

THE TATE FAMILY

by Joanne Owens



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The Tate Family

A stewardship skit for Laity Day

by JOANNE OWENS

CAST OF CHARACTERS

MEN

Grandpa Tate
 Dick Tate
 Ro Tate
 Vege Tate
 Devas Tate
 Facili Tate
 Cogi Tate
 Levi Tate
 Orien Tate

WOMEN

Hesi Tate
 Imi Tate
 Irri Tate
 Agi Tate
 Medi Tate
 Capaci Tate
 Resusci Tate
 Mu Tate

PRODUCTION NOTES

No special costumes, props or staging are necessary. Each character wears an oversized (at least 8½" x 11") name tag with his or her name printed in letters large enough to be read by the audience.

GRANDPA TATE is Onstage throughout the skit. Other characters do not enter until time for their lines to be spoken, but after their speeches, they remain Onstage until the end of the production.

The Tate family members may be male or female according to the participants available. Their attitudes are certainly not a factor of gender.

There's no harm in the actors playing their role for comedy effect. The message may be better carried with laughter.

THE TATE FAMILY

1 GRANDPA TATE: My name is Grandpa Tate. I'm about
2 to introduce you to my family. I had two sons — two
3 boys who were as different as night and day. One
4 always gave me a lot of trouble, and the other was as
5 easy to get along with as could be. Both my boys had
6 eight children. All sixteen of my grandchildren are
7 grown up now, and they're all church members. But
8 I'll be the first to admit that some are better church
9 members than others. I want you to meet them now.
10 I'll bet you already know some of them. First, there's
11 my grandson, Dick. (*Enter DICK TATE.*)

12 DICK TATE: Hello, my name is Dick Tate. I'm a natural-
13 born leader. Some people even say I like to dominate
14 everything in the church. I'll have to admit I do get
15 upset if things don't go my way. But believe me, I'm
16 always in favor of new projects and programs — as long
17 as I thought them up and can run them to suit
18 myself. You see, nobody does it better than I do —
19 whatever it is. Frankly, if I can't play first fiddle, I
20 won't play at all. (*Enter RO TATE.*)

21 RO TATE: I'm Dick's brother, Ro Tate. I'm really never
22 satisfied in any church. I was a Baptist for a while,
23 but things didn't go to suit me at the Baptist church,
24 so I became a Methodist. After I'd been in that
25 church a year or so, they got a new preacher. I didn't
26 like his style, so I went to the Presbyterian church.
27 To tell the truth, I'm not too happy as a Presbyterian.
28 Confidentially, I got my feelings hurt when they left
29 me off an important committee I thought I should
30 have been on. I think I'll try the Episcopal church
31 next. (*Enter HESI TATE.*)

32 HESI TATE: My name is Hesi Tate. Unlike my brother,
33 Ro, I don't like change. Why can't people understand
34 that we should do things as we have always done
35 them? I quiver at the thought of the new ideas that

1 some people have. They're just roo risky for me. I
2 like the comfort and security that comes with
3 tradition. I'm not at all impressed by the newcomers
4 we've been getting in our congregation lately. I doubt
5 if they have the kind of background we're accustomed
6 to. To be perfectly blunt about it, I'm a bit suspicious
7 of new people and their strange ways. I always say
8 " haste makes waste; you can't be too careful; look
9 before you leap; and don't stick your neck out."

10 *(Enter VEGE TATE.)*

11 VEGE TATE: Let me introduce myself. I'm Vege Tate.
12 I've been a church member almost all my life, but I'd
13 appreciate it if the preacher and members wouldn't
14 bother me. I like having my name on the church roll.
15 It enhances my respectability and will be a nice
16 addition to my obituary, but I don't intend for my
17 church membership to interfere with my lifestyle. I
18 really can't be bothered with attendance at services
19 or participation in any activities. I'm perfectly content
20 to sit, be comfortable, and do nothing. Please do not
21 disturb me. *(Enter IMI TATE.)*

22 IMI TATE: Hi there. I'm Vege's sister, Imi Tate. I think
23 the church could learn a lot from other institutions.
24 We should look at the world around us and pattern
25 ourselves after the most successful organizations we
26 can find. For instance, if the church were more
27 exclusive — like the country club — it would be
28 more of an honor to belong, and people would be
29 knocking the door down to get in. We could also
30 learn a few things from business and marketing experts.
31 I think we need to use a multi-level sales technique
32 in our efforts to encourage participation. And another
33 thing — why don't we assess members a stated amount
34 of membership dues — like maybe a percentage of
35 their income from their 1040 forms. It would be so

1 much more efficient than Stewardship Emphasis
2 Week. Let's be practical. The church is a social and
3 business organization, and it should be run that way
4 if it's going to be successful. (*Enter DEVAS TATE.*)

5 DEVAS TATE: They call me Devas Tate. I suppose some
6 people would say I have an acid tongue because I
7 say exactly what's on my mind. After all, why be
8 hypocritical and act sweet and syrupy? Folks think
9 I'm negative — always pouring cold water on new
10 proposals. But listen, somebody has to be realistic
11 enough to point out the dark side of things. I believe
12 in calling a spade a spade, even when people get their
13 feelings hurts. After all, it's not my fault that some
14 folks are sensitive. (*Enter IRRI TATE.*)

15 IRRI TATE: My name is Irri Tate. I can't stand it when
16 things are running smoothly. That's so boring! I like
17 to keep things stirred up. It's very easy to do. I
18 simply needle everyone about everything and remind
19 people of others' shortcomings. It takes only a few
20 phone calls to spread feelings of spitefulness and
21 resentment among the congregation. You'd be
22 amazed how easy it is to cause disunity in the church.
23 Most folks fall right into the trap. (*Enter AGI TATE.*)

24 AGI TATE: Hello, I'm Agi Tate. I love to gossip. It's more
25 fun! You might think I'm nosy, but actually I just
26 have an inquiring mind. I like to know everybody's
27 business, and I try to keep others well informed on
28 interesting tidbits of news. Someday soon when you
29 have time, I'll tell you the latest story on the
30 preacher. You won't believe it!

31 GRANDPA TATE: So far you've met only half of my
32 grandchildren. Don't get too upset about the Tate
33 family, because we have a better side to us. I want
34 you to meet the other side of the family now. First,
35 there's my grandson, Facili. (*Enter FACILI TATE.*)

1 FACILI TATE: Hi. Yes, I'm Facili Tate. I like to help
 2 get things done at the church. I've always told the
 3 preacher to call on me, and if I can possibly be of
 4 service, I will. It doesn't matter who gets the credit.
 5 The important thing is to serve the Lord by serving
 6 his people through the church. It's a privilege and
 7 pleasure to help advance God's kingdom by boosting
 8 up his workers and cooperating with them in furthering
 9 the work of the church. (*Enter COGI TATE.*)

10 COGI TATE: My name is Cogi Tate. I like to think through
 11 problems and issues before I make a comment or
 12 decision on them. I find that by pondering situations
 13 and using reason, I can avoid hasty and hurtful words
 14 or actions. I figure the Lord intended for us to use
 15 our brains, or he wouldn't have given them to us.
 16 It's been my experience that wise actions most often
 17 result when we calmly mull over questions and
 18 handle them in a mature, Christian manner. (*Enter*
 19 *MEDI TATE.*)

20 MEDI TATE: They call me Medi Tate. I've always been
 21 close to Cogi Tate. I agree with his outlook, and I'm
 22 sure he agrees with me on the importance of prayer
 23 and meditation. Through daily devotions and a
 24 prayerful attitude, I find it easier to be open to
 25 God's will in every situation. Over the years, I've
 26 discovered that life is more joyful when we focus our
 27 thoughts on God and wait on him in all situations.
 28 (*Enter CAPACI TATE.*)

29 CAPACI TATE: I'm Capaci Tate. I'm not really a leader,
 30 and I don't seem to have any outstanding talents in
 31 the eyes of the world. But the Lord has blessed
 32 me with a good income, and I'm in a position to
 33 contribute financially to the church. I feel I can
 34 serve God not only in attendance and participation,
 35 but by giving generously to enable the work of

1 the Lord to move forward. (*Enter RESUSCI TATE.*)

2 RESUSCI TATE: My name is Resusci Tate. Did you know
3 that enthusiasm is extremely contagious? When people
4 get apathetic about God's work, I take it upon myself
5 to be more enthusiastic than usual, and before I
6 know it, those around me become excited about the
7 programs and projects of the church. I think living
8 the Christian life is thrilling, and I like to let people
9 see how excited I am about it. It's great to be a
10 part of the Christian fellowship in our church. Every
11 day brings new challenges and rewards. Isn't that
12 exciting?! (*Enter MU TATE.*)

13 MU TATE: Mu Tate is my name. You see, I'm a new
14 creation — completely changed. Some people call it
15 being born again. Since I became a Christian and an
16 active church member, I have found that I continue
17 to change. I grow a little every day. This growth is
18 a result of serious Bible study, prayer and association
19 with other Christians. Growth is not always easy,
20 but it is totally rewarding. (*Enter LEVI TATE.*)

21 LEVI TATE: Levi Tate is what they call me. I have found
22 that the Christian experience is a continually uplifting
23 one. I try to keep my mind and heart on a high
24 plane, and that lifts my spirits during difficult times.
25 I lift others up in prayer to God, and I feel myself
26 held up in the loving, sustaining strength of the Lord
27 when others pray for me. To me, Christianity and
28 church membership mean supporting one another —
29 lifting up one another — in many different ways.
30 (*Enter ORIEN TATE.*)

31 ORIEN TATE: I'm Orien Tate. Like my other fellow
32 Christians, I'm far from perfect. We all have lots of
33 faults and problems. But still, I find real joy in
34 living the Christian life. The secret is keeping Christ
35 in the center of my life. I've found that true

1 freedom and happiness come not in choosing a
2 destination, but a direction. The direction I have
3 chosen is the Christian way. Like other Christians, I
4 keep on course through prayer, Bible study, worship
5 and active participation in the life of the church.

6 GRANDPA TATE: Well, you've met both sides of the
7 Tate family — good and bad. Now, if you'll promise
8 to keep this confidential, I'll let you in on a little
9 secret. We're kinfolks. That's right — we're all related.
10 Did you know that you have some Tate family blood
11 in you? Everybody does. The big question is,
12 which side of the family are you on?
13

14 *The End*
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29 *NOTE: The numerals running vertically down the left*
30 *margin of each page of dialogue are for the convenience*
31 *of the director. With these, he/she may easily direct*
32 *attention to a specific passage.*
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34
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by Joanne Owens.

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