Drama Ministry®

THE INNKEEPER
by Brian Walter

GENRE: Comedy

SYNOPSIS: To take a new look at the familiar story of Mary and Joseph finding "no room in the inn".

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 9

TOPIC: Christmas

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Luke 2:7

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Christmas

SUGGESTED USE: Christmas Service

CHARACTERS: Poor Man-An older man, desperate for a place to stay
Amos-An enterprising innkeeper, out to make a buck
Boy-Son of Rich Man and Rich Woman; a bit of a brat
Rich Man-Upper class man looking for lodging for his family
Rich Woman-Rich Man's wife; doesn't say anything but her attitude is clear
Woman-Middle-aged; money is no object-she needs a place to stay
Myrna-Amos' wife; she really runs the place, Amos is the "front man"
Joseph-Jesus' step-father; looking for lodging for his pregnant wife
Mary-Jesus' mother; doesn't speak, but we ache for her discomfort

PROPS: 1) Sign that can be flipped-lettering should "look" Hebrew-it says "No Vacancy" on one side and "Vacancy" on the other
2) Cow bell

COSTUMES: All characters should be in appropriate biblical attire

SOUND: Number of wireless mics varies, depending on double-casting

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: The inn where Mary and Joseph try to get lodging

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Director's Tip:

While this may seem like a large cast, the parts are relatively small and won't take a lot of memorizing. It's up to Amos to keep things interesting. He's obviously enterprising and doesn't care at all about helping people. Even in the end, when he seems to take pity on Mary and Joseph, it's only because Joseph can do something for him. Avoid playing him as a caricature-making him a real person will make him much funnier. And though the parts are small, remind the actors that each should have a developed character with whom the audience can identify. For example, Poor Man only has three lines (he doesn't even have a name!) but we should see that he's desperate enough to try to fool Amos into giving him a room. Amos, however, is on to him. This sketch will be lots of fun for both the cast and the audience if you spend a little time developing characters, and not just memorizing lines.

Scene opens with AMOS, the innkeeper, standing by his inn's vacancy sign, which reads "No Vacancy." POOR MAN ENTERS, looking for a room.

POOR MAN: Any room?

AMOS: Read the sign. "No vacancy."

POOR MAN: But I need a room.

AMOS: Haven't you heard of the census, pal? We've been booked for weeks.

POOR MAN: Would you make a room if Caesar himself showed up?

AMOS: Please, that's the oldest trick in the scroll. (*Mockingly*) "He's not coming, so I'll take his room." Beat it, old timer.

POOR MAN EXITS, sadly. RICH MAN, BOY, and RICH WOMAN ENTER. AMOS flips the sign to read "Vacancy."

AMOS: Lodgings, noble sir? For you and the misses. What's this? A little boy. (*He pats the BOY on the head. The BOY kicks him in the shin.*)

BOY: Don't touch me.

AMOS: Lovely boy. So well-mannered. Stay with us, only 30 shekels a night. Fridays are double, but Sabbaths are free.

RICH MAN: All right. (*He looks at RICH WOMAN, who is pleased with the attention shown to the BOY. She nods.*)