

# PUPPET PLAYS FOR HOLIDAYS

*by Sam Gover*



CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS

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# **PUPPET PLAYS FOR HOLIDAYS**

Six puppet sketches for special days

**by Sam Gover**

## ***PRODUCTION NOTES***

### **TECHNICAL STUFF:**

You do not need a puppet stage to perform these sketches. We have a puppet stage which we use for vacation Bible school and special shows. But when the script involves just one human and two puppets, we use a wall in the chancel area for the puppets to pop out of. It's simple and it works.

I wrote these pieces with the children in my church in mind. In our church we invite the children down to the chancel area and ask them to sit on the floor or the steps. It's best when they sit because they are then less likely to get fidgety and the adults will be able to see better.

Be aware that the human is the straight man/woman for the puppets. In the dominion of puppets, you must do their bidding. They get the laughs, but the human gets to make the points.

Given the nature of the skits, the human involved must be willing to look...how can I put this..."slightly out of the information loop." The puppets have access to a world of knowledge which is not open to human entry.

The human will usually begin each skit optimistically, become frustrated at the puppets, then bring resolution to the frustration by talking about the issue in question.

You may design and construct your own puppets or purchase them at a toy store. "Howard" and "Thelma," the puppet characters in dialog with the "Minister" in these scripts can be animal or people characters. How they appear is less important than their individual personalities—they are "puppets" and live and act as puppets do. They are brash, happy and exist in their own world. That's the fun of it.

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**Valentine's Day, Love, Science Fiction  
and Stuff Like That**

*(Valentine's Day)*

**CAST:** Minister, Howard, Thelma.

**MINISTER:** Since Valentine's Day is just around the corner, I thought that we should talk about love today. There are lots of definitions of what love is. Do you know any?  
*(Pause)* Sometimes people think that if you love someone you have to spend lots of money on them to show it. I read about a husband last year who wanted to show how much he loved his wife, so he rented a plane and flew a huge banner over the beach. The banner stated, "Margie, I love you."

**HOWARD:** That was Rupert P. Charleston.

**MINISTER:** You know him?

**HOWARD:** Sure. He's famous.

**MINISTER:** For flying that banner?

**HOWARD:** Yeah, that and also because he was caught up in a chrono-synclastic-infundibulum.

**MINISTER:** A what?

**HOWARD:** A chrono-synclastic-infundibulum.

**MINISTER:** What's that?

**HOWARD:** That's where you exist in all places and at all times, but not all at once. So you might be a sheik in Arabia one minute, and then a coal miner in West Virginia the next.

**MINISTER:** That's ridiculous. There's no such thing.

**HOWARD:** It's true. He was standing next to a power generator on the beach in Corpus Christi, Texas. There was a freak power surge and BAM! he was knocked around in time and space. BAM! he wasn't there, and BAM! then he was.

**MINISTER:** Forget it.

**HOWARD:** And BAM! then he wasn't, and then BAM! there he

1           was again.

2   **MINISTER:** Drop it.

3   **HOWARD:** You're the one who brought it up. You said Rupert  
4           P. Charleston flew a banner over —

5   **MINISTER:** Drop it! Let's introduce our friend, Thelma. She's  
6           a bit more logical. Hello, Thelma.

7   **THELMA:** Hello.

8   **MINISTER:** Since this is so close to Valentine's Day, I thought  
9           we'd talk about love.

10   **THELMA:** That's a wonderful subject.

11   **MINISTER:** Well, I think so, too, and I was trying earlier to  
12           make a point with Howard about how far some people  
13           will go to prove their love. And the point I wanted to  
14           make was that to show your love, you don't need to spend  
15           a lot of money or wait until special days. I remember  
16           reading about a guy who rented a plane and flew a  
17           banner behind him which read, "I love you, Margie."

18   **HOWARD:** It was "Margie, I love you."

19   **MINISTER:** Whatever.

20   **HOWARD:** You ought to get your story straight.

21   **MINISTER:** The point I'm trying to make is that he went to  
22           great expense to proclaim his love.

23   **THELMA:** He certainly did.

24   **MINISTER:** And I'll bet his wife was very happy.

25   **THELMA:** Not really.

26   **MINISTER:** Why do you say that? Wouldn't you be happy if  
27           your husband did that for you?

28   **THELMA:** No, I would not.

29   **MINISTER:** Because of the expense, right?

30   **THELMA:** No. Because my name is not Margie.

31   **MINISTER:** No, I'm saying if he used your name.

32   **THELMA:** Oh, yes, then I would like that; I think that would  
33           be rather sweet.

34   **MINISTER:** So why don't you think Margie liked it? Because  
35           of the expense, right?

- 1     **THELMA:** Oh, I'm sure Margie loved it.  
2     **MINISTER:** You just said his wife didn't like it.  
3     **THELMA:** That's right.  
4     **MINISTER:** Oh, you mean...  
5     **THELMA:** Margie was the woman he was engaged to back in  
6         1823 in Saskatchewan, Canada.  
7     **MINISTER:** Wait a minute — that's over one hundred seventy  
8         years ago.  
9     **THELMA:** Well, you are talking about that man who was  
10        caught up in the chrono-synclastic-infundibulum, aren't  
11        you?  
12    **HOWARD:** I tried to tell him, but he wouldn't listen to me.  
13    **THELMA:** When one is in a chrono-synclastic-infundibulum  
14        it's difficult to remember which century one is in. Poor  
15        Rupert couldn't remember whether he was engaged to  
16        Margie or married to Maureen.  
17    **HOWARD:** Or whether he lived in Texas or Saskatchewan.  
18    **MINISTER:** Oh, forget it, forget it.  
19    **HOWARD:** 'Cause BAM! you're someplace one minute, and  
20        BAM! you're someplace else the next.  
21    **MINISTER:** Let's forget it!  
22    **THELMA:** Well, you're the one who brought it up. Don't go  
23        getting upset with us.  
24    **MINISTER:** I just wanted to use it as an example.  
25    **THELMA:** Well, you ought not to use such a confusing and  
26        famous example like Rupert.  
27    **HOWARD:** Yeah, not many people in the congregation can  
28        relate to a person in the terrifying and mind-numbing  
29        midst of a chrono-synclastic-infundibulum.  
30    **MINISTER:** I think I can. Let's just go on. What I was getting  
31        at was that some people go to great lengths to show their  
32        love for other people. They rent planes or have fancy  
33        parties, or take expensive vacations.  
34    **HOWARD:** Or fly through the rings of Saturn on a duo-deluxe  
35        power pod coupe headed for the nearest nebula. *(Pause)*



1           Rupert did that one hundred twenty-four years from now.  
2   **ALL:** Chrono-synclastic-infundibulum.  
3   **MINISTER:** Yeah, I know. The point is that you show your love  
4           best by how you live every day. People aren't as  
5           enchanted by diamonds and vacations as they are by  
6           everyday acts of kindness and love. Love is best  
7           expressed in actions like making breakfast for someone,  
8           or writing someone an encouraging letter; helping out  
9           with the chores at home, even before you're asked. Many  
10          little acts of love make so much more of a difference than  
11          one or two large and expensive acts.  
12   **THELMA:** That's right; I'd much rather have a candlelight  
13          dinner for two at home once or twice a week than a trip  
14          to Hawaii, although I wouldn't mind the trip to Hawaii,  
15          too.  
16   **MINISTER:** Right. Thank you. What I am requesting is that we  
17          try to practice Valentine's Day all year round. Make every  
18          day a day for doing loving and kind acts for other people,  
19          even little things like sharing a toy or helping a new kid  
20          out in school will make a big difference. OK?  
21   **HOWARD:** And make sure if you fly a banner that you get the  
22          right name on it, too.  
23   **MINISTER:** That's not the point at all.  
24   **HOWARD:** Well, it's a pertinent sub-point.  
25   **MINISTER:** Good-bye. Just try to love everyone you can. Let  
26          us pray now.  
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# The Lenten Cue

(Lent)

**CAST:** Minister, Howard, Thelma.

**PROPS:** A script or stapled sheets of paper.

**MINISTER:** *(Alone, facing children)* Today is the first Sunday in Lent. Do you know what Lent is? *(Waits for responses.)* It's a forty-day period before Easter. Lent is a time in which we prepare for the wonderful celebration of Easter, which is the day Jesus was resurrected from the dead. Lent is a time we can use to remember sins maybe we have forgotten, and repent. In fact, Howard and Thelma have a little skit about sin, and they're going to act it out.

**THELMA:** *(Comes onto stage.)* Am I supposed to come out now?

**MINISTER:** Yes, that was your cue.

**THELMA:** What's a cue?

**MINISTER:** A cue is a signal or a hint for someone to begin a speech or an action.

**THELMA:** Oh.

**HOWARD:** *(Comes onto stage.)* Was I supposed to come out, too?

**MINISTER:** Yes, that was your cue as well.

**HOWARD:** Oh. What's a cue?

**MINISTER:** It's a sign to begin something which will be finished later.

**HOWARD:** All right.

**MINISTER:** Go ahead and try it again. Ready?

**HOWARD:** Ready. *(Leaves.)*

**THELMA:** Ready. *(Leaves.)*

**MINISTER:** *(Pauses. Looks to audience.)* In fact, Howard and Thelma have a little skit about sin and they are going to act it out.

**THELMA:** *(Comes onto stage.)* Was that my cue?

**MINISTER:** Yes.

- 1     **HOWARD:** *(Comes onto stage.)* Mine, too?
- 2     **MINISTER:** Yes, I just told you both that was your cue.
- 3     **HOWARD:** We just wanted to be sure. Nothing can destroy the
- 4             thespian craft like a miscued line.
- 5     **MINISTER:** Howard, please. The skit?
- 6     **HOWARD:** Right. From the top! *(HOWARD and THELMA leave*
- 7             *stage.)*
- 8     **MINISTER:** In *fact*, Howard and Thelma have a little skit
- 9             about sin and they are going to act it out.
- 10    **THELMA:** *(Comes onto stage.)* Oh. Oh. I feel so bad.
- 11    **HOWARD:** *(Comes onto stage.)* Why do you feel bad? *(MINISTER*
- 12             *smiles. Follows along with a script.)*
- 13    **THELMA:** Because I am sad.
- 14    **HOWARD:** Why are you sad?
- 15    **THELMA:** Because I did something wrong.
- 16    **HOWARD:** Whatever did you do wrong?
- 17    **THELMA:** Today at the playground, I didn't share my toy
- 18             truck with Johnny. I was selfish. And being selfish is
- 19             a sin.
- 20    **HOWARD:** Perhaps you should pray to God.
- 21    **THELMA:** Oh no, God would not want to hear my prayer. I am
- 22             a sinner.
- 23    **HOWARD:** But we are all sinners, yet God loves each and
- 24             every one of us. Especially puppets.
- 25    **MINISTER:** *(Smile disappears.)* That's not in the script.
- 26    **HOWARD:** *(To MINISTER)* Quiet.
- 27    **THELMA:** Does he really love puppets more than people?
- 28    **HOWARD:** Of course. People are not as smart as puppets.
- 29    **MINISTER:** Where did you get that?
- 30    **HOWARD:** *(To MINISTER)* Shush.
- 31    **THELMA:** I always knew in my heart that puppets were better
- 32             than humans.
- 33    **MINISTER:** All right, stop there. The skit is over.
- 34    **THELMA:** We're not finished yet.
- 35    **MINISTER:** Yes you are. That was horrid.

- 1     **HOWARD:** Critics! You're nothing but a bunch of frustrated  
2     actors.
- 3     **MINISTER:** I'm just trying to salvage this children's message.  
4     What I originally wanted to convey —
- 5     **HOWARD:** Oh great, here comes the sermon.
- 6     **MINISTER:** No, stick with me. You missed your cues, right?
- 7     **THELMA:** You don't have to rub it in.
- 8     **MINISTER:** That's not the point. Lent is a cue for all of us.  
9     Lent is a signal, a sign that Easter is coming soon. During  
10    Lent we pause to think about the sacrifice of Jesus and  
11    how his death affects us. Lent is a cue that sin and death  
12    are not the last words; they are signals, they are cues, to  
13    those who are watching, that obedience and life are  
14    coming; which is what we celebrate in Easter.
- 15    **THELMA:** If Lent is a cue, does that mean we have to do  
16    something like we were supposed to during our skit?
- 17    **MINISTER:** I think it might be helpful to do three things.  
18    First, pray a little bit more; maybe you can make that a  
19    habit and can continue it throughout the whole year.  
20    Second, ask forgiveness of others you may have been  
21    unkind to, or downright mean to; it's such a great  
22    feeling to enter the Easter season knowing we have  
23    tried to make peace whenever we could. Third, some  
24    people try to go without some favorite food during Lent,  
25    as a "cue" that they are ready to sacrifice for the Lord.
- 26    **HOWARD:** I don't know if I could give up ice cream.
- 27    **MINISTER:** You could if you wanted to. God won't love you  
28    any less if you don't; it's just one of those things you do for  
29    your own benefit as a Christian. Lent is a time in which  
30    we are "cued" to remember the powerful love Jesus has  
31    for us, and to look forward to the wonderful life God  
32    desires for everyone.
- 33    **HOWARD:** Is that the end of your sermon?
- 34    **MINISTER:** That's it.
- 35    **HOWARD:** That wasn't so boring this time.

1     **THELMA: Yeah, you're getting better.**

2     **MINISTER: Thanks, Howard. Thanks, Thelma. You two aren't**  
3             **so bad yourselves — for puppets. Let's pray.**

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## Pentecost and the Quartzite 2000

*(Pentecost Sunday)*

**CAST:** Minister, Howard, Thelma.

**PROPS:** Paper towel roll.

**MINISTER:** Hey, Thelma. Why are you looking up?

**THELMA:** Howard told me that after Jesus died and was resurrected, he went up to heaven.

**MINISTER:** Howard's right. *(THELMA is still looking up.)* So, why are you looking up?

**THELMA:** I'm trying to see Jesus.

**HOWARD:** Here we go. This is the thing right here.

**MINISTER:** Howard, what is that?

**HOWARD:** Oh, hi. This is the Quartzite 2000 Heavenly Bodies and Celestial Beings Telescope. It's supposed to allow us to see Jesus up in heaven.

**MINISTER:** Howard, please don't tell me you paid money for that.

**HOWARD:** No, I'm not that dumb. I put it on your charge card.  
*(THELMA looks through it upward.)*

**MINISTER:** On my charge card? Howard!

**HOWARD:** Relax, it was on sale. Fifty percent off. With tax and shipping and handling it only came to \$483.61.

**MINISTER:** Howard, that's a paper towel roll!

**HOWARD:** *(Looks at MINISTER.)* You just don't know much about science, do you?

**MINISTER:** Howard...I don't know where to begin. First, that is just a paper towel roll. Second, you paid too much money for it. Third, you should have asked me before using my charge card. And fourth, even if it was the most powerful telescope in the world —

**HOWARD:** Oh, it's not. That would be the Quartzite 3000, and you're lucky I didn't buy that. Of course, I know what a cheapskate you are.

1 **MINISTER:** Fifth, even if it was the most powerful telescope  
2 in the world, you wouldn't be able to see Jesus in heaven.  
3 **THELMA:** (*Still looking*) There it is.  
4 **HOWARD:** You see heaven?! (*To MINISTER*) There, see? Told  
5 you, Mr. Smarty Pants.  
6 **THELMA:** No, I see the ceiling of the church.  
7 **HOWARD:** Well, that's almost as good.  
8 **MINISTER:** I can see the ceiling of the church. Anyone can;  
9 you don't need a paper towel roll —  
10 **HOWARD:** Quartzite 2000.  
11 **MINISTER:** — to see that. Look, my point is this: you cannot  
12 see Jesus in heaven with any telescope.  
13 **HOWARD:** How do you know?  
14 **MINISTER:** Read the Bible. The book of Acts, chapters one  
15 and two. Yes, Jesus rose up to heaven. But he came down  
16 again in the form of the Spirit of God.  
17 **HOWARD:** I'm not sure it's actually theologically correct to  
18 equate the second and third parts of the Trinity with one  
19 another. The Son and the Spirit have been distinguished  
20 from one another by theorists for quite some time.  
21 **MINISTER:** Howard, my point is that we aren't supposed to be  
22 looking for Jesus up in heaven.  
23 **THELMA:** (*Puts down towel roll.*) Oh?  
24 **MINISTER:** That's right. Do you two know what we're  
25 celebrating very soon?  
26 **HOWARD:** Sure, the Bavarian Brine Soup and Shpetzel Feast  
27 Days.  
28 **MINISTER:** Uh...let me rephrase my question: Do you know  
29 what *Christian humans* will be celebrating soon?  
30 **THELMA:** No.  
31 **MINISTER:** Pentecost. Do you know what that is?  
32 **HOWARD:** No.  
33 **MINISTER:** Pentecost is the day when the Spirit of God came  
34 into the hearts of Jesus' disciples. They then went out  
35 preaching and sharing this Spirit with others, and others

1       received it, too. And the Spirit of God has lived in  
2       Christians from the time of Pentecost until now. So,  
3       Pentecost is a time when we remember God's guidance in  
4       our lives, and the lives of all Christians. And that means  
5       we are to be about the business of the Lord, which has  
6       nothing to do with looking for Jesus in heaven; rather, it  
7       has to do with looking for Jesus in ourselves, and in  
8       others and sharing God's love with those who do not have  
9       the Spirit of God. Do you know what I mean?

10      **THELMA:** Yeah, you mean that Howard threw away a lot of  
11      your money for nothing.

12      **MINISTER:** Well, maybe we can get it bronzed and use it as a  
13      paper weight.

14      **HOWARD:** (*Looking through paper towel roll*) You have to admit,  
15      this is one fine view of the ceiling.

16      **MINISTER:** Why don't we pray now.

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# **The Ghosts of the Transfiguration**

*(Transfiguration Sunday)*

**CAST:** Minister, Howard, Thelma.

**PROPS:** Flashlight, Bible.

**MINISTER:** Hi, Thelma. Do you know what today is?

**THELMA:** Yeah, Sunday.

**MINISTER:** I mean, what specific day in the Christian calendar?

**THELMA:** I didn't get one of those; I just got a calendar from the bank.

**MINISTER:** No, the Christian calendar is not something you buy, it's something you observe. Christians long ago established a set of days to celebrate as extra special. *(To children)* You know what extra-special day today is? *(Waits for response.)* Transfiguration Sunday.

**THELMA:** That's nice.

**MINISTER:** You don't know what I'm talking about, do you?

**THELMA:** Well, it's not the first time.

**MINISTER:** Today we celebrate the event in Jesus' ministry when he revealed to Peter and James and John exactly who he was.

**THELMA:** Never heard of it.

**MINISTER:** I'm sure you heard the story when Jesus took the three disciples up on the mountain and they saw Jesus talking with Moses and Elijah? Remember?

**THELMA:** I thought Moses and Elijah were dead by Jesus' time.

**MINISTER:** They were.

**THELMA:** *(Looks down.)* Hey, Howard, get up here! The pastor's telling ghost stories!

**HOWARD:** *(Pops up.)* I love ghost stories!

**THELMA:** Me, too. They give me the creeps. *(Shudders.)*

**MINISTER:** Wait, wait. This is not a ghost story.

- 1     **HOWARD:** I heard you down below. You said Jesus was talking  
2           to two dead guys.
- 3     **MINISTER:** Yes, but —
- 4     **THELMA:** If you're talking to dead people, you're talking to  
5           ghosts.
- 6     **MINISTER:** Yes, but —
- 7     **HOWARD:** And if you're telling a story about dead people  
8           talking to live people, you're telling a ghost story.
- 9     **MINISTER:** Yeah, but —
- 10    **THELMA:** I'm not telling the story, Howard's not telling the  
11          story. *You're* the one telling the story about dead guys.  
12          Therefore, *you're* the one telling a ghost story.
- 13    **MINISTER:** No, no. This is not a ghost story.
- 14    **HOWARD:** Here's a flashlight. Shine it on your face. I'll go turn  
15          off the lights in the sanctuary.
- 16    **MINISTER:** Hold it right there. Look, this is not a ghost story.
- 17    **THELMA:** *(To HOWARD)* Remember that story about the ghost  
18          looking for his head?
- 19    **HOWARD:** *(Shudders.) Uuuuhhh!* Man, I didn't sleep for two  
20          weeks after that one.
- 21    **THELMA:** *(To MINISTER)* Is your story as scary as that one?
- 22    **MINISTER:** Wait a minute. My story isn't scary at all.
- 23    **HOWARD:** It isn't?
- 24    **MINISTER:** No.
- 25    **THELMA:** What's the point of telling a ghost story if it isn't  
26          scary?
- 27    **MINISTER:** It's not supposed to be scary. It's supposed to be  
28          hopeful and comforting.
- 29    **HOWARD:** *(Pause)* Oh, I get it! You just want to put us off  
30          guard, then at the end you're going to say something  
31          really scary. You're a good storyteller.
- 32    **THELMA:** Go ahead; we're ready.
- 33    **MINISTER:** Just listen.
- 34    **THELMA:** We are.
- 35    **MINISTER:** I'm going to read from the Gospel of Matthew: It

1           says, "Jesus took Peter and James and John and led them  
2           up a high mountain..."

3   **HOWARD:** A looonnnneely mountain, with no one else around.

4   **THELMA:** And the wind was blowing through the trees —  
5           *whoooo.*

6   **MINISTER:** Will you two stop that?

7   **HOWARD:** We're just trying to provide sufficient background  
8           in order for your story to attain a more macabre  
9           ambience.

10   **MINISTER:** Just pipe down, please. *(To children)* And then,  
11           "Jesus was transfigured; his face shone like the sun, and  
12           his clothes became white as the light. And they saw Moses  
13           and Elijah appear..."

14   **HOWARD:** The dead guys!

15   **THELMA:** *Ahhh! (They run down below, Off-stage; slowly they come  
16           back up.)*

17   **HOWARD:** Boy, that was a good one.

18   **MINISTER:** I'm not finished yet.

19   **HOWARD:** Oh, man, it just gets scarier.

20   **MINISTER:** What is so scary about this story? The  
21           transfiguration reminds us that God did not use Jesus  
22           just at his death and resurrection. Rather, God was  
23           working throughout all of Jesus' life. His disciples  
24           sometimes could not see that. They had to be reminded.  
25           We have to be reminded, too, that God is at work in our  
26           lives, even when we don't feel it.

27   **THELMA:** *Oooohhh!* Wait a minute, that wasn't scary.

28   **MINISTER:** I already told you it wasn't a ghost story.

29   **THELMA:** Why did you tell it then? Are you trying to sell one  
30           of those Christian calendars you talked about earlier?

31   **MINISTER:** I'm not trying to sell anything. I'm telling you why  
32           we treat this day a little special. And to remind you that  
33           God is at work in our lives.

34   **HOWARD:** We already knew that.

35   **MINISTER:** And if God is watching and working in each of us,

1           we don't have to be scared of things, like monsters in the  
2           closet and goblins under the bed, because God is  
3           protecting us.

4   **THELMA:** We already knew that.

5   **HOWARD:** Yeah, you're not telling us anything new.

6   **MINISTER:** No?

7   **HOWARD:** Nope.

8   **THELMA:** Nope.

9   **MINISTER:** *(Pause, then to PUPPETS, softly)* Boo.

10   **HOWARD:** *Ahhh! (Runs down from stage.)*

11   **THELMA:** *Ahhh! (Runs down from stage.)*

12   **MINISTER:** Well, maybe they didn't know. But you can. God  
13           loves you very much and is always trying to show you. He  
14           showed the disciples with the transfiguration. So today  
15           we celebrate that event, and the fact that God is at work  
16           in us as well. Let's pray.

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# The Mafia Versus the Lord

(Stewardship Sunday)

**CAST:** Minister, Howard, Thelma.

**PROPS:** Play money (from Monopoly or another game).

**THELMA:** Twenty-three, twenty-four, twenty-five —

**MINISTER:** (*Walks over.*) Hi, Thelma.

**THELMA:** — twenty-six, twenty-seven, hi, twenty-nine —

**MINISTER:** What are you doing?

**THELMA:** — thirty-one, thirty-two, I'm counting my money,  
thirty-three —

**MINISTER:** Why?

**THELMA** — forty-two, I need to, forty-five, see how much I  
have, forty-seven —

**MINISTER:** What are you going to do with it?

**THELMA:** — forty-nine, fifty, I can't think when you're asking  
me questions, fifty-two —

**MINISTER:** Why are you counting your money?

**THELMA:** — sixty-two, don't be so nosey, sixty-four —

**MINISTER:** Sorry.

**THELMA:** — thirty-three, thirty-four. No, wait. Twenty-  
five...no, that's not it. Oh, look what you made me do. Now  
I have to start all over. (*Sighs.*) One, two, three —

**MINISTER:** I was just asking you what you were doing. Don't  
get upset with me.

**THELMA:** — eighteen, twenty, thirty...oh! You did it again.  
Will you stop talking so much?

**MINISTER:** Why is it so important that you know how much  
money you have?

**THELMA:** Because, one, I'm going to tithe to the church, two,  
three, four —

**MINISTER:** Oh. That's a good thing to do. Very nice.

**THELMA:** Nice, nothing. I'm doing it so God won't kill me. Six,  
seven, eight —

- 1 MINISTER: What?!
- 2 THELMA: — ten, eleven, shush, will you?! I'm trying to count.
- 3 Twelve, thirteen —
- 4 MINISTER: Where did you get an idea like that?
- 5 THELMA: — fifteen, Howard, twenty-one...great, you made
- 6 me lose count again.
- 7 MINISTER: Howard! Come up here!
- 8 HOWARD: (*Pops up.*) Hello!
- 9 MINISTER: Did you tell Thelma anything about tithing?
- 10 HOWARD: Sure.
- 11 THELMA: One, two, three —
- 12 MINISTER: What did you tell her?
- 13 THELMA: — four, five, six —
- 14 HOWARD: I told her that it was important to give to the
- 15 church.
- 16 MINISTER: Uh huh. What else?
- 17 THELMA: — seven, eight, nine. Shhh, you two.
- 18 HOWARD: That tithing — giving ten percent of our money —
- 19 was a real good thing to do.
- 20 THELMA: — ten, eleven, fifteen...I lost count again! I'm going
- 21 to count somewhere else. (*Exits.*)
- 22 MINISTER: Go on. What else did you tell her?
- 23 HOWARD: That if she didn't do it, she just might have an...
- 24 (*Pause — head trembles*) accident.
- 25 MINISTER: What are you talking about?
- 26 HOWARD: Well, I saw a movie about a guy who owned a store
- 27 and had to pay money every week to some gangsters.
- 28 And one time, when he didn't pay — kabluwee! They
- 29 dynamited his store.
- 30 MINISTER: What is your point?
- 31 HOWARD: I think it's quite clear.
- 32 MINISTER: You're saying God is like a gangster?
- 33 HOWARD: More like a godfather.
- 34 MINISTER: And a tithe is a bribe?
- 35 HOWARD: More like protection money.

- 1 **MINISTER:** That's ridiculous.
- 2 **HOWARD:** Well, that's because you didn't see the movie.
- 3 **MINISTER:** I don't have to see the movie. God is not like some
- 4 hoodlum in a movie.
- 5 **THELMA:** (*Enters.*) OK, I have sixty-three dollars.
- 6 **HOWARD:** (*To THELMA*) That means you have to fork over six
- 7 dollars and thirty cents. No more, no less.
- 8 **MINISTER:** Oh, give me a break. Thelma, if you want to give
- 9 your money to the church, that's great. But don't do it
- 10 because you think God will hurt you if you don't.
- 11 **THELMA:** He won't?
- 12 **MINISTER:** Of course not! Look — Howard, you listen up, too
- 13 — everything we have is God's. Not just part, not just ten
- 14 percent, but everything. What we do when we give money
- 15 — or tithe — to the church is tell God that we know what
- 16 we have is a good thing. It helps pay for the church's
- 17 ministry, the church's worship, the church's mission. But
- 18 above all, we are to give because we want to. Not because
- 19 someone tells us that God will hurt us if we don't; that is
- 20 simply not true.
- 21 **HOWARD:** Well, he might send over some guys to break your
- 22 legs. In the movie they did that.
- 23 **MINISTER:** Will you stop talking about that movie? (*To*
- 24 *children*) Children, God loves you just the way you are.
- 25 He'd love you if you never gave the church a thing. You
- 26 can't do anything to make God love you more. That's
- 27 because God is like a mom or dad or uncle or aunt or
- 28 grandma or grandpa or anyone who takes care of you and
- 29 loves you. Have you ever made a picture for your family,
- 30 and they say, "Wow, this is great!"? That's the way God is
- 31 when we tithe. God doesn't need any money at all. But his
- 32 church does. His servants do. We give for the good of our
- 33 Christian community. Even if it's one dime, or one penny,
- 34 God says, "Wow, that's great!" And *you* know it's great, too,
- 35 because your money is going to help other people — poor



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