

PIECING IT ALL TOGETHER

by Beth Troop



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Piecing It All Together

A youth sunrise service

by Beth Troop

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Speaker 1

Speaker 2

Speaker 3

Speaker 4

Speaker 5

Speaker 6

Speaker 7

Speaker 8

Speaker 9

Speaker 10

Reader 1

Reader 2

Reader 3

Reader 4

Reader 5

Reader 6

Reader 7

Reader 8

PRODUCTION NOTES

Run Time: 20 minutes

Props

Seven pieces of construction paper or cardboard to use as a sign, each with one of the following letters on it: H, E, L, I, V, E, S, and one with an exclamation point. The letters and exclamation point need to be large and dark enough to be seen several feet away. You will also need 8 ½" x 11" photocopies of each Speaker's part.

Costumes

Participants may wear contemporary clothing. No special costumes required.

Set

A cross and two microphones – one for the Speakers and one for the Readers – should be positioned at the front. The microphone used by the Readers should be to the side so the audience is able to clearly see the Speakers as they line up.

Cast

If there are not enough presenters to fill each role with a different person, one Speaker could do two consecutive parts at a time in order to keep the letters in order. The number of Readers could range from one to eight.

Preparation

Copy each Speaker's part on an 8 ½" x 11" piece of paper, and staple it to the top of each piece of construction paper or cardboard that contains a letter or exclamation point so the speaking part covers the top the letter. After reading the assigned part, each Speaker will then flip the top paper over so it's on the back and the letter continues to face the Speaker. The Speaker takes his/her place in front of the cross, lining up after speaking. At the appointed time, all Speakers will turn their letters around toward the audience, spelling out "HE LIVES!"

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(Each **SPEAKER**, except **SPEAKERS 9 and 10**, lines up in front of the cross after reading his/her part. **SPEAKERS** should line up from right to left as they face the audience so that the signs will read from left to right for the audience. **SPEAKER 1** enters.)

SPEAKER 1: (From microphone, with enthusiasm) “**This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it**” (Psalm 118: 24). (Stands in front of the cross, starting a line with letter *H* facing inward. **READER 1** enters.)

READER 1: (From microphone) “**Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, ‘If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.’ Jesus answered him, ‘It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone.’**”

Then the devil led him up and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And the devil said to him, “To you I will give their glory and all this authority; for it has been given over to me, and I give it to anyone I please. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.” Jesus answered him, “It is written, “Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.”

Then the devil took him to Jerusalem, and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, saying to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, for it is written, “He will command his angels concerning you, to protect you,” and “On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against the stone.” Jesus answered him, “It is said, “Do not put the Lord your God to the test.” When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time” (Luke 4:1-4, 9-12). (**READER 1** exits. **READERS** leave after they say their parts. They do not line up with the **SPEAKERS** but along the side or at the back, whichever works best for the venue, until the point at which all **SPEAKERS** and **READERS** speak in unison. **SPEAKER 2** enters.)

SPEAKER 2: *(From microphone)* Before he began his earthly ministry, Jesus spent forty days fasting in the desert while Satan tempted him with food, power, and prestige. But Jesus was committed to his purpose for becoming human and kept his focus on his heavenly Father. He sought the strength of God to overcome temptation and fulfill God's mission for him here on earth. Satan failed; Jesus prevailed. Praise God! *(Stands in front of the cross with page flipped over and letter E facing inward, to the left of SPEAKER 1. READER 2 enters.)*

READER 2: *(From microphone)* "When [Jesus] entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him as he was teaching, and said, 'By what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?' Jesus said to them, 'I will also ask you one question; if you tell me the answer, then I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. Did the baptism of John come from heaven, or was it of human origin?' And they argued with one another, 'If we say, "from heaven," he will say to us, "why then did you not believe him?" But if we say, "Of human origin," we are afraid of the crowd; for all regard John as a prophet.' So they answered Jesus, 'We do not know.' And he said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things' " *(Matthew 21:23-27)*. "Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas, and they conspired to arrest Jesus by stealth and kill him" *(Matthew 26:3-4)*. *(READER 2 exits. SPEAKER 3 enters.)*

SPEAKER 3: *(From microphone)* Jesus challenged the established religious authority. As a result, religious leaders questioned his actions and looked for ways to arrest him. Because the crowds who listened to Jesus kept growing in number, the leaders felt Jesus' message of love, displayed through justice, mercy, and humility, undermined their power and the many laws they required people to obey. Jesus made it clear that God's love was available to everyone, regardless of social

standing or cultural origins. (*Stands in front of the cross with page flipped over and letter L facing inward, to the left of*
SPEAKER 2. Allow a little more room here so that when they
hold up their letters at the end, there will be a space between the
two words. READER 3 enters.)

READER 3: (*From microphone*) “As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea — for they were fishermen. And he said to them: ‘Follow me, and I will make you fish for people.’ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him” (*Matthew 4:18-22*).

“As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, ‘Follow me.’ And he got up and followed him” (*Matthew 9:9*).

“These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him” (*Matthew 10: 2-4*). (*READER 3 exits. SPEAKER 4 enters.*)

SPEAKER 4: (*From microphone*) A group of often misguided disciples followed and befriended Jesus, listening to his teachings but never quite understanding his true purpose. Jesus told and explained many parables related to the kingdom of God, performed miracles, and sent out the disciples to proclaim the Good News and heal the sick. Yet even after all the time they spent with Jesus, many of the disciples still thought he planned to conquer the Romans in the end. But Jesus had been born in order to reconcile humankind with God.

Though the disciples abandoned Jesus when he was arrested, Jesus stayed true to his course. Later, after his disciples more fully understood what Jesus had told them and received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, they began to spread Jesus' message all over the known world, something we are commissioned to continue today. *(Stands in front of the cross with page flipped over and letter I facing inward, to the left of SPEAKER 3. READER 4 enters.)*

READER 4: *(From microphone)* "Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.' He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. Then he said to them, 'I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.' And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.' Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, 'So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' Again he went away for the second time and prayed, 'My father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.' Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. Then he came to the disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going'" *(Matthew 26: 36-46a)*. *(READER 4 exits. SPEAKER 5 enters.)*

SPEAKER 5: *(From microphone)* In one of his darkest hours, Jesus submitted to his Father's will. Being human, he likely was as tired as his friends who could not keep their eyes open. Unlike the disciples, however, he had a clear vision of what was to come, and he knew he

needed the Father's strength to sustain him physically and spiritually. Though we cannot see beyond our current trials, Jesus' actions remind us that we can overcome our fears and anxieties when we submit to God's will through him, our Savior. (*Stands in front of the cross with page flipped over and letter V facing inward, to the left of SPEAKER 4. READER 5 enters.*)

READER 5: (*From microphone*) "Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered ... Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so they might put him to death" (*Matthew 26: 57, 59*).

"Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's headquarters, and they gathered the whole cohort around him. They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and after twisting some thorns into a crown, they put it on his head. They put a reed in his right hand and knelt before him and mocked him, saying, 'Hail, King of the Jews!' They spat on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. After mocking him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him. Then they led him away to crucify him" (*Matthew 27: 27-31*). (*READER 5 exits. SPEAKER 6 enters.*)

SPEAKER 6: (*From microphone*) Jesus suffered through an unjust trial, ridicule, flogging, and beatings to redeem us from our sins. He allowed himself to be hung on a cross, nails driven through his hands and feet, because his love knew no bounds. Yet even to the end he sought forgiveness over vengeance. As his breathing on the cross became more labored, he prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing" (*Luke 23: 34*). By his actions, he reminds us that no one is beyond the reach of God's forgiveness. (*Stands in front of the cross with page flipped over and letter E facing inward, to the left of SPEAKER 5. READER 6 enters.*)

READER 6: (*From microphone*) "When it was evening, there

1 came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who
 2 was also a disciple of Jesus. He went to Pilate and asked
 3 for the body of Jesus; then Pilate ordered it to be given
 4 to him. So Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a
 5 clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb, which
 6 he had hewn in the rock. He then rolled a great stone to
 7 the door of the tomb and went away” (*Matthew 27: 57-60*).

8 “The next day, that is, after the day of Preparation,
 9 the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before
 10 Pilate and said, ‘Sir, we remember what that impostor
 11 said while he was still alive, “After three days I will rise
 12 again.” Therefore command the tomb to be made secure
 13 until the third day; otherwise, his disciples may go and
 14 steal him away, and tell the people, “He has been raised
 15 from the dead,” and the last deception would be worse
 16 than the first.’ Pilate said to them, ‘You have a guard of
 17 soldiers; go, make it as secure as you can.’ So they went
 18 with the guard and made the tomb secure by sealing the
 19 stone” (*Matthew 27: 62-66*).

20 “After the Sabbath, as the first day of the week was
 21 dawning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to
 22 see the tomb. And suddenly there was a great
 23 earthquake; for an angel of the Lord, descending from
 24 heaven, came and rolled back the stone and sat on it.
 25 His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing
 26 white as snow. For fear of him the guards shook and
 27 became like dead men” (*Matthew 28: 1-4*). (*READER 6 exits.*
 28 *SPEAKER 7 enters.*)

29 **SPEAKER 7:** (*From microphone*) When Jesus died, his body
 30 was laid in a tomb. A large stone was rolled across it.
 31 Later, at the request of Jewish leaders, the stone was
 32 sealed, and armed guards were posted to prevent Jesus’
 33 followers from trying to steal Jesus’ body. Yet in spite of
 34 these precautions, on the third day an angel of the Lord
 35 rolled away the stone, for Jesus had risen from the
 36 dead. The well-trained guards fainted with fear at such
 37 an awesome sight! At that point, Jesus overcame sin
 38 and death and by his grace paved the way for everyone



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