

Teachers of the law confront Jesus

CHARACTERS: 20, (Doubling and tripling possible) Woman 1, 2, 3; Bartholomew, Phillip, Demon, Alexander, Annas, Caiaphas, Jesus, Peter, Andrew; Voice of Moses, Voice of Isaiah, ALL

James (brother of Jesus), Man (non speaking)

SETTING: Israel, time of Christ

SCRIPTURE/BASED ON: Mark 3, 5, 6 & 7

Before you read: Based on passages in Acts and John get a feel for the characters in opposition to Jesus. Decide the various degrees of opposition – from most opposed to least so you have a contrast in characters.

Read Acts 4:1The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. 2They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. 3They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. 5The next day the rulers, elders and teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. 6 Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the other men of the high priest's family.

John 3:1 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. 2He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him."

John 7:45Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, who asked them, "Why didn't you bring him in?" 46"No one ever spoke the way this man does," the guards declared. (in the script the guards are named Eliab and Amos) 47"You mean he has deceived you also?" the Pharisees retorted. 48"Has any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him? 49No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law—there is a curse on them." 50Nicodemus, who had gone to Jesus earlier and who was one of their own number, asked, 51"Does our law condemn anyone without first hearing him to find out what he is doing?"

John 18:10 Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.)

A Sabbath Healing

An old theater saying is "There are no small parts, only small actors." Man is a non speaking part but can still play an important role. Brainstorm some ideas what could have caused the man's hand to have a shriveled appearance. Stroke, accident? How would having only one hand affect the way he went about everyday tasks? What occupations would be out of the question?

To prepare for the role, pick a period of time from an hour to a day. During that time carry something in one hand or bandage your fingers into a fist. How did having this disability affect you?

PETER: Jesus went into the synagogue, and a man with a shriveled hand was there.

PHILIP: Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus.

ALEXANDER: Watch him closely to see if he will heal him on the Sabbath.

JESUS: Stand up in front of everyone. (*MAN stands*)

JESUS: Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?

PETER: They remained silent. Jesus looked around at them in anger.

PHILIP: He was deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts

JESUS: Stretch out your hand.

PETER: The man stretched it out

WOMAN 3: Did you see that? His hand is completely restored!

CAIAPHAS: Come on. Let us plot with the Herodians to see how we might kill Jesus.

Crowds Follow Jesus

PETER: Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake.

ANDREW: A large crowd from Galilee followed.

PETER: When they heard all he was doing, many people came to him from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and the regions across the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon.

BARTHOLOMEW: There's a big crowd, master.

PHILLIP: You have healed many and now those with diseases are pushing forward to touch you.

JESUS: Go and get a small boat ready for me, to keep the people from crowding me.

ANDREW: Whenever the evil spirits saw him, they fell down before him.

DEMON: You are the Son of God.

JESUS: (*commanding voice*) Do not to tell who I am.

Jesus and Beelzebub

PETER: Then Jesus entered a house

WOMAN 1: Look, a crowd has gathered

WOMAN 2: Jesus and his disciples aren't even able to eat.

ALEXANDER: Here come members of his family to take charge of him.

JAMES (*the brother of Jesus*): He is out of his mind.

PHILIP: And the teachers of the law who came down from Jerusalem said

ALEXANDER: (*accusing, smugly*) He is possessed by Beelzebub

CAIAPHAS: (*contemptuous*) By the prince of demons he is driving out demons.

PETER: So Jesus called them and spoke to them in parables:

JESUS: How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

ALL: If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

JESUS: And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. In fact, no one can enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man.

ALL: Then he can rob his house.

JESUS: I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them. But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven;

ALL: he is guilty of an eternal sin.

ANNAS: (*to ALEXANDER*) He said this because we said he has an evil spirit.

Jesus' Mother and Brothers

PHILIP: Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived.

PETER: Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him.

PHILIP: A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him

WOMAN 1: Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.

JESUS: Who are my mother and my brothers?

PETER: Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said

JESUS: Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother.

A Prophet without Honor from Mark 6

ANDREW: Jesus left there and went to his hometown, accompanied by his disciples.

NARR: When the Sabbath came, he began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard him were amazed.

WOMAN 1: Where did this man get these things?

WOMAN 2: What's this wisdom that has been given him, that he even does miracles!

WOMAN 1: Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon?

WOMAN 3: Aren't his sisters here with us?

PETER: And they took offense at him.

JESUS: Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor.

ANDREW: He could not do any miracles there, except lay his hands on a few sick people and heal them.

PETER: And he was amazed at their lack of faith.

Clean and Unclean from Mark 7

Before you begin: What are some reasons people think they are superior to others? How do these people act towards those they think are beneath them? What tones of voice do they use? How do they hold their head? Body?

PETER: The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered around Jesus

ANDREW: They saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were "unclean," that is, unwashed.

CAIAPHAS: (*haughty, snobbish*) We Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless we give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders.

ALEXANDER: (*superior*) When we come from the marketplace we do not eat unless we wash.

ANNAS: (*aloof*) We observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles.

ANDREW: So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus

ANNAS: Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with 'unclean' hands?

JESUS: Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written:

VOICE OF ISAIAH: These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.

JESUS: You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men.

ANNAS, CAIAPHAS and ALEXANDER *should react as if they are insulted Jesus would speak to someone "superior" to him.*

JESUS: You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe ^{your} own traditions! For Moses said

VOICE OF MOSES: Honor your father and your mother. Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.

JESUS: But you say that if a man says to his father or mother:

ALEXANDER: (*condescendingly*) Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is Corban.

ANNAS: That is, a gift devoted to God

JESUS: (*disgusted*) Then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother. Thus, you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.

PETER: Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said

JESUS: Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. Nothing outside a man can make him 'unclean' by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him 'unclean.'

ANDREW: After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable.

JESUS: Are you so dull? Don't you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him 'unclean'? For it doesn't go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body.

ANDREW: In saying this, Jesus declared all foods "clean."

PETER: He went on.

JESUS: What comes out of a man is what makes him 'unclean.' For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery,

ALL: greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy,

JESUS: slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man 'unclean.'