

2016 Easter Drama

Act 1

Three groups of actors/actresses will be on stage. After the group has delivered their lines, they will rotate towards the back of the stage. After each group, the worship team will sing a verse from 'Were You There?'. After the verse, the next group will step into the spotlight.

Narrator: Jesus taught the people with an authority that could only come from God. He had performed miracles that only God could do. And He loved others with a love that proved He was God. But in His final days, the people rejected Him.

Jesus was arrested and put on trial before Caiaphas, the High Priest, and a group of religious leaders. They were outraged by Jesus' claim to be the Son of God. To them, this was a lie that should be punished by death!

After that, Jesus was questioned by the Roman officials, Pilate and Herod. Neither of these men wanted to be the one that punished Jesus. So, Pilate let the crowds of people decide what should happen to Jesus. The crowds shouted their answer, "Crucify Him!" Jesus had done nothing wrong, but they were not going to let him go free.

So on that Friday, Jesus was beaten, mocked, and led outside the city to be crucified. Nails were driven through His hands and His feet, and the Cross was raised up for everyone to watch Him die. He endured the pain for hours, but then took a final breath and gave up His life.

After Jesus died, Joseph of Arimathea took his body and placed it in the tomb. The tomb was sealed with a large stone. It all seemed like this could be the end of the story. The people were trying to understand what had just happened.

Scene 1 – The Mocking Townspeople

T3: Days like today always make me feel sick to my stomach.

T1: Well, I'm glad it's over! From the moment He came into Jerusalem, that Jesus has made the whole city feel like a circus! Maybe now things will finally get back to normal!

T2: I know exactly what you mean! All of His followers were walking around talking about miracles He had done. They said He healed a blind man near Jericho. They said, in Capernaum, He healed a man who couldn't walk. Some even said He raised Lazarus from the dead! How could a man save all these people, and He couldn't even save himself!

T1: Ha! I heard he claimed to be the Son of God who had come to build a new kingdom. Where's that new kingdom now? If he were the one who came to save us—the Messiah, then surely God would've saved him!

T2: Now, he's dead and had to be buried in a tomb that belonged to someone else! I heard his followers were so scared that they scattered like cockroaches! They're all hiding because Jesus is dead!

T3: I guess I just can't help but feel bad about everything that happened. I'm just not sure that He deserved the punishment that he got. And on the cross, he even asked God to forgive the people who were doing this to him!

T1: Are you serious? Are you saying you believe that he really was the Son of God?

T3: I don't know what to believe! All I'm saying is: *What if it was true? What if He really was the Son of God?*

T2: Well, it doesn't matter now. He's dead. He's buried. The story is over! *(T1 & T2 scoff walk off. T3 & T4 stay on stage)*

T4: What do you think will happen next? What if that's not really the end of the story?

T3: I don't know. We'll just have to wait and see what happens next. *(As they exit, the worship team will begin the 1st verse of 'Were You There?')*

Scene 2 – The Scared Religious Leaders

RL1: Are you sure we did the right thing?

RL2: Look, we did what we had to do. He was claiming to be the Messiah. He was hanging out with sinners. You heard him say that he had the power to forgive their sins! How could we let Him continue to say such lies?

Besides, if the people were to believe him and follow him, then what would happen to us? These sinners would claim to be holy like us. We would be nobody! We couldn't just sit back and let that happen! Jesus of Nazareth had to die!

RL1: But didn't all of Jesus' followers scatter and hide after he was arrested?

RL2: Maybe they are hiding or maybe they're just planning how to attack us next! They gave up their lives to follow this man, so I don't believe they will stop just because he is dead!

RL1: I've ordered guards to be at the tomb day and night. This should stop the disciples from trying to steal the body out of the tomb.

RL2: That's not enough! I don't want those disciples stealing the body and claiming that Jesus is alive! We will have the tomb sealed with a massive stone. Make it so big that only God himself could move that rock! If his followers are planning something, we must be ready!

RL1: I just hope we can be ready for whatever happens next. Did you hear about the curtain in the Temple? When Jesus died, it ripped in half all the way from the top to the bottom! How could something like that happen if this was just an ordinary man?

RL2: I don't know...I just don't know. But that's why we have to be ready...for whatever is about to happen.

(Both men exit. As they exit, the worship team will sing Verse 2 of 'Were You There?')

Scene 3 – Confused Followers

(A man (F2) joins the group on stage. It looks as though he's been running and checking behind him as he enters)

F1: Oh, Praise God you're alive! Where have you been?

F2: After Jesus was arrested, we were all afraid that we might be arrested or killed. So, we all went into hiding. Have you heard from any of the other disciples?

F3: Only Peter...poor Peter. He was so scared, three different times, he denied even knowing Jesus. He is so heart broken because he swore that he would never do that.

F4: We saw Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus take Jesus' body. They had to rush as the sun went down, but they prepared the body with spices and they placed it in a tomb. But now the tomb is guarded by soldiers and it has been sealed shut with a massive stone.

F1: I just don't understand why these things are happening. You can't imagine how awful it was to watch Jesus suffer on the Cross. There was nothing we could do to stop it. Jesus brought us so much hope, but it just seems like all of that hope died on the Cross with him!

F3: *(To F2)* Was this God's plan? Did you know that Jesus was going to die?

F2: I remember when we were on our way to Jerusalem and Jesus was telling us that he would soon be turned over to the chief priests. He said that he would be beaten,

flogged, and crucified. It was such a long journey...we were tired...and that was such a terrible thing to think about. I don't think any of us really listened or believed what he was saying.

F4: Is that all he said? Did he tell you what would happen next?

F2: I don't exactly remember...it's all so confusing! I remember him saying something about raising up after three days. But how would that be? I mean, I saw him raise a young girl, a young boy, and Lazarus from the dead. But how could he possible raise himself?

F3: So, what are we supposed to do now? Is this the end? Do we go back to our old lives because Jesus is gone...forever?

F2: First, we need to find the others. We need to be together at a time like this. Then, we pray. We pray that Jesus' words were true and that He will be raised from the dead.

F4: Do you really believe?

F2: I believe Jesus is the Son of God. I believe He came to save us. I'm just as afraid and confused as you are...but I do want to believe that He will live again. We will just have to wait and see...

(Final group exits the stage. The worship team sings the third verse of 'Were You There?')

Act 2

The Narrator will describe the transition from hopelessness to joy of the resurrection. Lighting will be used to highlight the empty tomb on the backdrop. We want there to be a noticeable change in pace, attitude, and environment as we describe the resurrection.

Scene 1

Narrator: After Jesus was buried, people weren't really sure what was happening or how they should feel. Those who never knew Jesus were just glad that the city would finally be calm again.

The religious leaders who had plotted to kill Jesus were still afraid that his followers would revolt against the Temple.

And even Jesus' followers were confused. Even though Jesus had told them about His own death, they just did not expect it all to happen this way. Their hope seemed to be fading just like the Sun on Saturday evening.

But by the dawn of Sunday morning, the whole world would be changed!

(Narrator picks up his pace and continues with excitement)

Early in the morning, Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James, went to the tomb. They were going to anoint the body with spices, which was a common practice in those days.

On the way to the tomb, the ladies wondered how they would remove the stone that sealed the tomb. But as they approached the tomb, they found the stone already rolled away! Before their shock could even set in, they saw an angel who said to them:

"Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the place where he lay. ⁷ Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he has risen from the dead, and behold, he is going before you to Galilee; there you will see him. (Matthew 28:5-7)

(After the angel's announcement of the resurrection, the worship team will sing the final verse of 'Were You There?' The Narrator will remain on stage during the song and continue with the following lines once the song is finished.)

Scene 2 — Women Share the Resurrection News

Narrator: That moment was filled with hope! Everything they had believed was true! Jesus—the Savior—was alive! And so the women, filled with joy and excitement, rushed back to tell the others what they had seen.

(Two women rush on stage to tell the others about the resurrection of Jesus. They are excited and out of breath!)

F3: It's true! It's true! We heard the angel say that it is true!

F2 or other man: Whoa! Slow down, what are you talking about? What is true?

F3: Jesus is alive! The tomb is empty and He is not there! He is Risen!

F4: When we got to the tomb, we saw the stone rolled back. We thought someone had robbed the grave and stolen the body, but an angel told us that Jesus has risen!

F3: The angel said that Jesus would come and meet us in Galilee. Quick, quick! We must gather our things and go there!

F2: I just can't believe it! Jesus is alive? Have you told anyone else?

F4: We saw Peter in the city and we told him what the angel said. He took off running towards the tomb to see it for himself!

F3: Oh, my heart is racing with joy! Jesus—our Savior—is alive! Do you know what this means? It means everything we have believed, everything we have hoped for, is all true! Jesus is the One who forgives our sin and gives us eternal life with God!

F2: My heart is bursting too! Let's go to Galilee and wait for Him!

(All actors/actresses exit. Worship Team begins worship set with 'Happy Day')