

OPEN ON CHRISTMAS

by JOHN COSPER

GENRE: Comedy

SYNOPSIS: A single woman works her regular job on Christmas Day to avoid the family that doesn't seem to acknowledge her on Christmas. She encounters three other people who experience the same problem... and one of them is Jesus.

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 4

TOPIC: Christmas

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Matthew 1, Luke 2

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Christmas

SUGGESTED USE: Sermon Starter

CHARACTERS:

KASI—a convenience store clerk

EVAN—a single college guy

BARB—a frantic mother

JESUS

PROPS: Counter, Christmas candy, other convenience store items and merchandise

COSTUMES: Winter clothing for Kasi, Evan, and Barb; store vest for Kasi; biblical costume for Jesus

SOUND: Four wireless microphones

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: A convenience store open on Christmas

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ISSN 1084-5917

Drama Ministry is a division of
Belden Worship Resources
www.beldenworshipresources.com

Publisher: **Regi Stone**

Executive Editor: **Kimberlee Crisafulli** / Assistant Editor: **Scott Crain**

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DIRECTOR'S TIP:

Missing The Point: In the midst of the witty banter and three apparently unrelated visitors to the convenience store, be sure the audience doesn't miss the point of the scene. Kasi—the friendly store clerk—is alone and overlooked on Christmas, but the first two customers virtually plow over her with their own cynical demands. Take care that the audience doesn't make the same mistake. Be careful that Kasi doesn't get lost in the shuffle, and that her key lines (“I don't like being ignored on this holiday of love”, “No kids, no husband, no boyfriend”, etc.) don't get trampled by a lot of stage business.

Setting the Scene: A convenience store may seem complicated to stage, but keep it simple and be creative. A large part of being a good director is being a keen observer— pay a visit to your local convenience store and see what makes it visually “tick”. It's perhaps impractical to bring in a counter and cash register, but a vest and name tag for the clerk, some Christmas Muzac playing lightly in the background, a well-arranged display of candy—little touches like these can create the ‘feel’ of a convenience store without taking a bite out of the drama budget.

Stage Business: The devil, as they say, is in the details, and the stage business of picking up an armful of discount Christmas candy, getting it to the counter, ‘ringing it up’, paying for it, then exiting can be trickier than it would seem. Be sure to allow plenty of rehearsal time with the actual props so this bit of stage action doesn't become its own scene.

A Familiar Face: The conclusion (and main point) of the scene relies heavily on Jesus being instantly recognizable in the final moments, so be sure the actor looks the part to the uttermost. Take care with costuming and makeup—if the actor only looks like a bearded man in a housecoat, the scene's conclusion will leave the audience bewildered instead of moved!

Substitutes Allowed: Some congregations may take offense at the harried mother's request for beer. Feel free to substitute the request for somet

KASI is waiting at the counter of a convenience store.

EVAN enters.

KASI: Hey, welcome to Quick Stop.

EVAN: Hey. Christmas candy on sale yet?

KASI: Help yourself, fifty percent off.