

THE LORD'S TABLE

The Original Stageplay



Cleveland O. McLeish

The Lord's Table by Cleveland O. McLeish

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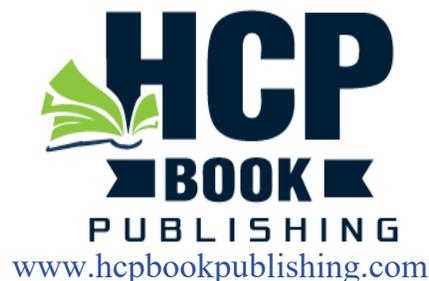
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Characters

Michael

Jesus

Satan

Jennifer

Judith

Peter

James

John

Judas

Annas

Caiaphas

Pilate

Commanding Officer

Soldiers

Extras (Some with speaking lines)

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Setting

The Lord's table is positioned Front-Stage Right where it remains for the entire play. It has a Bible, hymnal, and some gospel CDs.

There is another table Front-Stage Left. We can't refer to this table as Satan's table because the truth is, some of the items on this table of themselves are not bad...but the context in which they are used can be. On this table is a laptop, iPods, cell phones, secular music CDs, a television, radios, a variety of foods and drinks, alcohol, cigarettes, clothes, money, and just about anything else that appeals to people (Yes, this table will have to be a little bigger than the other)

The rest of the stage is the living room with an area separated for kitchen/dining.

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The Story

This story takes the Easter Story of Christ's death and puts it in a contemporary setting to bring about a major change in the life of our main character, Michael.

Michael is a qualified accountant married to a beautiful Real Estate Agent, but his marriage takes a turn for the worst when he quits his job and is unable to find other employment. But Michael's problem is not linked to his unemployment, but his spiritual state and the table he spends most of his time feasting from.

Unknown to Michael is a conflict going on between Jesus & Satan for his soul. Satan will use all the weapons at his disposal to sink Michael deeper into sin, but Jesus has His own plan. He uses the Easter Story in a most remarkable way to bring about change.

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Play Details

Length: 60 Minutes

Cast: 12 males, 2 females. Plus extras.

Audience: Teens & Adults

Genre: Contemporary and Biblical Drama

THE SCRIPT



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SCENE 1

LIGHTS UP

Jesus is standing between the two tables as Satan enters and approaches.

JESUS: Where are you coming from?

SATAN: Just taking a walk. As usual. Don't you ever grow tired of these games?

JESUS: It's not a game for me. The souls of these people mean something to me. It's why I died for them.

SATAN: A noble act...I must say, but with time, even the value of that sacrifice has lost meaning to the common man.

JESUS: You would want to believe that.

Satan walks over to the Lord's Table.

SATAN: I hate to be the bearer of bad news...okay, who am I kidding...I love to be the bearer of bad news. This table is just not very appealing to your precious human beings.

Satan takes up the Bible.

SATAN: A Bible? I have put one of these in the back pockets of criminals. They quote scripture before committing murder.

JESUS: Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof.

Satan puts the Bible down and takes up the hymnal.

SATAN: Seriously, a hymnal? This is so primitive. I have given the people variety...too much to choose from. Oh, and my personal favorite (*puts the hymnal down and picks up one gospel cd*) Gospel music...like, so old school.

JESUS: Everything my children need is on this table.

SATAN: Yeah, but...they don't know that, do they?

Pause.

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SATAN: Why do you continue to pursue these people?

JESUS: Because I love them.

SATAN: But they don't love you.

JESUS: Some of them do.

SATAN: Really...like Michael here?

JESUS: Yes.

SATAN: Allow me to demonstrate what Michael really loves.

Michael enters. He walks to the Lord's table. Rubbing his chin, trying to make a decision, he reaches for the Bible...just then his cell phone on the other table starts to ring. He goes to answer it.

MICHAEL: *(pressing the phone to his ears)* Hi...no I wasn't doing anything important. What's up?

Michael exits.

SATAN: He just brushed you off to talk to a female who is not even his wife. *(Sarcastic)* I can definitely feel the love!

JESUS: There is no victory here for you, Satan.

SATAN: That's just it, Jesus. Maybe you won the war...but I am winning the battles. As long as people spend more time over on this table right here, there is no victory for you. That's just the way it is.

Satan goes over to the big table.

SATAN: I have everything that appeals to people right here. They have no reason to go over to that bland table over there. They want excitement...a quick fix...temporary pleasure...relief from stress and depression...I got a temporary fix right here that gives just enough to have them coming back for more.

JESUS: They only need to be reminded.

SATAN: Yeah, well...you have your ways and I have mine.

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Michael enters, still talking on his cell phone. He takes a seat on the couch.

MICHAEL: This evening is bad for me. How about tomorrow afternoon? (*Listens*) Ok sweetness, I will see you then. (*Michaels hangs up*)

SATAN: (*smiles*) Time to play.

Satan exits.

Jesus looks at Michael with compassionate eyes. Michael is smiling at his phone.

JESUS: There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: And God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. (*Jesus remains for a beat*)

The smile fades from Michael's face.

MICHAEL: I hope you know what you are doing, Michey boy.

Jesus exits.

Jennifer enters, just coming from work. She lays her briefcase down and removes her coat.

JENNIFER: You didn't call me today.

MICHAEL: Good evening, ma'am. How was your day?

JENNIFER: You should have called if you cared.

MICHAEL: I was busy.

JENNIFER: Doing what?

MICHAEL: I don't want to do this right now. Okay?

JENNIFER: How many application letters did you send out today?

MICHAEL: How many properties did you sell today?

JENNIFER: This is not a game, Michael. You need to get a job. I can't bear this weight alone.

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MICHAEL: You have said that every single day for the past three months. When I told you I was going to quit my job, why didn't you tell me then it was a bad idea?

JENNIFER: I didn't think you were stupid enough to leave.

MICHAEL: What did you just call me?

JENNIFER: No one in their right mind would leave a secure job unless they found another one.

MICHAEL: I wasn't happy there.

JENNIFER: Are you happy now?

MICHAEL: Not with you breathing down my neck all the time.

Michael goes to the big table and pours himself a drink.

JENNIFER: Since when did you start drinking?

MICHAEL: Since I married you.

Pause.

JENNIFER: *(grabs her stuff)* I have some paper work to do.

Jennifer exits.

Michael takes another drink.

MICHAEL: *(calls offstage)* And I will be sleeping on the couch tonight...*(sighs deeply, allowing the alcohol to sink in)*... Again!

LIGHTS OUT

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SCENE 2

LIGHTS UP

Michael is at Center Stage with Judith.

Judith is examining a document she has in her hand.

JUDITH: This resume needs work before you send it out.

MICHAEL: Well, that's why you are here.

Pause.

JUDITH: Are you sure you want to do this?

MICHAEL: How else am I going to get a job?

JUDITH: I wasn't talking about that.

MICHAEL: What were you talking about?

JUDITH: You and me.

Pause.

Michael goes to the large table and takes a snack.

JUDITH: If you keep eating like that, you are going to put on weight.

MICHAEL: It's comforting.

JUDITH: If it is comfort you need, all you have to do is come sit beside me.

Pause.

MICHAEL: Does it bother you at all that I am married?

JUDITH: *(looks Michael square in the eyes)* Not when I see something I want.

Pause.

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JUDITH: Michael, I have had a crush on you since high school. You know that. This is a dream come true for me.

MICHAEL: Yes, but we have traveled different roads.

JUDITH: And yet we keep on meeting. I think that's a sign.

MICHAEL: I am not comfortable having this conversation here...in this house.

JUDITH: Then maybe we should take our conversation elsewhere.

MICHAEL: Do you have somewhere in mind?

JUDITH: I do, actually.

Michael again goes to the big table. He takes another snack, a drink, and considers a cigar but decides against it.

Judith comes over and takes his glass. She pours herself a drink and comes very close to Michael.

There is a knock at the door.

JUDITH: Your wife?

MICHAEL: My wife wouldn't knock. Do me a favor and wait in the other room.

JUDITH: I hate being the one to hide.

Judith drinks from the glass and exits.

Michael answers the door.

Bishop Thomas walks in.

BISHOP THOMAS: Brother Michael.

MICHAEL: Bishop.

Bishop Thomas walks over to the large table.

MICHAEL: You caught me at a bad time, Bishop.

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BISHOP THOMAS: Oh, my apologies. What were you doing?

Pause. Michael can't answer. Bishop glances at the large table.

BISHOP THOMAS: My, my. This table wasn't so big the last time I visited you.

MICHAEL: It looks the same to me. Why are you here, sir?

BISHOP THOMAS: It's just a routine check.

MICHAEL: Since when do you do routine checks?

BISHOP THOMAS: I go as the Lord bids me to go, brother...and, personally, I am just concerned about one of the more gifted sheep in my flock.

Pause.

BISHOP THOMAS: You haven't been to church in five weeks, Michael.

MICHAEL: I have just been busy.

BISHOP THOMAS: Yeah, I hear you. What I can't figure out is, and maybe you can explain this to me, how were you less busy when you were employed?

Pause.

Bishop Thomas walks over to the Lord's Table. He takes the Bible up and wipes dust from it.

BISHOP THOMAS: Funny how nothing on that table over there is gathering dust.

MICHAEL: Are you here to judge me, sir?

BISHOP THOMAS: You remind me so much of when I was young. Vibrant, gifted, fearless.

MICHAEL: Who are you talking about?

BISHOP THOMAS: It's funny you should ask me that question.

Pause.

MICHAEL: I just need some time to figure out where I am going.

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BISHOP THOMAS: Why would you need to figure that out? God already knows where you are going.

MICHAEL: Yeah well, God seemed to have distanced himself from me.

BISHOP THOMAS: I think you have distanced yourself from Him.

MICHAEL: You don't know what I am going through, Bishop.

BISHOP THOMAS: I know that your life will never get better until you start spending more time at the Lord's table. (*Puts the Bible down*)

MICHAEL: It just doesn't appeal to me anymore.

BISHOP THOMAS: And the world does?

Pause.

BISHOP THOMAS: What will it profit a man to gain the whole world...and lose his soul?

Pause.

BISHOP THOMAS: Listen, God has not forsaken you.

MICHAEL: Are you sure about that?

BISHOP THOMAS: Sure enough to recommend you as our preacher for Easter Sunday.

MICHAEL: I don't think I am ready for that.

BISHOP THOMAS: Then you better get busy getting ready, and since time is so short, I will not take up anymore of it. How is Jen?

MICHAEL: I am not sure.

BISHOP THOMAS: I am praying for you guys. Have a good day, Michael.

Bishop Thomas pats Michael on the shoulder and exits.

Michael looks over at the Lord's table.

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Judith comes out and stands between him and the table.

JUDITH: I didn't know you were still into this church thing.

MICHAEL: There is a lot you don't know about me, Judith.

JUDITH: Then maybe we need to be spending more time together.

Pause.

JUDITH: I am going on a business trip Easter Weekend. I want you to come with me, unless you would rather be at church preaching.

Pause.

MICHAEL: I will think about it.

JUDITH: You do that, Michael. (*Judith gathers some paperwork*) I will revamp your resume and send it to your email address later. I will let myself out. Looks like you have some very big decisions to make. Let's have lunch tomorrow.

MICHAEL: Okay, lunch sounds good.

JUDITH: I love you, Michael.

Pause.

MICHAEL: I know.

Judith exits.

LIGHTS OUT