

JESUS' UNSHARED VIGIL

by DENISE NATIONS

GENRE: Drama

SYNOPSIS: While watching Jesus pray in the Garden of Gethsemane, Peter, James and John almost let their emotions get the best of them.

DIRECTOR'S TIP: This drama deals with one of the most powerful forces that can be brought to a stage—silence. We live in a world terrified of silence. Commercials rush to fill the millisecond gap brought on by the pause in a television program, commuters are glued to their radios on their way to work, kids fuse with their video games. Modernity is loud and invasive and never wants us to take a moment to pause and be silent. Jesus' Unshared Vigil may be a difficult piece for your actors to deal with. Many newer actors are convinced that they have to be doing something on stage to be interesting; some bit of choreography or stage business to keep the audience amused.

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 3

TOPIC: Prayer, Good Friday, Biblical Times

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Matthew 26:36-46

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Good Friday Service, Easter Service, Sermon Introduction

CHARACTERS:

Peter
James
John

PROPS: None

COSTUMES: Contemporary dress or stylized costumes

SOUND: 3 wireless mics

LIGHTING: Dimly lit stage

SETTING: The Garden of Gethsemane

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PETER, JAMES and JOHN follow Jesus up to the garden at Gethsemane. Jesus has gone further to pray alone. The three stay behind to watch and pray.

PETER: Jesus!

JOHN: Let him go, Peter. He wants to be alone.

PETER: Then why did he tell us to come with him? He doesn't want to be alone.

JOHN: Yes, he does. Just do as he asks; let's stay here and keep watch.

JAMES: What are we supposed to pray about?

PETER: Well, gee James, why not pray for him? Wouldn't that be nice of us? Huh?

JOHN: He admitted outright that his soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. I think he means it; Jesus isn't careless with words.

JAMES: John, you don't think he's contemplating taking his life, do you?

JOHN: Surely not.

PETER: He'll have to take it over my dead body—

PETER starts towards Jesus, JOHN stops him.

JOHN: Peter, stop. He's here to pray, remember, like we ought to be doing.

PETER: But you're right, he said "to the point of death!"

JAMES: Probably just meant it like a figure of speech. You know how he is. Stories, riddles... sometimes we don't exactly know what he means.

JOHN: C'mon, let's pray.

JAMES: You know, I'm embarrassed to say this, but until now I never thought to pray for Jesus. I've let him pray for me, but never really thought he needed my prayers.

JOHN: He needs them now, James.

JAMES wanders in Jesus' direction.

PETER: What's he doing?

JAMES: Can't tell. His back is to us, but he's looking up towards the sky.

PETER looks up for a moment. JOHN looks up pensively.