

**GOD IS . . . FORGIVING
(PRODIGAL SON)**

by Cathy Spurr
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CHARACTERS - PEOPLE

WORSHIP LEADER
DAD
SON
BANK COLLECTOR
“UNTRUE FRIEND” #1
2-3 GANG-LIKE KIDS

CHARACTERS - PUPPETS

JAMES (THE BIBLE)
JOEY
STEPHANIE
PIG
APARTMENT OWNER

PROPS

COMB
BANDANAS FOR “GANG-LIKE” KIDS
CUT OUT, STAND UP PIGS & PIG TROUGH
6-PACK COKE
BAG OF STUFF: COOKIES, CHIPS, ETC
PLAY MONEY IN PANT’S POCKET
“NO TRESPASSING” SIGN, & “FOR RENT” SIGN
NICE, WHITE T-SHIRT & RAGGEDY, TORN, MUDDY T-SHIRT
STROBE
STORE BACKDROP
PUPPET STAGE
SCHOOL BACKDROP
BARN DOOR TO TRANSFORM SCHOOL
MONEY BOX
LARGE PLASTIC SHOPPING BAG - STUFFED
LONG LIST OF STUFF FOR BANKER TO READ FROM
TARP
CHEERIOS & FEED BASKET
BOOM BOX

SPECIAL EFFECTS:

VIDEO NOISES, WILD MUSIC
DOORBELL
“PIG SONG” DITTY BY CATHY SPURR
“I’VE GOT MONEY” DITTY BY CATHY SPURR
“WHEN GOD RAN” BY BENNY HESTER”

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LIGHT CUE - UP ON SINGERS

CUE SONG - ROCK THE WORLD

LIGHT CUE - UP ON STAGE RIGHT

WORSHIP LEADER OPENS WITH SHORT PRAYER

WORSHIP LEADER: GOOD MORNING!

JAMES: (*James comes up in puppet stage*) GOOD MORNING!

WORSHIP LEADER: OH, AND GOOD MORNING TO YOU TOO, JAMES. RAISE YOUR HAND IF YOU'VE EVER HAD YOUR FEELINGS HURT. (*kids respond*) DOESN'T IT MAKE YOU SO MAD YOU JUST WANNA . . . BOY! AND SOMETIMES, WHAT'S EVEN HARDER, IS WHEN THEY TELL YOU THEY'RE SORRY AND YOU **KNOW** THAT YOU HAVE TO FORGIVE EM, BUT . . . YOU REALLY DON'T WANT TO!

JAMES: WELL, YOU KNOW, THE BIBLE SAYS WE MUST FORGIVE OTHERS BECAUSE GOD FORGAVE US.

WORSHIP LEADER: WHAT ABOUT WHEN YOU'VE DONE SOMETHING REALLY, REALLY BAD AND YOU'RE AFRAID THAT MAYBE GOD WON'T FORGIVE YOU? MAYBE YOU'VE EVEN FELT LIKE THAT. WELL THEN, TODAY'S STORY IS JUST FOR YOU! WE'RE GOING TO TALK ABOUT HOW GOD IS FORGIVING. AND THAT MEANS TO EVERYONE! LET'S WATCH AND LISTEN! (*puppet goes down*)

LIGHT CUE - DOWN ON SINGERS
HOUSE LIGHTS DOWN EXCEPT FAR REAR

Stephanie is combing hair when Joey comes up in a panic.

JOEY: (*frantic*) OH NO! STEPHANIE! YOU'VE GOT TO HELP ME! YOU'VE JUST GOTTA!

STEPHANIE: CALM DOWN, JOEY AND TELL ME WHAT'S WRONG.

JOEY: I'VE DONE SOMETHING REALLY, REALLY STUPID! YOU KNOW THAT GROUP OF GUYS AT OUR SCHOOL THAT ARE ALWAYS GETTING IN TROUBLE?

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STEPHANIE: YEAH, THEY'RE NOT A GROUP, THEY'RE A GANG! AND THEY SPELL TROUBLE WITH A CAPITOL "T"!

JOEY: WELL, I'M THE ONE IN TROUBLE! I THOUGHT WE WERE JUST GONNA GO HANG OUT SOMEWHERE, BUT THEY WENT TO A STORE DOWNTOWN AND STARTED BREAKING WINDOWS. THEN THE COPS CAME. I WAS SO SCARED I RAN AWAY. BUT I KNOW THEY'RE GONNA GO TELL MY PARENTS. THEY MIGHT EVEN ARREST ME! STEPHANIE, YOU'VE GOT TO HIDE ME! I CAN'T EVER GO HOME NOW!

STEPHANIE: THAT'S NOT TRUE! JOEY, IF YOU'VE DONE SOMETHING WRONG YOU HAVE TO TAKE THE CONSEQUENCES - - GOOD OR BAD. BUT YOUR MOM AND DAD LOVE YOU AND THEY WILL FORGIVE YOU. LET ME TELL YOU A STORY ABOUT A GUY WHO THOUGHT THAT RUNNING AWAY FROM HIS PROBLEMS WOULD MAKE THEM BETTER . . . *(puppets down after light change)*

LIGHT CUE - DOWN ON STAGE RIGHT, UP ON PORTABLE

SON: *(serious and kind of angry and cocky)* DAD . . . YOU SAID THAT SOMEDAY I WOULD GET MY SHARE OF THE FAMILY MONEY . . . RIGHT?

DAD: THAT'S RIGHT, SON. WHEN I SEE THAT YOU'RE READY TO GO OUT ON YOUR OWN . . . AND THAT . . .

SON: *(interrupts)* WELL, DAD, I'M READY! AND I WANT MY SHARE NOW! I'M TIRED OF YOU TELLING ME WHAT TO DO. I WANT TO LIVE MY OWN LIFE AND DO WHAT I WANT TO DO.

DAD: NOW, SON, I DON'T THINK . . .

SON: *(interrupts)* DAD, I'M LEAVING AND YOU CAN'T STOP ME! SO GIVE ME MY MONEY AND I'M OUTTA HERE!

DAD: ALL RIGHT . . . *(reaches into money box and gets money)* HERE YOU GO, SON . . .

Gang kids wander over to store, mimeing animated conversation, apartment owner comes up in puppet stage.

LIGHT CUE - DOWN ON PORTABLE, UP CENTER & RIGHT STAGE

SON: *(as he walks away)* DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME DAD, I'M GONNA BE FINE. *(holds money out and fans finger through it)* JUST FINE!

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CUE SONG - "I'VE GOT MONEY" DITTY

(Son proudly struts during song, flashing money as he goes down center aisle and returns up left aisle to center stage where "gang" kids are hanging out in front of store. He pulls money out and pretends to pay someone at store, picks up big shopping bag full of "stuff" on his way to rent house. He walks over to house that has "for rent" sign . . . turns to puppet stage & talks to apartment owner.)

SON: *(to apartment owner)* I'D LIKE TO RENT THIS APARTMENT. HOW MUCH? *(pulls out his cash)*

APARTMENT OWNER: *(thinking to himself)* LET'S SEE, FIRST AND LAST MONTH'S RENT, PLUS A CLEANING DEPOSIT . . . THAT'LL BE TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS.

SON: *(surprised)* TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS! WOW, THAT'S A LOT, BUT I'VE GOT PLENTY OF MONEY, SO . . . *(hands the man some money)* NO PROBLEM! *(kids wander over from store)* HEY, HERE COME THE FRIENDS I MET WHEN I WENT SHOPPING. HEY GUYS, HOW BOUT HANGING OUT IN MY NEW APARTMENT? I'VE GOT SOME NEW VIDEO GAMES, A STEREO, FOOD . . .

UNTRUE FRIEND #1: *(gives prodigal son the "thumbs up" sign, walks over and grabs six pack of coke out of shopping bag, everybody agrees with "thumbs up" sign. Untrue friend #1 opens apartment door, strobe light is flashing, boom box is blaring out. all walk in . . . prodigal son is the last one in . . . gives a "thumbs up" to the audience.*

SOUND CUE - VIDEO NOISES, WILD MUSIC

Bank collector walks across below stage, comes up steps, stage right and talks to apartment owner. Sound effects come down in volume.

BANK COLLECTOR: I'M HERE TO COLLECT MONEY FROM SOME IRRESPONSIBLE KID WHO'S BEEN FLASHIN MONEY & TALKIN BIG ALL OVER TOWN.

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APARTMENT OWNER: *(points to apartment)* YAH, HE'S HERE. HE'S BEHIND ON HIS RENT TOO.

BANK COLLECTOR: *(approaches apartment and rings doorbell)*

SOUND CUE - DOORBELL

SON: HEY, I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE PIZZA MAN . . . WOULD YOU LIKE TO JOIN THE PARTY? IT'S BEEN GOIN' ON EVERY NIGHT FOR THE LAST TWO MONTHS. THIS PARTY IS NEVER GONNA END. YOU SHOULD SEE ALL MY STUFF! WHAT A BLAST!

BANK COLLECTOR: I'M HERE TO PULL THE PLUG ON YOUR PARTY! I'M FROM THE BANK AND YOU MISSED THE PAYMENT ON YOUR . . .
(looks at paper with long list of stuff that unrolls & hits floor) MOTORCYCLE, STEREO SYSTEM, VIDEO ARCADE GAMES, BIG SCREEN T.V., YOUR . . .

SON: *(looking shocked & bummed, interrupts)* DIDN'T I SEND IT? *(puts hands in pockets and feels for money, gets shocked look on face)* I'M SURE I'VE GOT MORE MONEY RIGHT HERE . . . *(pulls out one empty pocket)* I'M SURE . . . *(pulls out second empty pocket)*

APARTMENT OWNER: *(puts up "no trespassing" sign)* KID, YOU'RE OUTTA HERE!

BANK COLLECTOR: NO MONEY, NO STUFF, NO HOUSE! MY MEN WILL COME BY IN AN HOUR TO PICK UP ALL YOUR . . . "STUFF!"

UNTRUE FRIEND #1: *(walks out, followed by rest of gang, waving good riddance & not looking back)* HEY EVERYBODY, THERE'S A PARTY AT SMITTY'S HOUSE. LET'S GO! *(exit down stairs and down center aisle to back)*

SON: HEY, WAIT A MINUTE . . . WHERE YOU GOIN'? . . . *(puts hand up like he's asking a question)* WHAT ABOUT ME? *(exits off stage left and puts on muddy, ripped T-shirt, gets feed basket and sits in front of pig pen.)*

LIGHT CUE - DOWN ON CENTER STAGE

Joey and Stephanie come up in puppet stage.

JOEY: WELL, AT LEAST HE GOT TO LEAVE HOME. HE DIDN'T HAVE TO FACE UP TO ANY PROBLEMS. HE RAN AWAY FROM HIS PROBLEMS.

STEPHANIE: RUNNING AWAY ISN'T THE WAY TO MAKE PROBLEMS GO

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AWAY. IT ONLY ADDS TO THEM!

JOEY: WELL, HE DIDN'T SEEM TO BE DOIN SO BAD. HE WAS EVEN HAVING FUN FOR A WHILE!

STEPHANIE: YEAH, BUT THERE ARE ALWAYS CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR ACTIONS.

JOEY: LIKE WHAT? HE WASN'T DOIN ANYTHING WRONG!

STEPHANIE: LET'S WATCH AND SEE . . . THERE'S MORE TO THIS STORY!

LIGHT CUE - DOWN ON STAGE RIGHT, UP STAGE LEFT

Puppet pigs are behind pig pen, ready for cue to come up oinking)

SON: *(with disgust)* LOOK AT ME! I'M FEEDING THE PIGS . . . WHAT A STINKY JOB *(holds nose)*

PUPPET PIGS: OINK! OINK! OINK! etc.

SON: *(looks at pigs with disgust)* I DON'T EVEN MAKE ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY A BIG MAC. I'M STARVING!! *(he picks up pig food basket, eyes it with disgust, and looks at audience)* I GUESS I COULD TRY SOME OF THIS . . . *(tastes it and spits it out)* YUK! NO WAY! WHAT AM I GONNA DO? *(throws head back and looks up and sees pig)*

CUE SONG - PIG SONG DITTY

SON: *(sarcastically)* HOME IN THE PIG PEN? HOME? . . . HEY, I COULD GO HOME! *(gets excited)* THE MEN WHO WORK FOR MY DAD MAKE FIVE HUNDRED TIMES WHAT I MAKE WORKING HERE. . . AND MAYBE MY DAD WILL LET ME SLEEP IN THE GARAGE AND SWEEP HIS FACTORY FLOORS. . . . BUT GOSH, I WONDER IF MY DAD COULD EVER FORGIVE ME? I'VE GOT TO GO BACK AND ASK FOR HIS FORGIVENESS.

CUE SONG - WHEN GOD RAN by Benny Hester
(play as background music)

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SON: *(prays)* DEAR GOD, PLEASE FORGIVE ME . . . PLEASE GIVE ME THE WORDS TO SAY TO MY DAD AND HELP ME FIND HIM . . . *(gets up & walks to brick wall of stage)*

LIGHT CUE - SLOWLY BRING LIGHTS UP ON PORTABLE

DAD: *(in the back of the room, standing and praying)* DEAR LORD GOD, PLEASE LORD, WATCH OVER MY SON AND PROTECT HIM. AND FATHER, WOULD YOU PUT IT INTO HIS HEART TO LEAD HIM BACK HOME WHERE HE BELONGS, WITH HIS DAD? FATHER GOD, HELP ME FIND MY SON. IN JESUS NAME I PRAY. AMEN. *(Dad slowly walks down center aisle, peering out with hand to forehead, looking for his son)*

SON: THERE'S SOMEONE STANDING OUT THERE, HE'S LOOKING FOR SOMEONE.

DAD: *(as he walks down center aisle he asks kids)* HAVE YOU SEEN MY SON? HAVE YOU SEEN HIM?

SON: *(looking more intently)* HEY, WAIT A MINUTE, THAT'S MY DAD . . . *(jumps off stage and runs, yelling)* DAD! HEY, DAD!

DAD: *(runs and hugs son. they meet in center aisle close to portable stage)* SON, THANK GOD YOU'RE HOME!

SON: *(desperately cries out, hangs his head)* DAD, PLEASE FORGIVE ME! I WANT TO COME HOME . . . *(looks at his dad)* I'LL SLEEP IN THE GARAGE AND SWEEP THE FLOORS IN YOUR FACTORY . . . *(hangs his head again)* JUST SAY YOU'LL FORGIVE ME . . .

DAD: SON . . . YOUR OLD ROOM IS STILL WAITING FOR YOU. LET'S GET YOUR BROTHER AND GO OUT AND CELEBRATE! GOD HAS BROUGHT YOU BACK TO ME. I'M THE HAPPIEST MAN ON EARTH! *(hugs son and they finish walking down aisle and up stairs with arms around each other, exit stage left)*

LIGHT CUE - DOWN ON STAGE LEFT, UP STAGE RIGHT

Joey & Stephanie come up in puppet stage.

JOEY: HE WAS LUCKY. HIS FATHER FORGAVE HIM!

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STEPHANIE: HE DIDN'T KNOW WHETHER HIS FATHER WOULD FORGIVE HIM. BUT HE DID KNOW THAT HE NEEDED TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS ACTIONS AND TAKE WHATEVER CONSEQUENCES THERE WERE. JUST LIKE YOU NEED TO DO.

(James comes up in puppet stage) OH, HERE'S JAMES. LET'S SEE WHAT HE SAYS.

JAMES: REPEAT AFTER ME:

IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS,
HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST
TO FORGIVE US OUR SINS
AND TO CLEANSE US
FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

1st JOHN 1:9

Joey turns and starts to leave.

STEPHANIE: HEY JOEY, WHERE YA GOIN'?

JOEY: I'M GOIN HOME AND CONFESS TO MY PARENTS ABOUT THOSE BROKEN WINDOWS. *(Joey exits)*

JAMES: HEY KIDS, IS JOEY DOING THE RIGHT THING? *(kids respond)* GOD WILL ALWAYS FORGIVE YOU IF YOU COME TO HIM AND REALLY WANT TO BE FORGIVEN.

LIGHT CUE - UP ON SINGERS

WORSHIP LEADER: Closing Prayer.

CUE SONG - IF WE TURN