simon, loudly* We just want him to bless the children!

4<sup>TH</sup> MOTHER: You heard what he just said about children.

SIMON: *almost at wit's end* Maybe some other time, ladies!

5<sup>TH</sup> MOTHER: *loudly, with hands on hips* But we walked all the way from Capernaum!

*Mothers talk among themselves, rather loudly, all at same time:*

1<sup>st</sup>: This man doesn't know what he's talking about! What'll we do?

2<sup>nd</sup>: Let's ask Jesus, ourselves!

3<sup>rd</sup>: Come on, let's go to Jesus. I know he loves children.

4<sup>th</sup>: *shaking finger at Simon* Sir, don't you like children?

5<sup>th</sup>: It's such a little thing to ask!

SIMON: *raising voice* Now, ladies, ladies, get quiet! We can't hear what the Master is saying!

*C. F., still holding Little Boy and Small Girl, notices battle of words.*

C. F.: *calling* Simon Peter?

SIMON: *coming towards C. F.* Yes, Master.

C. F.: What seems to be the question over there?

SIMON: Master, all these mothers from Capernaum want you to bless their children. And I'm just trying to tell them that you don't have time!

C. F.: *with much tolerance* Ah, "let the little children come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

*There is considerable shifting about as children gather in front of Christ Figure and the disciples and other followers move to background. Mothers stand on either side of C. F. and children. Little Boy and Small Girl return to their mothers so that C. F. can gather other children into his arms. When the children are still, C. F. turns to adults.*

C. F.: Verily, I say unto all of you that you take heed to love and care for the little ones. "For in heaven they have angels who always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven." Cf. *Matthew 18:10*

*C. F. lifts head to pray* Father, bless these little children--all little children--for evermore. A-men.

*Mothers quietly lead their children away, going completely off stage. Salome, James and John make their way to C. F.. Others gather in two clusters--one around Zebedee, the other around Simon--and turn backs to audience. C. F. moves to talk with Salome and James and John.*

JOHN: *to C. F.* Master?

C. F.: *turning toward John, James, and Salome* Yes, John?

JOHN: My mother, here, wants to ask a special favor--for James and me.

C. F.: *cordially* Ah, Madam Salome, what do you want me to do?

SALOME *somewhat flustered* Oh, uh-- uh-- Master, I'm afraid I'm just like all those other mothers! I want to ask a special favor for my sons!

C. F.: A favor for James and John? They're my dear "Sons of Thunder!" *Places one arm around shoulders of James, the other across John's shoulders* I also call these two my "fishers of men!" What should I do for them?

SALOME: When you come into your glory, let one of them sit on your right hand and the other on your left!

C. F.: *in disappointed, crestfallen tone* Oh, Madam Salome! I don't believe you know what you ask.

That honor is not mine to give. Who shall sit on my right hand and who shall sit on my left, my Father in heaven will say. He will give that honor to those for whom it is prepared.

SALOME: Yes, Master. *bows head slightly, steps back.*

C. F.: James and John, you two cannot drink of the cup I shall drink of. And could you be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

JAMES: Yes, Lord. We'll drink of any cup.

JOHN: And be baptized with any woe. We'll do anything for you, Lord!

C. F.: Ah, you know not what lies ahead--when we go to Jerusalem. A bitter cup awaits me there.

JOHN: Lord, what are you saying?

JAMES: What bitter cup?

C. F.: *calling all group together* Come to me, all of you.

*All gather around C. F. slowly, quietly as he continues talking*

We must go now into Capernaum and prepare for tomorrow's journey to Jerusalem--for the Passover, my last Passover.

It is written: "The shepherd shall be smitten, and the sheep shall be scattered."

When I tell you that the Son of Man shall be betrayed and condemned to death, you cannot believe.

Yet, this is so.

All the Scriptures shall be fulfilled. Even the sorrowful words of Isaiah must come to pass: *Cf. Isaiah 53*

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief....

"He was wounded for our transgressions: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed....

"He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

"He was taken from prison and from judgment... he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

"And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death. ... Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin....

"He hath poured out his soul unto death...."

*C. F. pauses, alters stance slightly*

These scriptures must be fulfilled. But after I am risen, I will meet you here in Galilee--beside the Sea.

Let us go. My work is to do the will of my Father in heaven.

*C. F. walks away; disciples and others follow, talking in low tones among themselves. Zebedee, Salome, James and John linger behind.*

ZEBEDEE: *to J. and J.* Boys, I didn't exactly understand what Jesus of Nazareth was talking about. Do you?

JAMES: No, Sir. Except that he is the shepherd and we disciples are the sheep who will be scattered.

ZEBEDEE: Possibly so.

JOHN: Father, we believe Jesus is the long-promised Messiah!

JAMES: Yes, Father. He is the Messiah. He's the Son of God!

ZEBEDEE: *alarmed over his sons' beliefs* Boys! Boys! What you're saying couldn't be possible!

Jesus of Nazareth is from God. I believe that, because he couldn't do the miracles he does if he were not from God.

But, the Son of God? No, no, boys. *changes tone* But enough of such talk. Come on, let's go mend those nets.

SALOME: Zebedee, tomorrow let's go with all of them to Jerusalem. We haven't been to Passover in years!

ZEBEDEE: I'd love to go--the best in the world--but I just can't. I can't leave my business for two or three weeks. The fish merchants in Capernaum depend on me. I have contracts to supply so many fish, every day.

SALOME: *with resignation* All right, if that's the way it is.

ZEBEDEE: *brightly* You could go. Yes, Salome! Why don't you do that? You could stay with our Cousin Joanna.

SALOME: Yes, I could stay with Joanna!

JOHN: *enthusiastically* It's all settled then, Mother!

JAMES: Yes, you're coming with us to Jerusalem! We'll be leaving at daylight! *All start moving on.*

CURTAIN (End of ACT II)

### ACT III Scene 1

*Scene 1--Some three weeks later. It is mid-morning at Zebedee's fishing wharf on the Sea of Galilee. Zebedee and his servant Kish have disposed of all their fish--except for one batch. Kish is mending nets. Zebedee is puttering around in the boat.*

ZEBEDEE: Kish, I'll tell you one thing.

KISH: What's that, Sir?

ZEBEDEE: I'll be glad when my wife gets back from Jerusalem! She's been gone three weeks and it seems like three years!

KISH: I'll be glad, too, Sir. The suppers you pack don't taste so good.

ZEBEDEE: *laughs* Kish! How could you say such a thing?

*Picks up basket--or string--of fish, admires them*

Kish, I'm going to take these fish into Capernaum--to an old friend of mine, an elderly gentleman who knew my father. But I'll be right back.

KISH: Yes sir.

*Zebedee starts off in one direction, Salome comes hurrying in from the other. Kish sees Salome when she is some distance away.*

KISH: *calling loudly* Master Zebedee! Master Zebedee!

*Zebedee turns around*

ZEBEDEE: *calling back* What do you want?

KISH: Madam Salome's back. See? *points toward S.*

ZEBEDEE: Good! *hurries back, hands fish to K.* Here, you take the fish! *calls out to S.* You're back! You're back! Thank heaven! *runs to meet Salome, gives her a bear hug.*

SALOME: I am so glad to be home! *without taking a breath* Zebedee, you can't imagine what happened! Some of it dreadful! Some of it, unbelievable!

ZEBEDEE: *with alarm* James and John? Are they all right?

SALOME: Yes, they're all right. Shaken and scared, but all right. I've seen 'em since it happened.

KISH: *with much concern* Since what happened, Ma'am?

SALOME: Jesus was put to death! Crucified!

ZEBEDEE: *horror-stricken* Oh, no!

KISH: *gasps, horrified* Crucified on a cross? Ma'am!

ZEBEDEE: How horrible! Who-- Who-- Who did such a thing? And why?

SALOME: Jesus didn't stay dead! He arose on the third day!

*Both Zebedee and Kish are amazed beyond words. Kish registers his amazement by staring at Salome, his mouth open, his eyes wide; slowly he sits down beside the basket of fish and barely breathes as he listens to Salome. At first, Zebedee gasps. He looks at Salome, intently.*

ZEBEDEE: *slowly, deliberately* Salome? What did you say?

SALOME: I said he rose from the grave--the third day after he was buried! That's what happened! James and John have both seen him alive!

We all saw him crucified, dead, and buried.

ZEBEDEE: *anxiously* Here, sit down, Salome, and tell us everything. Everything that happened.

*As Salome sits down, she begins the narrative. Kish comes to listen. Zebedee finally sits down.*

SALOME: It was on Friday morning of Passover week. Several of us women were going from Cousin Joannah's house to the temple, when we heard a great commotion in the street and saw some Roman soldiers coming. And we could hear some people weeping. At first we thought it was a funeral procession. Then...

*Voice trails off as Scene 2 gets underway. There is no break.*

## Scene 2

Scene 2: The Friday morning of Passover Week. A street corner in Jerusalem, not far from the temple. Four Roman soldiers--detailed to drive Jesus of Nazareth and two common thieves up to Golgotha, where the three are to be crucified--enter. They shout orders at their prisoners, the grieving followers, and at all passersby.

Each prisoner carries his own cross. The thieves are in front, the Christ Figure in the back.

James; John and Simon Peter walk near the Christ Figure. Each time they try to assist him, the Third Soldier drives them aside.

Grieving Women wail and follow close behind C. F. and disciples. The First Grieving Woman manages to give C. F. a drink of water, but is shoved away by Fourth Soldier.

The procession enters from ballroom door right of stage, crosses ballroom--in front of stage--and exits out door left of stage.

These six players enters from opposite direction: Old Blind Man, Old Deaf Man, Mary Magdalene, the Other Mary, Joanna, and Salome-in-Jerusalem.

Simon of Cyrene and Alexander and Rufus enter from downstairs bar area.

Please keep in mind that this scene must be brutal, heart-breaking, and fast moving. The procession will halt only when the Christ Figure falls and First Soldier drags in Simon of Cyrene to compel him to bear the cross.

*First and Second Soldiers march in, abreast.*

1<sup>ST</sup> SOLDIER: *shouting* Clear the streets! *to companion* I hate these crucifixion details!

2<sup>ND</sup> SOLDIER: Me too! Why do we always get stuck with the dirty work?

1<sup>ST</sup> SOLDIER: Our Centurion is a weakling! That's why! For two shekels, I'd ask for a transfer! *calls back over his shoulder* Step lively back there! You two thieves, quit dragging your feet! *turns back, prods first Thief with spear.*

*Old Blind Man and Old Deaf Man almost bump into Second Soldier.*

2<sup>ND</sup> SOLDIER: *shouting* Clear the streets! *Old men pay no attention.* Out of the way, you old men! *whacks at them with spear, misses* Can't you see or hear? *moves on*

*Old Men, driven aside, stumble, almost fall*

OLD BLIND MAN: *to companion* What's going on?

OLD DEAF MAN: I don't know! *looks again* The Lord have mercy! They're taking prisoners to be crucified!

*Old Men turn round to run away, almost bump into Mary Magdalene and companions. At same time, Third Soldier yells out.*

3<sup>RD</sup> SOLDIER: *yelling at James, John, Simon Peter* Stay away from the prisoner! *Disciples move aside so that First Grieving Woman can give water to C. F.*

4<sup>TH</sup> SOLDIER: Woman, get out of the way! *shoves First G. W. to ground.*

*Four women entering from left swerve to the side to avoid running into two old men, and, try to slip past First Soldier and Second Soldier.*

1<sup>ST</sup> SOLDIER: *loudly, harshly* Clear the street! Where do you women think you're going?

*Four women run forward. They shriek with horror when they recognize third prisoner. They run to Christ Figure. At same time he falls under the weight of his cross and that part of the procession comes to a halt.*

MARY MAGDALENE: *kneeling by C. F.* Oh, Master! Not you! Not you! Ohh-hh-h!

JOANNA: *wailing* Oh, Master, they're going to kill you!

OTHER MARY: Oh, Master! Master!

SALOME: *running to James and John* James! John! Maybe we could get help!  
*Sons try to comfort Salome.*

3<sup>RD</sup> SOLDIER: Move aside! Move aside! *women move back*  
*Third Soldier stoops, shakes shoulder of C. F.*

Get to your feet, prisoner! Get to your feet!

*C. F. is unconscious, does not move.*

Aw, for the love of Caesar! He's out cold!

*At the same time, Second Soldier gets First Thief and Second Thief off stage. First Soldier strides back to see why procession has halted. Fourth Soldier comes forward, stops, looks down at C. F. Simon of Cyrene and his sons come close enough to be seen.*

1<sup>ST</sup> SOLDIER: *much frustrated* What's going on back here? Get going! Get going!  
We haven't got all day!

3<sup>RD</sup> SOLDIER: *hurrying to meet First Soldier* That third prisoner back there has about had it. Pontius Pilate had him flogged nearly to death! Thirty nine lashes!

1<sup>ST</sup> SOLDIER: I wish the great Pontius Pilate had the job of just one crucifixion!  
He wouldn't order so many!

*Fourth Soldier joins companions.*

4<sup>TH</sup> SOLDIER: Say, you guys, we gotta be careful. We sure don't want this fellow back here dying on us till we get him nailed to his cross. He's a king!

3<sup>RD</sup> SOLDIER: What do you mean, a king?

*While Soldiers talk the Christ revives. First Grieving Woman manages to give him a drink of water--with the help of Mary Magdalene. John takes crown of thorns off head of C. F., hides it under his cloak. Mary Magdalene wipes brow of C. F. with her head covering.*

4<sup>TH</sup> SOLDIER: Yeah! That's right. You didn't see this sign? *holds up sign* Pontius Pilate ordered this nailed up over his head: "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews!"

1<sup>ST</sup> SOLDIER: Well, king or no king, we've got to get him on up to Golgotha.  
*looks around, notices Simon of Cyrene, beckons to him.*

Hey, you! Come carry the cross for this poor wretch!

SIMON OF CYRENE: *dismayed, rather frightened.* Me?

1<sup>ST</sup> SOLDIER: Yes, you! *advances toward Simon and his boys*

*Boys cling to their father's cloak.*

ALEXANDER: Father! What's that soldier going to do to us?

RUFUS: I'm scared, Father! Let's leave!

SIMON: Don't worry, boys. Everything will be all right. *turns, stands his ground before First Soldier* Don't ask me to take the cross!

1<sup>ST</sup> SOLDIER: I'm not asking you. I'm telling you!

SIMON: But I'm a stranger in Jerusalem! I don't even know the prisoner. I'm Simon, a citizen of Cyrene!

1<sup>ST</sup> SOLDIER: *grabbing Simon's collar with one hand and placing the point of his spear at his throat with the other*

I don't care who you are!

I don't care where you came from!

And I don't care who you know, or don't know!

Pick up that cross!

*Drags Simon to C. F.*

*Wide-eyed, frightened boys dart away--toward Simon Peter, who puts his arms around them and gets them into a safe place. Women back away. Simon lifts up cross.*

1<sup>ST</sup> SOLDIER: Hurry up, now! And you wailing women shut up!

3<sup>RD</sup> SOLDIER: *to James and John.* You two guys! Get the prisoner on his feet and on up the hill!

*James and John help C. F. to stand, support him--one on either side--as the procession moves slowly forward. First Soldier moves to head of column.*

1<sup>ST</sup> SOLDIER: Moo-oo-o-ve, out!

*Simon of Cyrene walks, or staggers, for the cross is heavy, right behind First Soldier. Christ Figure, James and John come next and are urged along by Third Soldier. The Grieving followers are next. Fourth Soldier brings up rear. Women resume their weeping and wailing and keep up same even after they're off stage--to give the illusion that the procession is fading away.*

End of Scene 2

*Spotlight directs audience attention back to Salome, Zebedee, and Kish, at the boat. Salome continues her narrative.*

ZEBEDEE: Salome, you say this dreadful crucifixion was on that Friday morning?

SALOME: *slowly, sadly.* Yes; Nearly all day we watched him hang on the cross. It was dreadful. Sad. Sad. *shakes her head, wipes eyes*

But he didn't blame anybody.

He even prayed for the soldiers who pierced his side. He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

He spoke kind words to the thieves hanging there beside him.

And he spoke to his mother, Mary.

Then, he asked our John to take care of Mary.

Finally--it must have been about the middle of the afternoon--he cried out:  
"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

And then he died. *wipes eyes again*

ZEBEDEE: *much moved* Oh! My! My!

KISH: Ma'am, who got him down off that cross and buried him? Mister James and Mister John?

SALOME: Oh, no, Kish! The disciples had to flee! Hide from the authorities! So they wouldn't be arrested!

Two of Jesus' friends in Jerusalem buried him.

*Here, pantomime Scene 3 begins. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus enter with linen-wrapped "corpse"--as Mary Magdalene, Other Mary, Joanna and Salome-in-Jerusalem watch. And as Salome continues her narrative.*

One friend was a ruler named Joseph of Arimathea. And the other one was a secret follower named Nicodemus.

They bought fine linen and spices and buried him in a new tomb. It was in a garden. And some of us women slipped in to see where they laid him.

You see, our plan was that as soon as the Sabbath was passed, we'd go to the tomb and take more burial spices. That was the least we could do....*voice trails off*

*Pantomime, still in progress, goes on. After men place "corpse" in tomb they roll the stone across the entrance and leave, taking no notice of four women. Women whisper to each other, look at the tomb briefly, and hurry away.*

SALOME: The authorities posted a guard at the tomb. Two Roman soldiers--to watch, night and day.

*Enter soldiers. Take up positions on either side of tomb entrance.*

But, sometime in the night on Saturday night--we don't know just when--God sent angels!

*Angels enter.*

The soldiers were so frightened they fell over like dead men.

*Soldiers keel over.*

Of course as soon as they came to themselves they ran away!

*Soldiers scramble to their feet and flee. Angels roll away the stone and enter the tomb.*

Early in the morning on the first day of the week--long before daylight--we women went to the tomb to take the burial spices.

By we, I mean Cousin Joanna, the Other Mary, Mary Magdalene, and me....  
*voice trails off*

*Joanna, Other Mary, and Salome enter, carrying a lantern and the spices. They talk among themselves as they walk along.*

SALOME-in-Jerusalem: Where's Mary Magdalene? I thought she was coming with us.

JOANNA: She'll be along in a few minutes. *motions others to halt* I just thought of something. We're going to have a problem.

OTHER MARY: What, Joanna?

JOANNA: The stone! Who'll roll away the stone for us?

OTHER MARY: Oh, my! I had forgotten about that. That stone will be heavy. We should have asked some of the men to come with us.

SALOME-in-J.: Maybe we can manage somehow. Let's go ahead and try.

*Three move on toward tomb. Joanna is first to see the angels at the tomb.*

JOANNA: *crying out* Look! Angels!

*Women gasp with fright, start backing away.*

1<sup>ST</sup> ANGEL: Don't be afraid.

JOANNA: We-- We-- We brought burial spices, and--

2<sup>ND</sup> ANGEL: We know that you seek Jesus, who was crucified. But he is not here.

1<sup>ST</sup> ANGEL: He is risen!

*Women are amazed, beyond measure. They all speak at once, as follows:*

JOANNA: Risen? He's alive? How could that be?

OTHER MARY: You mean he's not dead now?

SALOME-in-J: Jesus is risen from the grave?

2<sup>ND</sup> ANGEL: Come see the place where the Lord lay. *beckons to women, leads them to the tomb. They look in.*

1<sup>ST</sup> ANGEL: Go quickly and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead!

JOANNA: We will! We'll tell them right away! *turns to other women* Let's go!

*Three start moving away*

2<sup>ND</sup> ANGEL: Say to the disciples that the Lord will meet them in Galilee. Lo, we have told you.

*Angels stand still until three leave, then exit. Three women meet Mary Magdalene, who is en route to the tomb. Only Other Mary stops long enough to speak with her.*

OTHER MARY: *grasping Mary Magdalene's arm* Mary Magdalene, he's not there!

MARY MAGDALENE: Where are you going?

OTHER MARY: To tell the disciples!

*Hurries on to catch up with companions. Women run on, leaving Mary Magdalene in garden. By this time angels have disappeared. Mary Magdalene runs to tomb, enters, comes right back out, much distressed.*

MARY MAGDALENE: *wiping her eyes, speaking to herself* Oh, they've taken my Lord away!

*As Mary M. walks slowly from tomb, she meets Christ Figure, whom she assumes is the gardener.*

MARY MAGDALENE: Oh, Sir! You are the gardener. Maybe you could tell me something, something I must know! They've taken my Lord away. Do you know where they laid him?

CHRIST FIGURE: Mary!

*Mary kneels at his feet for she recognizes his voice.*

MARY MAGDALENE: *astonished* Master! It's you! It's you!

CHRIST FIGURE: Yes, Mary.

MARY MAGDALENE: You are alive! Oh, Lord! My Lord!

CHRIST FIGURE: Go and tell my disciples that soon I will ascend to my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

*Helps M. M. to rise*

And tell them that I will meet them in Galilee, beside the sea--as I promised.

MARY MAGDALENE: *joyously* Yes, Master! I will! I'll tell them all. I know where they're hiding!

*M. M. leaves hurriedly. C. F. walks away, in the opposite direction.*

End of Scene 3

*Spotlight goes back to Salome, Zebedee, and Kish.*

ACT III--Scene 4

*Scene 4. Immediately after Scene 3, at Zebedee's boat. Salome has just finished telling Zebedee and Kish of the resurrection of the Christ, as it occurred while she was in Jerusalem. She finished her narrative with the appearance of the Christ to Mary Magdalene.*

ZEBEDEE: *getting to his feet and speaking with a mixture of relief, elation—sheer joy*

Now I know the truth!

My sons were right. I was wrong.

Jesus is the Son of God! The Christ!

*Turns to Salome and Kish*

Salome! Kish! Do you know what this means?

For the whole world! It means he has conquered death!

He--

KISH: *jumping to his feet and interrupting.* Master Zebedee! They're coming! It's Mister James and Mister John! And their friends!

*Zebedee and Salome turn quickly--to see James, John, Simon Peter, Andrew, Thomas, Philip, and Nathanael approaching.*

ZEBEDEE: *joyously* Yes! It's the boys! And Simon Peter! And Andrew! And Thomas! *turns to Salome* Do you know those other two?

SALOME: Yes. That's Philip and Nathanael. Oh, I'm so glad they're back from Jerusalem.

*Zebedee and Salome go to meet group*

ZEBEDEE: Boys! Simon Peter! Andrew! All of you! This is a blessed day! Salome just told me and Kish what happened in Jerusalem. I can't get over it! I-- I--

JOHN: Father, we've seen Jesus!

JAMES: Twice! He has appeared to us twice since his resurrection!

SIMON PETER: Yes, Zebedee, our Lord lives! We've all seen him. And he told Mary Magdalene he would meet us--here in Galilee!

ZEBEDEE: When?

SIMON PETER: We don't know when. But we will wait for him.

ZEBEDEE: Well, it's getting late. Come to our house for the night, and wait there.

SALOME: Yes, I'll fix supper--for all of you.

JOHN: Mother, we've made other plans. But maybe we'll eat breakfast with you.

SALOME: All right.

SIMON PETER: We all want to go fishing tonight. The Lord can find us on the sea--or anywhere.

*Turns to other disciples*

Do you all remember the night he walked on the water? And the night he calmed the storm?

*All disciples respond at the same time, some saying one thing, some another as follows:*

Philip: I'll never forget his walking on the water.

Andrew: Yes, we remember.

Nathanael: I remember that at the time we were so amazed!

James: We didn't know then that he was the Christ!

John: I'll never forget any of his miracles!

SIMON PETER: *turning to Zebedee and slapping him on the shoulder* Zebedee, come go with us! We haven't all fished together in a long time!

ZEBEDEE: *much pleased* Well, yes! I'll go fishing with you. It has been a long time--nearly three years. I'll take my boat.

SIMON PETER: No, come walk on around the bend and sail with us. My boats will be waiting, I'm sure. *turns to Kish* Kish, your legs are young and limber--run tell my hired fishermen to get all my boats ready. Tell 'em I said we're fishin' tonight!

KISH: *with delight* Yes, Sir, Mister Simon! *runs off*

*All men except Zebedee, James and John start leaving.*

ZEBEDEE: Salome, we'll all be back at daylight.

SALOME: Good, I'll have breakfast waiting at the house.

*Salome leaves. Zebedee, James and John hurry to catch up with others. They walk three abreast--Zebedee in the middle, with an arm across the shoulder of each son.*

#### End of Scene 4

#### Begin Scene 5

*Scene 5--Early the next morning, just at dawn. Not far from Zebedee's boat, which is tied up at his wharf on the Sea of Galilee. The Christ Figure is there, cooking fish over an open fire. He has brought bread and is waiting for his disciples. After he has turned two or three of the fish over, he begins to walk to and fro, slowly--looking up and praying as he walks.*

CHRIST FIGURE: *praying* Holy Father, I have so little time left now to be on earth, so little time to talk to my beloved few--my chosen ones.

Help me to tell them once again of love--your love, my love.

Father, "I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work which you gave me to do."...

My disciples have believed that you sent me, for "I gave them the words which you gave me."

Again, I pray for them, and not for them alone, but for "all who shall believe on me through their word."

Let "the love wherewith you have loved me be in them, and I in them." Amen.

*Note to players: Above prayer is based on the prayer of Jesus, as recorded in John 17.*

*All in fishing party enter. They halt momentarily when they see the Christ Figure.*

JAMES: *with excitement* That's our Lord! Isn't it?

JOHN: Yes, it's him!

OTHERS: *almost in unison* The Master!

CHRIST FIGURE: *calling* Come! Come over here, my Children! Come have breakfast!

*Disciples, Zebedee and Kish hurry to C. F., all showing great pleasure in seeing him. C. F. begins passing out fish as soon as they arrive.*

CHRIST FIGURE: Here, have some fish. Simon Peter, pass the bread.

*Simon Peter takes bread basket around. Each takes a cake of bread. Each takes some of the fish. Some sit down, some remain standing. C. F. continues to talk as he distributes fish.*

CHRIST FIGURE: Honorable Zebedee, did you catch many fish last night?

ZEBEDEE: No, Master. Not any.

SIMON PETER: We didn't even see a fish.

CHRIST FIGURE: After a while, I will show you where to cast your nets, and you will catch an abundance.

*Sits down.*

Now, once more, I want to talk to you about love. God's love.

Simon Peter, do you love me?

SIMON PETER: Oh, yes, Lord. I do.

CHRIST FIGURE: Then you must feed my sheep.

SIMON PETER: Feed your sheep?

CHRIST FIGURE: Yes, if you are sure you love me, feed my sheep.

SIMON PETER: Lord, I'm sure.

CHRIST FIGURE: Do you, Simon? And the rest of you? *waves hand to include whole group.* Do you love me more than all these things--the sea, the fish, the world? *gives sweep of the hand*

SIMON PETER: Oh, yes, Lord, you know we love you! *all murmur agreement*

CHRIST FIGURE: Then you are to feed the sheep of my pastures--when they turn astray and turn every one to his own way. For I have borne the iniquity of them all.

You are to continue in my love; for "as the Father has loved me, so have I loved you." *John 15:9*

Many times have I told you that you are to love one another, as I have loved you. This do.

You are to go into the whole world, teaching my word, my love--so that all may know life eternal in the only true God, and in Jesus Christ, whom he has sent.

You are witnesses of all these things.

Come, now. Come walk with me. And talk with me.

And be not afraid. I will be with you, always.

*All except Zebedee and Kish quietly follow Christ Figure off stage.*

ZEBEDEE: Kish?

KISH: Yes, Master Zebedee?

ZEBEDEE: Kish, Madam Salome is waiting at our house. And I'm sure she has prepared breakfast. Go tell her that we had breakfast with Jesus the Christ.

KISH: Yes, Sir.

ZEBEDEE: And tell her that I will be home, after a while.

KISH: Yes, Sir. *leaves*

*Zebedee goes down toward his boat, to talk to the sea.*

ZEBEDEE: *leaning against his boat and looking out toward the sea* Ah, old Heart-Shaped Sea of Galilee, I have something to say to you.

When I was a child, I heard the legend that God made you like the heart of a man. But I never heard why. *Pause* Now, I know. It was to show His love.

O Sea of Galilee, you are the most fortunate sea in all the world--not because your shape is like the heart of a man, but because *slowly, now this day, the Son of God, the Risen Christ, walked along your shores!*

And, O Sea of Galilee, I am the most fortunate man in all the world. The Son of God, the Risen Christ, chose my two sons to walk with Him.

*Zebedee stands silent for a second or so, then turns and leaves--going toward his home.*

END OF PLAY

-- Jewell Ellen Smith  
28 January, 1983

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