

DARE TO BE DIFFERENT

by Cindy Davis



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Dare to be Different

A presentation
for a youth-led service

by Cindy Davis

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

DESK GIRL

*A youth member who is
the main storyteller*

YOUTH MEMBERS

Four or five

YOUTH DIRECTOR

KIM-JUAN

*A foreign exchange student,
can be male or female*

NARRATOR

EARLY CHURCH MEMBERS

Three to six

THELMA

BEATRICE

PASTOR

CONGREGATION MEMBERS

*Number can vary, at least
four voices needed*

NOTE: Casting for this production is versatile and can be used by both large and small youth groups. Our production was successfully done with nine players who “doubled up” on parts and appeared in each scene. Conversely, the production could easily accommodate a much larger cast.

PRODUCTION NOTES

Dare to Be Different serves as a reminder that sometimes it takes courage to live life to the extent that God has called us to. God did not create us to be bored or to think small. The challenge that Christ extended to us to spread the Gospel to the entire world calls for big dreams, creativity and a love for adventure. Daring to be different does not mean the same for all of us. For some, it may mean that we begin putting our talents to work for God in his house. For others it may mean trusting God to remove seemingly insurmountable obstacles. For more of us it may mean extending ourselves far beyond sanctuary walls to bring an exciting message of hope to a far-flung corner of the earth. For all of us it means that we adopt a willingness to think beyond our current circumstances and imagine something bigger, coupled with an understanding that we can never out-dream our Creator. It is a choice we all must make: are we satisfied to stay the same or do we dare to accept the bigger adventure God created us for? *Dare to Be Different* is a drama that shatters familiar comfort zones, and who better to share a positive message of hope than those who represent the future of the church body?

SET: Stage Right: a youth room with a desk, a chair, a phone, boxes and posters announcing a variety of events. The youth room serves as Set A, where all action in the present takes place. Stage Left contains a desk, a chair, a box or boxes, and poster board signs. Serves as Set B where all past action takes place.

PROPS: A photo album.

COSTUMES: Street clothes are appropriate for all scenes with the exception of "What If?" Early church members should wear robes.

PLAYING TIME: Approximately 40 minutes.

1 *(Action begins on Set A. YOUTH are busily sorting through*
 2 *boxes, making signs, possibly tuning instruments, etc. DESK*
 3 *GIRL is sitting at the desk, where she remains for the entire*
 4 *program.)*

5 **YOUTH ONE:** Will one bus be enough, or do we need both of
 6 **them running tonight?**

7 **DESK GIRL:** One will probably be ... *(Phone heard ringing in*
 8 *background)* no, better make it two, the phone's been
 9 *ringing all day. (Picks up the phone.)* Yes, we are meeting
 10 **tonight at four and six. (Pauses briefly.)** Well, we'll be
 11 **having a band and Bible study. (Pauses again.)** No, don't
 12 **worry about eating first. We have a standing order with**
 13 **a pizza place ... they deliver one hundred pizzas here**
 14 **each Sunday night. What else are we doing this week?**
 15 **Well, we have small group Bible studies on Tuesday, and**
 16 **our choir and drama team will be at the mall on**
 17 **Wednesday. On Friday, we're having a send-off party for**
 18 **the mission team we're sending to Brazil. (Pauses to**
 19 *listen.)* **Good. Well, see you tonight. (Hangs up phone.)**

20 *(Looks up and notices audience for the first time.)* **Hi there!**
 21 **You folks must be here for volunteer orientation. What**
 22 **a good crowd, too! It's a relief to see so many of you here**
 23 **today. Believe me, a youth program this large wouldn't**
 24 **be possible without adults like you behind us. We need**
 25 **teachers, chaperones, drivers, the list is endless ... but**
 26 **I'm getting ahead of myself. I don't want to scare you off**
 27 **before you even get a chance to meet us. Take it from**
 28 **me, things weren't always this exciting around here. Let**
 29 **me explain.**

30 *(Action shifts to Set B.)*

31

32 **THE BORED YOUTH GROUP**

33 *(Action takes place in the hall in front of and inside the office of*
 34 *a church youth director. A large box or boxes serve to separate*
 35 *the office interior from the hall. Posters adorn the background,*

- 1 *announcing a wide variety of events, many with empty sign-up*
 2 *sheets attached. The YOUTH DIRECTOR sits with head in*
 3 *hands at desk while the youth are in the hall.)*
- 4 **YOUTH ONE: I'm bored.**
- 5 **YOUTH TWO: Me, too.**
- 6 **YOUTH THREE: When are we ever going to *do* anything?**
- 7 **YOUTH ONE: (*Stepping over boxes*) When is anyone ever going**
 8 **to clean up this mess?**
- 9 **YOUTH TWO: (*Peering into the box*) Oh, these are the leftover**
 10 **T-shirts from our big fundraiser.**
- 11 **YOUTH THREE: I didn't sell any.**
- 12 **YOUTHS ONE, TWO: (*In unison*) Me neither.**
- 13 **YOUTH ONE: I'm bored.**
- 14 **YOUTH TWO: Me too.**
- 15 **YOUTH THREE: When are we ever going to *do* anything?**
- 16 **YOUTH ONE: Did you hear about Deacon Churchman?**
- 17 **YOUTH TWO: He passed out mowing the church lawn.**
- 18 **YOUTH THREE: (*Sighing*) I guess it was just too hot.**
- 19 **YOUTH ONE: I'm bored.**
- 20 **YOUTH TWO: Me too.**
- 21 **YOUTH THREE: When are we ever going to *do* anything?**
 22 *(They walk into the YOUTH DIRECTOR's office.)*
- 23 **YOUTH DIRECTOR: Hey, missed you guys at the retreat last**
 24 **weekend!**
- 25 **YOUTH ONE: I was busy.**
- 26 **YOUTH TWO: Me too.**
- 27 **YOUTH THREE: I had too much to do.**
- 28 **YOUTH DIRECTOR: So what brings you by today.**
- 29 **YOUTH ONE: We're bored.**
- 30 **YOUTH TWO: (*Nodding*) Bored.**
- 31 **YOUTH THREE: When are we ever going to *do* anything?**
- 32 **YOUTH DIRECTOR: Are you guys coming to the lock-in**
 33 **tonight?**
- 34 **YOUTH ONE: I'm busy.**
- 35 **YOUTH TWO: Me too.**

- 1 **YOUTH THREE:** I've got too much to do.
- 2 **YOUTH DIRECTOR:** Well, how about the scavenger hunt
3 next week? *(All three shake their heads no.)*
- 4 **YOUTH DIRECTOR:** Why did you say you came by?
- 5 **YOUTHS ONE, TWO, THREE:** *(In unison)* We're bored.
- 6 **YOUTH FOUR:** *(Bursts in with a photo album, smiling broadly.)*
7 I'm so excited! I just got the pictures back from my
8 summer mission trip! *(All the YOUTHS crowd around the*
9 *album.)* Here I am, getting on the plane. *(She points to*
10 *another page.)* These are my twenty new best friends
11 from all over the country.
- 12 **YOUTH ONE:** *(Pointing)* What's this?
- 13 **YOUTH FOUR:** *(Smiling)* There we are, jumping into a
14 waterfall after a hard day's work digging a village well —
15 boy, did that feel good!
- 16 **YOUTH TWO:** *(Pointing)* Is that you?
- 17 **YOUTH FOUR:** On the elephant? Yeah, that was quite a ride!
- 18 **YOUTH THREE:** And this?
- 19 **YOUTH FOUR:** *(Laughing)* That's our team leader battling a
20 giant spider.
- 21 **YOUTH ONE:** What about here?
- 22 **YOUTH FOUR:** That's the tribe that came to know the Lord.
23 *(YOUTHS ONE, TWO and THREE exchange glances.)*
- 24 **YOUTH FOUR:** Well, I've got to go. I'm babysitting tonight to
25 raise money to go back during spring break! *(YOUTH*
26 *FOUR exits.)*
- 27 **YOUTH DIRECTOR:** So, where were we?
- 28 **YOUTHS ONE, TWO, THREE:** *(Look at each other and then, in*
29 *unison)* We're *bored!* *(YOUTH DIRECTOR lays his head*
30 *down on the table in defeat. Action shifts to Set A.)*
- 31 **DESK GIRL:** Things continued like that for a long time. One
32 or two people were on fire, but the rest of us were
33 pretty dead. All that began to change one day when
34 Jesus visited our youth group ... *(Action shifts to Set B.)*
35

A VISIT FROM THE MASTER

(Four or five YOUTH stand in a semicircle around a microphone in Set B. They are speaking to the audience in a conversational tone.)

YOUTH ONE: (*Palms raised upwards*) We didn't recognize him at first ... how could we? All we saw was an exchange student from someplace very far away, somewhere we just couldn't relate to. He was staying in the home of a family from our church, and our youth director told us in no uncertain terms that we were to make him feel welcome. It was hard at first. He sat quietly in the back and didn't try to join any of our conversations. When he did speak, he was always talking about our "great opportunities and freedoms." We really didn't understand what he was talking about. He was fascinated by our Christian T-shirts, so we gave him one. You'd think we'd given him a two hundred dollar cashmere sweater. He wore it constantly and proudly talked about it to all the kids at school. He kept pointing us out and telling everybody we had T-shirts, too. Quite frankly, it was embarrassing.

YOUTH TWO: I suggested to him later that he might want to be a little quieter with all this T-shirt talk and witnessing he was doing at school. After all, I didn't want there to be any trouble. When he looked at me, I could see that he was hurt. I felt bad, but I didn't know what to say. If he was going to live here, he should learn to fit in, shouldn't he?

YOUTH THREE: I saw that hurt look another time. A few of us were arguing about something stupid. He was sitting there, listening to it all. I tried to pull him in, to get him on my side, but all he did was shake his head sadly and walk away. I couldn't believe he was so *sensitive*.

YOUTH FOUR: I thought Kim-Juan was just plain weird. He

was always so happy and excited to be at church, no matter what was going on. And he wasn't afraid to pray *out loud*, and when he did he smiled too much. It made me just plain uncomfortable.

YOUTH FIVE (OR ONE): The whole thing blew up one night.

The church had asked the youth to help set up tables at a potluck supper, and our youth director asked for volunteers. No one wanted to do it, so we all started pointing fingers at each other, listing all the reasons why the person next to us should be the one to do the work.

YOUTH TWO: The lesson that night was about Christ's return. When we read the Scripture passage for our lesson, a few of us began to get pretty uncomfortable.

ANY YOUTH: (*Reading from the Bible*) Matthew 25:14-30

"Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his property to them. To one he gave five talents of money, to another two talents, and to another one talent, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received the five talents went at once and put his money to work and gained five more. So also, the one with the two talents gained two more. But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

After a long time, the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received the five talents brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.'

His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'

The man with the two talents also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two talents; see, I have

1 gained two more.'

2 His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful
3 servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will
4 put you in charge of many things. Come and share your
5 master's happiness!'

6 Then the man who had received the one talent came.
7 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man,
8 harvesting where you have not sown and gathering
9 where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and
10 went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is
11 what belongs to you.'

12 His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you
13 knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather
14 where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should
15 have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that
16 when I returned I would have received it back with
17 interest. Take the talent from him and give it to the one
18 who has the ten talents. For everyone who has will be
19 given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever
20 does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.
21 And throw that worthless servant outside, into the
22 darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of
23 teeth.'"

24 **YOUTH ONE:** For a moment, no one said anything. Then, to
25 our astonishment, we noticed that Kim-Juan was
26 crying. He wiped his tears aside and finally he spoke.
27 (*KIM-JUAN enters from Stage Left and joins the middle of the*
28 *semicircle.*)

29 **KIM-JUAN:** Can't you see? You are rich in blessings. First is
30 your freedom. There are no limits on what you can do to
31 spread the gospel. Next you have each other. And to
32 make it all complete, you have this wonderful church
33 building to work from. You have so much, so why do you
34 choose to throw these gifts away, to hide them as
35 though you are ashamed? In my country, we don't have

1 these blessings. We are not free to speak. Our
2 opportunities are dangerous and limited. Christians in
3 my country are few in number, so we band tightly
4 together. You are many, but you fight. We don't have a
5 church building, but here you do, but no one wants to
6 work. I do not understand this.

7 **YOUTH ONE:** Something clicked that night. For the first
8 time I was able to see how we looked to the outside
9 world — a world bigger than our high schools and our
10 neighborhoods. We looked petty and childish, foolishly
11 chasing all the wrong things. More importantly,
12 through Kim-Juan's eyes, I caught a glimpse of how we
13 looked to Christ.

14 **YOUTH TWO:** Suddenly, Kim-Juan no longer looked like an
15 awkward foreigner to me. God used him to open my
16 eyes. I know he was just a teenager like the rest of us,
17 but the Christ in him was so powerful it was all we
18 could see that day. Christ himself came to visit our
19 youth group ... all because one teenager wasn't afraid to
20 be different. One teenager was daring enough to let
21 Christ shine through him so brightly we could see
22 nothing else. (*Action shifts to Set A.*)

23 **DESK GIRL:** It became pretty clear. We had a choice to make.
24 We could choose to be satisfied with the same old sit-in-
25 the-same-pew-every-Sunday church-going experience
26 that we had always known, or we could dare to be
27 different. We could dare to find out what God could do
28 with our lives if we gave him the chance. There was
29 work to be done! We could let fear of being different
30 keep us from living God's plan for us, or we could take
31 the plunge. We began to study the book of Acts, and we
32 were amazed to learn about all the obstacles that the
33 early church had to overcome. We couldn't help but
34 wonder what would have happened if *they'd* been
35 satisfied with ho-hum Christianity. (*Action shifts to Set B.*)

WHAT IF?

(During the narration, EARLY CHURCH MEMBERS silently pantomime passing a loaf of bread around, surrounded by signs that read "Free food for the hungry" or "Free robes handmade by Tabitha" [just examples]. They may also silently clap in praise and worship and hug one another.)

NARRATOR: After Jesus completed his ministry on earth, he went back to heaven, leaving the Holy Spirit to guide a small group of faithful believers in the incredible task of spreading his message of hope and freedom to a lost world. Acts 2:42-47 tells us that the early church "devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved." *(Dramatic pause)* But what if it all stopped there? *(EARLY CHURCH MEMBERS freeze in mid-motion, display a sign which reads: "One Year Later — A meeting of First Jerusalem temple's Congregation Committee.")*

EARLY CHURCH MEMBER ONE: Last week's potluck was great!

EARLY CHURCH MEMBER TWO: Did anyone try Tabitha's pork barbeque?

EARLY CHURCH MEMBER THREE: Man, that was good!

EARLY CHURCH MEMBER FOUR: I can't believe what we were missing when we were still under the law!

EARLY CHURCH MEMBER ONE: I know, the new freedom

- 1 we have is incredible.
- 2 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER TWO:** How is the Gentile
- 3 outreach program coming?
- 4 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER THREE:** Pretty good, I think.
- 5 The lentil and ham chowder stirred up some interest in
- 6 the soup kitchen last week. *(Several members stroke their*
- 7 *beards and nod.)*
- 8 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER FOUR:** Peter and John are
- 9 starting a new sermon series: "The Old Testament: Is it
- 10 for Today?"
- 11 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER ONE:** That could shake things
- 12 up a bit.
- 13 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER TWO:** Let's hope not too much.
- 14 Things are going really well, and we want to keep it
- 15 that way.
- 16 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER THREE:** But we have a world to
- 17 reach!
- 18 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER FOUR:** Yes, but we have to be
- 19 careful. Change can be dangerous, and we don't want to
- 20 undo all the wonderful things God is doing for us here.
- 21 *(Sign: "Next Meeting")*
- 22 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER ONE:** Awesome dessert fellowship
- 23 we had after last week's song service!
- 24 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER TWO:** No pork barbeque, though.
- 25 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER THREE:** Some of the older Jews
- 26 were offended. The law is still important to them, and
- 27 we need to understand that.
- 28 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER FOUR:** It's important to avoid
- 29 controversy.
- 30 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER ONE:** Exactly! First Jerusalem
- 31 Temple needs to be attractive to outsiders so we can
- 32 grow!
- 33 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER TWO:** But we don't live under
- 34 the law anymore.
- 35 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER THREE:** I know, I know, but

1 that's not the point. We have pews to fill, and upsetting
2 the Sanhedrin is not the way to go about that.
3 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER FOUR:** I heard Peter and John's
4 sermon series was canceled.
5 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER ONE:** It certainly was!
6 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER TWO:** They stepped on too many
7 toes. There was even talk about putting them in jail!
8 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER THREE:** That would never do!
9 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER FOUR:** Can you imagine?
10 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER ONE:** We can't afford to have
11 another fiasco like the one last month after they healed
12 the crippled beggar outside the temple.
13 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER TWO:** But didn't God give them
14 that power to use for his glory?
15 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER THREE:** *(Voice rising)* How can
16 we possibly spread the gospel if we're all sitting in jail?
17 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER FOUR:** Look, we're up against
18 thousands of years of tradition here. Besides,
19 everything is going so well. God wouldn't be blessing us
20 so much if we weren't doing the right thing. Let's leave
21 well enough alone.
22 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER ONE:** Agreed! How's next week's
23 chicken barbeque coming?
24 *(Sign: "Next Meeting")*
25 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER ONE:** See, I told you everything
26 would work out just fine.
27 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER TWO:** It's been weeks since the
28 Sanhedrin have found anything at all to complain about!
29 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER THREE:** And look at the good
30 it's done for our fellowship! All we have to worry about
31 are cookouts, song services and fundraisers for the
32 camel parking shelter!
33 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER FOUR:** I guess you're right.
34 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER ONE:** You'll see. Generations
35 from now our children's children will still worship here

1 at First Jerusalem Tabernacle in peace.
 2 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER TWO:** And they'll even have a
 3 place to park their camels!
 4 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER THREE:** But what about the
 5 rest of the world?
 6 **EARLY CHURCH MEMBER FOUR:** I'm sure God has a plan
 7 to reach them. Now let's run along before Sapphira's
 8 death by chocolate cake is gone!
 9 **NARRATOR:** What would it have meant to our world if the
 10 members of the early church had been satisfied to
 11 remain comfortable in the safety of their own fellowship?
 12 What if they had allowed satisfaction with the status quo
 13 and fear of change to keep them from daring to fulfill
 14 God's plan for them? What if he hadn't been able to use
 15 them to spread the gospel beyond Palestine? Where
 16 would you be today? (*Action shifts to Set A.*)
 17 **DESK GIRL:** We began to wonder if we were missing out on
 18 a bigger plan, something even greater that God could
 19 do with our group if we were willing. The idea must
 20 have been contagious, because it wasn't long before
 21 some strange things began to happen in our church.
 22 (*Action shifts to Set B. For added dramatic effect and audience*
 23 *involvement, the director may opt to actually take the offering*
 24 *and sing hymns during the following skit, and place the*
 25 *congregation members out in the actual congregation.*)

26 **THREE LITTLE WORDS**

27
 28
 29 (*THELMA and BEATRICE enter from the sanctuary doors and*
 30 *walk down the aisle, speaking their lines.*)
 31 **THELMA:** (*Emphatically*) I can't begin to imagine what's in
 32 store for us this week!
 33 **BEATRICE:** After last week, I was half tempted not to come
 34 this morning, but curiosity got the best of me.
 35 **THELMA:** It was the same with me. I said to myself, "Thelma,



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