

WHAT A FUNNY REVEREND!

A play in One Act

By

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CHARACTERS

ADRIAN:	Church bookkeeper
PASTOR MITCHEL:	Pastor of the Pentecostal church
FRED:	Adrian's neighbour
BODYGUARD # 1:	Pastor Mitchel bodyguard
BODYGUARD # 2:	Pastor Mitchel bodyguard
VOICE OF ALMIGHTY:	One of the Pastor's bodyguard
CHOIR & CONGREGATION:	men and women
A WOMAN'S VOICE:	The woman in the office

SETTING: A New Pentecostal Church anywhere in the world.

TIME: The present day. Friday between six and ten in the evening.

ACT I

SCENE 1

THERE'S A RED CROSS ON A WHITE CLOTH HANGING ON THE WALL. IN THE FRONT OF THE WALL IS THE STAGE PULPIT. AT THE DOWNSTAGE RIGHT, THREE BLUE CHAIRS ARE FACING THE AUDITORIUM. AT THE DOWNSTAGE LEFT, THERE IS A TABLE DECORATED WITH WHITE CLOTH AND TWO DARKER BLUE CHAIRS. AT THE UPSTAGE LEFT, THERE IS A BOOKSHELF. WHEN LIGHTS UP, WE SEE PASTOR MITCHEL ON THE PULPIT, PREACHING. ON HIS SIDES STAND TWO BODYGUARDS WEARING BLACK SUITS LIKE GANGSTERS. A CHOIR, WOMEN WEAR BLUE GOWNS STANDING IN THE FRONT OF THE CONGREGATION.

PASTOR MITCHEL: When the Lord gives you what you asked, you say, "Amen." Is an 'amen' enough?

THE CONGREGATION.: (VERY LOUD AND EXTENDED) No.

PASTOR MITCHEL: When he gives you daily life, you always say, "Amen." Beloved! Do you think it is enough?

THE CONGREGATION: (VERY LOUD AND EXTENDED) No.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Beloved. The ways of the Lord are impenetrable.

THE CONGREGATION.: (VERY LOUD AND EXTENDED) Yes.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Right, my brothers and sisters. You must pay back to the Lord what he gave to you with mercy. Well! Last night, the Lord had revealed to me something significant. He said: "Oh, Mitchel! I am asking you to build for me a big temple, such as the one King Solomon dedicated to me. Dear brothers and sisters. Commit to the Lord what you owe him is a vital decision. Give what you have, golden or money. Don't hide things because Lord knows how much you have in your pocket. He also knows how much you saved in your savings bank account. Commit everything to him; then he blesses you—Hebrews

chapter ten, verse twenty-two to twenty-five. Says: "Let us draw near to Lord with a sincere heart and with the full assurance that faith brings, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. ... For he who promised is faithful. No! And let us think how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of exercising, but furthering one another—and all the more as you attend the day approaching."

LIGHTS GO OUT. WHEN THEY LIGHT UP, ADRIAN, WITH A WHITE SHIRT AND BLACK TROUSERS, SITS ON THE CHAIR IN THE FRONT OF THE COMPUTER TABLE, DOING THE CHURCH BOOK. HE IS WHISTLING A CHURCH TUNE. ENTER PASTOR MITCHEL, WEARING A CHIC COSTUME, A SHIRT WITH A BLACK COLLAR. ON HIS SIDE, TWO BODYGUARDS WERE WEARING BLACK T-SHIRTS AND BLACK SUNGLASSES.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (EMBARRASSED) New technology, uh! When they conceive and fabricate all those worldly things, they think they are more intelligent than the Lord. But when we start using them, problems begin. What a waste, eh!

ADRIAN STOPS WORKING. HE LOOKS AT PASTOR MITCHEL.

ADRIAN: What is it, Pastor Mitchel?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Mobile phones, tablets, laptops, games...

ADRIAN: Okay. How can I help you?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Nothing, Adrian. I don't need anything from a human being. The Lord is with me.

ADRIAN: I know you. When you start blaming things, that means something is wrong. Please, put your stubbornness behind you.

PASTOR MITCHEL: All right! You got me. My Laptop is freezing. Do you know someone who can fix it for me?

ADRIAN: I have a friend who can check it for you.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Great! Call him for me, please.

ADRIAN: I will do.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Wait a minute. Is your friend a Christian?

ADRIAN: What does it have to do with being a Christian? So, you tell me everyone willing to offer you service must be a Christian?

PASTOR MITCHEL: I think a God-fearing person will never scam me.

ADRIAN: I don't know about that, but my friend is a wonderful man without blame even if he does not belong to any religion.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Without blame?

ADRIAN: I admit that sometimes he can be very provocative, but he is a very good man.

PASTOR MITCHEL: You see, that is what I am talking about.

ADRIAN: Do you want me to ring him or not, Pastor Mitchel?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Let me pray to the Lord. He will tell me if your friend is the best person for my Laptop?

ADRIAN: Since when do you ask me for permission before you pray?

PASTOR MITCHEL SPEAKS IN TONGUES. THEN HE STARTS PRAYING.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Dear Lord. You know better than me; human beings think they are beyond you when fabricating technological gadgets. They become so arrogant, forgetting that you are the one who gave that intelligence. I am in trouble. My Laptop is not working, and I want someone to repair it, but I can't find a Christian person to do it for me. That is the reason I am begging you to show me the way. I want you to tell me if I can persuade that person and change his views about the church. In the name of your son, Emmanuel. Amen.

ADRIAN: I did not hear you saying the name of my friend.

PASTOR MITCHEL: There is no need for that, Adrian. Our Lord knows I was referring to your friend.

ADRIAN: If you say so. What did the Lord say? May I ring him?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Well. He hesitated first, then finally, he said yes.

ADRIAN: Since when does God hesitate?

PASTOR MITCHEL: The ways of the Lord are mysterious.

ADRIAN: Do you want me to ring him or not?

PASTOR MITCHEL: You can call him.

ADRIAN: Promise me that you will not offend him.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I will not. You know me well.

ADRIAN: Otherwise, I encourage you to call brother Joseph to repair it for you.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Oh, him! I don't have confidence in him. I asked him to do it for me the last time, but it was catastrophic.

ADRIAN: So?

PASTOR MITCHEL: So, what?

ADRIAN: Should I ring him or not?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Yes, you can, but I don't want to be there while calling your atheist friend.

ADRIAN: Pastor? You promised.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Sometimes, people make promises they can't respect.

ADRIAN: Pastor.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I will see you later when my Laptop is repaired.

ADRIAN: You are selfish.

PASTOR MITCHEL: We live in a world of selfishness, my brother.

PASTOR MITCHEL EXITS. ADRIAN DIALS A NUMBER FROM HIS MOBILE PHONE.

ADRIAN: Yes, FRED. It's Adrian. I have a problem with one of the laptops here. Can you come, please? Yes, here in the church. Oh, FRED! Come on. The church will not bite you. Perfect, I am waiting for you.

IN A RUSH, PASTOR MITCHEL ENTERS.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Is he coming?

THE PASTOR IS AT THE BACK OF THE STAGE.

ADRIAN: Why are you back here?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Oh shit!

ADRIAN: You are swearing, Pastor.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I am sorry. What did your friend say?

ADRIAN: He said he would ask his Lord first.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Son of a bitch. What God? He doesn't even have God.

ADRIAN: Yes, he does.

PASTOR MITCHEL: What a sacrilege!

PASTOR MITCHEL STARTS SINGING AND DANCING.

ADRIAN: Is everything okay?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Can I tell you something?

ADRIAN: Of course, Pastor.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Did you know the music comes from heaven?

ADRIAN: I don't know about that.

PASTOR MITCHEL: How come? You are Christian. You have to know that.

ADRIAN: That is because I have never heard about that before.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Oh, Adrian. That is not fair. You must believe in everything.

ADRIAN: I believe in God. That is it.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I know, but you should believe that music comes from heaven.

ADRIAN: How can I hear about something I have never heard before?

PASTOR MITCHEL: That is a shame.

ADRIAN: Shame? Are you telling me that John Lennon, Madonna, and Michael Jackson copied music from heaven?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Obviously.

ADRIAN: Wow! Who were music celebrities in heaven then?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Good question. I have only one example to give to you. It was King David.

ADRIAN: Really? I thought he was living in Israel.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Yes, but he did live in earthly and celestial Israel.

ADRIAN: If you say so. You are the Pastor.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I know, I am. Adrian, every day, when I think about the marvels of the Lord, I am pleased. Oh! I forgot something. Did you know that King David danced for the Lord?

ADRIAN: Is it in the Bible?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Yes, of course. Samuel chapter 16: verse says: "As a young man, he played the sitar."

ADRIAN: I did not hear the verb to dance. And as far as I know, he was playing the harp and not a Sitar. Was he dancing the Rumba? Let me think, Reggae?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Don't make jokes about the Lord. Besides, you are wrong. It was a Sitar, and it's all written in the Bible.

ADRIAN: Sure! It's useless asking you again for biblical evidence, then. I am sure you have one.

PASTOR MITCHEL: According to King David, Christians must dance in the church to please the Lord.

ADRIAN: How can he oblige Christians to dance if he was not a Christian himself?

PASTOR MITCHEL: King David was a whole soul who had accomplished good work for the Lord.

ADRIAN: You did not answer my question.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Oh, the wonderful Kind David!

HE DODGES THE QUESTION. ENTER FRED, CARRYING A LAPTOP BAG.

FRED: Isn't he the guy who sent a general of his army to die so he could commit adultery with his wife?

PASTOR MITCHEL LOOKS AT FRED WITH DISGUST.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO ADRIAN.) Who the hell is this guy?

FRED: The one who will save your life.

ADRIAN: Pastor Mitchel, meet Fred.

PASTOR MITCHEL: What?

ADRIAN: He is the one who will repair your Laptop.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I see. That means I don't have a choice.

ADRIAN: No. You don't.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Well. Let him do it, even if I don't like him. (TO FRED) Do you believe in Emmanuel?

FRED: No. I don't.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Why?

FRED: I am not interested anymore in your Emmanuel and his twelve apostrophes.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Apostrophes?

FRED: Yes.

PASTOR MITCHEL: No. Apostles and not apostrophes.

FRED: What is the difference?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Yes, there is one. The apostrophe is a punctuation mark.

FRED: It is used to indicate possession, true or not?

PASTOR MITCHEL: So?

FRED: They all belonged to Emmanuel. Example "Harry's book.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I don't understand: Who is Harry?

FRED: It's just an example. The book belongs to Harry.

PASTOR MITCHEL: You, bastard.

ADRIAN: Pastor?

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO ADRIAN) What now?

ADRIAN: Harold is right to call them like that.

FRED: (TO ADRIAN) Sure.

ADRIAN: (TO FRED) Don't push it.

FRED: Alright.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Your friend is challenging God.

FRED: Challenging God? Serious?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Shit. Oh sorry. (TO ADRIAN) How could you do that to me? I wanted a Christian to repair my Laptop.

ADRIAN: Pastor, you are swearing again.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Oh, sorry.

FRED: Apology accepted.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO FRED) I am not apologizing to you.

ADRIAN: So, you wanted a Christian laptop doctor?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Of course, yes.

ADRIAN: If I am not mistaken, your doctor's name is Dutt Sanjay?

FRED: That guy is a Bollywood actor.

ADRIAN: Many people can have the same name.

FRED: I got it.

ADRIAN: If I remember correctly, that name is not Christian, right?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Yes, but...

ADRIAN: There is no but. He's a Hindu.

FRED: That is right.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO FRED) You shut up. May I remind you that this is a discussion among...

FRED: Do you want to say, Christian, dear Reverend?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Yes. Do you have a problem with that?

FRED: Not at all. Anyway, I am here to fix your Laptop.

PASTOR MITCHEL: So?

FRED: Not to be converted in the twelve apostrophes club.

PASTOR MITCHEL: What? I am changing my mind.

ADRIAN: Why, Pastor?

PASTOR MITCHEL: I am calling someone else to fix my Laptop.

FRED: It's up to you, dear Reverend.

ADRIAN: Calm, Pastor Mitchel. You two need to make peace.

FRED: Peace is not a problem for me. I am a peaceful man.

FRED WANTS TO SHAKE PASTOR MITCHEL'S HANDS TO MAKE PEACE, BUT PASTOR REFUSES AND LOOKS TO THE OTHER SIDE.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Peaceful, my ass.

FRED: What a funny pastor! How can you swear like that?

PASTOR MITCHEL: I am not a funny pastor. I can swear anytime I want.

ADRIAN: Really? Have you gone mental, Pastor?

PASTOR MITCHEL: What do you think Emmanuel did when he had chased people who were trading in the temple? Tell me, Adrian. Can you chase people from the church without swearing?

ADRIAN: Yes, of course. Have you gone mental, pastor?

FRED: I told you he is mental.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO ADRIAN) Call me when this son of a bitch has gone.

ADRIAN: Pastor?

ANGRILY, PASTOR MITCHEL LEAVES THE STAGE. ADRIAN HANDS THE LAPTOP TO FRED. FRED PUTS HIS BAG ON THE FLOOR AND SITS. THEN HE STARTS CHECKING THE IT. AT THE SAME TIME, ADRIAN CONTINUES TO DO THE CHURCH BOOKS. SUDDENLY, FRED STARTS SINGING LOUDLY EVEN THOUGH HE WEARS HEADPHONES.

ADRIAN: Do you mind lowering your voice, Fred? We are in God's house.

FRED: What did you say? I can't hear you.

HE CONTINUES SINGING LOUDLY.

ADRIAN: (LOUDLY.) For Lord's sake – why are you singing loudly?

FRED: What did you say?

ADRIAN: (LOUDLY AGAIN.) We are in God's house. You can't sing like that.

FRED: (LOUDLY) I like singing, mate. What is your problem? This is a free country.

ADRIAN: I know, but you also know that your freedom stops where the church starts.

FRED: I know. Declaration of human rights and the citizen of 1789 and Sartre.

ADRIAN: I am happy you remember that.

FRED: Look. I am practicing for a music contest.

ADRIAN: Well, Mister Music contestant. I don't care. You need to stop now.

FRED: Why? Are you jealous?

ADRIAN: Jealous? Not at all. You are distracting me. This is God's house.

FRED: (ALOUD) I know. You already told me. Would he punish me?

ADRIAN: Of course. God doesn't like this kind of behaviour.

FRED: (ALOUD) Rubbish!

ADRIAN: Not, it is not.

FRED TAKES OFF THE EARPHONES AND STOPS SINGING.

ADRIAN: That is better.

FRED APPROACHES ADRIAN THEN PUTS HIS RIGHT ARM AROUND ADRIAN'S SHOULDER.

FRED: I have a plan tonight, after eleven pm.

ADRIAN: A plan? What plan is it?

FRED: My girlfriend has a beautiful friend. We go together to the club. My girlfriend will introduce you to her friend.

ADRIAN: Negative.

FRED: Objection, your honour.

ADRIAN: We are not in the court, FRED. You can't object.

FRED: It is a kind of court. Say yes.

ADRIAN: I don't do clubs, and I don't want any girlfriend.

FRED: Why?

ADRIAN: I am a born again. You know that.

FRED: What's wrong with you, man? I understand. Maybe in that century, people were not allowed to have a girlfriend, and we are in the 21st century. Do you remember?

ADRIAN: It does not matter about the century. I am a man of principle, and I decide not to have sex before marrying.

FRED: Did I mention sex?

ADRIAN: What do you think boyfriends and girlfriends do? Do they watch cartoons?

FRED: Why do you think marriage is necessary?

ADRIAN: Are you not interested in the marriage?

FRED: Not at all. I need to enjoy my life first. Marriage is like a sweet pie, and when you get in, you start regretting it. Marriage is a complicated business, and inside, people want to quit.

ADRIAN: You're mistaken. Marriage is one of the temporal estates the Lord already instituted in Paradise. "A man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to him a wife, and they shall become one flesh" (Genesis chapter two, verse twenty-four.) This institution conceived by the Lord makes marriage holy and inviolable. "What therefore Lord has joined together, let no man separate" (Matthew chapter nineteen and verse six). The marriage lasts until one of the parties involved dies (Roman chapter seven, verse two to three.) Where these principles are confessed and observed, marriage enjoys God's blessing, even though mutual love and the continuation of life together are at times under severe strain because of human weakness.

- FRED: (LOUDLY LAUGHS) Look at you, huh? You are saying it like a stage performance.
- ADRIAN: Anyway. Why are we having this conversation in the house of God?
- FRED: Adrian, Adrian, Adrian. Wake up. You know very well that the Lord has a house.
- ADRIAN: Maybe you are right, but we are in the church, aren't we?
- FRED: Churches are built by the culprit human beings who try to take advantage of the weak, especially women and vulnerable people.
- ADRIAN: Have a minimum of respect, Fred.
- FRED: Do you believe in what you are saying?
- ADRIAN HESITATES TO ANSWER.
- FRED: (LOUDLY LAUGHS) That is what I was talking about.
- ADRIAN: You have no chance of convincing me, Fred.
- FRED: I am not trying to convince you, and I want you to open your eyes because you deserve to enjoy your life. You don't need to wait for the marriage, and you need to enjoy your life.
- ADRIAN: I want it to be legal.
- FRED: You are not serious, are you? Find a girlfriend and enjoy your life.
- ADRIAN STANDS AND TAKES A FEW STEPS ON THE STAGE.
- ADRIAN: You can't change the way I think. I am a Christian, devoted to God, and I don't intend to violate the Lord's rules.
- FRED: Lord's rules? Are you listening to yourself? What rules? You are talking like Moses. People transgress laws every day. Sometimes rules are meant to be bypassed. Look. You need a break. Have some fresh air and meet someone. Just give it a try and see what will happen. If you don't like it, you are free to stop. That girl is sweet as honey. You know, having a girlfriend gives you energy.
- ADRIAN: What energy? It is like you're talking about the Red Bull drink.

FRED: Kind of. You will become emotionally stable.

ADRIAN: A woman is one of the very dangerous human beings. Do you remember because of Eve, we are suffering today.

FRED: How can you be so misogynistic?

ADRIAN: She gave the forbidden fruit to Adam.

FRED: Stop telling yourself stories. She didn't force Adam if it was a true story.

ADRIAN: Yes, she did. You know how women are.

FRED: It has been just a sex story.

ADRIAN: That is very outrageous. They were married.

FRED: Who preceded their marriage?

ADRIAN: Stop blaspheming in God's house.

FRED: You are missing something extraordinary.

ADRIAN: Like what?

FRED: Kissing... cuddling... some different stuff. You see what I mean, right?

ADRIAN: Didn't you say it wasn't because of sex?

FRED: It is just a part of. Let me tell you a little story.

ADRIAN: Oh my. Do you mean your made-up stories?

FRED: No. It is a true story, I swear.

ADRIAN: I don't believe you. Swear in the name of God.

FRED: No. I prefer to swear in the name of my grandma.

ADRIAN: Go on then.

SUDDENLY, ENTER PASTOR MICHEL SINGING

PASTOR MITCHEL: So? Is my computer ready yet?

ADRIEN: Fred is working on it.

FRED: Do you know why your computer has problems, my dear Reverend?

PASTOR MITCHEL: The Almighty hasn't revealed it to me yet.

FRED: Really? Well, I found some porn videos and pictures in there. It's weird, my dear Reverend.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (PRETENDING TO BE SURPRISED) Pornographic pictures and videos? No. It's impossible.

ADRIEN: How's that? You did not know?

PASTOR MITCHEL: But not at all.

ADRIEN: So what?

PASTOR MITCHEL: So what?

ADRIEN: An explanation.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Ah, an explanation! The Almighty is the only one to whom I owe answers.

ADRIEN: Stop it, Pastor Michel.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I'm sure it was my brother who downloaded these kinds of things. For God Sake! He's a real hacker that one.

ADRIEN AND FRED LOOK AT IT.

FRED: Didn't you tell me he was his nephew?

ADRIEN: (TO PASTOR MITCHEL) You said you lived with your brother.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Did I say that?

FRED: Of course it is.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO FRED) What am I doing?

FRED: It's because I'm the one fixing this Laptop. And all these pornographic images make me dizzy.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Okay. I admit that my brother comes to my house almost every day, and he's the one who uses my computer.

ADRIEN & FRED: That's it. Take us for idiots.

PASTOR MITCHEL: That's good. Let's not get carried away. I hope that will not come out of here?

ADRIEN & FRED: We're listening. We will be dumb like two carp of identical offspring.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Ah! It's very nice of you.

ADRIEN & FRED: Yeah, that's it.

PASTOR MITCHEL: The Almighty will reward you. (TO FRED) Did you find a solution to remove all this dirt?

FRED: No problem, my dear Reverend. However, you will have to tell your brother to stop playing with pornographic videos. This slows down the capacity of the computer while destroying its entire system. I used Spybot and Adaware, which will do the housework.

PASTOR MITCHEL: The Spybot, the Adaware? Feels like Mission Impossible Three.

FRED: Yeah, that's it.

PASTOR MITCHEL APPROACHES FRED. HE WANTS TO KISS HIM, BUT FRED PUSHES HIM BACK.

FRED: It's okay it's okay.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO FRED) It's just a little hug of gratitude.

FRED: I know that.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO FRED) You're cute. Thanks for your help. Almighty will give it back to you.

FRED: (IRONICALLY) I don't doubt that for a minute. Let me tell you a story. One day, a guy was ill all the time. Check-up after check-up, no doctor could heal him. And then he decided to consult a Cuban doctor. The Cuban doctor asked him if he was sexually active, he said no'. 'What a shame,' said the doctor. 'That is the cause of your illness.' He prescribes him some drugs, advising him to hire a prostitute for a night. You're excited now, aren't you?

ADRIAN: Not at all.

FRED: You are not typical, man. The same evening, he paid a visit to a prostitute. He returned to visit the doctor the following day and said: 'I feel good.'

ADRIAN: (LAUGHING.) I have never heard a silly story like this. What are you trying to do to me?

FRED: Nothing, man.

ADRIAN: Do you think to convince me to go to the club?

FRED: Come on! Open your eyes, Adrian.

ADRIAN: I don't want to be like Rudolf Valentino.

FRED: Who is that guy, again?

ADRIAN: Really?

FRED: Yes.

ADRIAN: He was a very handsome actor, who liked to have sex with all women, even the married ones.

FRED: Where does he live?

ADRIAN: I said he was. That means he died years ago.

FRED: Oh! Did he?

ADRIAN: Yes. I told you.

FRED: Shame. He should be alive.

ADRIAN: I am a Christian, Fred. I must... I need to have a respectful life.

FRED: I see, but I don't think your Pastor has a respectful life.

ADRIEN: How do you know that?

FRED: I saw him with a girl.

ADRIAN: What did you say?

FRED: Last night, I saw your dear Reverend with a beautiful girl. I am sure they went see a movie, and they were arm-in-arm.

ADRIAN: You must be kidding, right?

FRED: No. Sometimes, people you think are being saints are not.

ADRIAN: Maybe she was a church member.

FRED: Do pastors kiss their church members on their lips? As far I know, they kiss on the cheek. I heard him saying: 'Good things are made to be tasted.' Another day, I saw him come out of a brothel with a girl who might have been his daughter's age. What a hottie that girl was! I wonder what girls find in him. He is not even handsome.

ADRIAN: I don't believe you. Pastor Mitchel is my old friend. He can't do such things.

FRED: Well! People can change. If only you had seen that ... that girl! She had everything a woman should have had. (DESCRIBING GESTURALLY THE GIRL.) She is the kind of girl who can make you forget everything. She has everything perfect; attractive legs, beautiful breasts, lips, eyebrows, cheeks, butt, waist... Oh my God!

ADRIAN: Stop it, Fred. Show some respect for your God.

FRED: Your pastor is a con artist.

ADRIAN: I know him better than you.

FRED: Yes. You already said that. It was not the first time I had seen him with a woman. Another day, I saw him coming from the hotel with a girl who could be his daughter.

ADRIAN: No. I don't believe you. I know my Pastor better than you.

FRED: Come on! Don't be like a mother who always says to her son's school teacher, 'I know my son better than anyone.' No one knows anyone better.

ADRIAN: Bible says, do not judge.

FRED: Oh! That is church member talk. Church members also judge everyone, but they say you do not judge' when it comes to their pastors.'

ADRIAN: Let's not pay attention to the chatter.

FRED: Are you listening to me? I told you, I saw him

ADRIAN: Okay. Did you call him?

FRED: What for?

ADRIAN: To be sure if it was him. Maybe you confused him with someone else.

FRED: It was him. I wasn't wrong. He always wears a nice suit. How can I forget that arrogant person who shows off every time?

ADRIAN: Give him the benefit of the doubt like in the court. A man is presumed innocent until one proves his guilt. Do you remember?

FRED: You watch too much television, mate.

ADRIAN: Why didn't you call him?

FRED: For what?

ADRIAN: He is not a bad man. Otherwise, I would know that.

FRED: Growing up in the faith, reading the Bible every day, attending church every Sunday, busy childhood life, no girlfriends. My father also was a Pentecostal Church pastor, but he was acting like your Pastor. How awful! You can't imagine what my mother has been through with that. I am happy today because I quit the church and put it all behind me.

ADRIAN: Whatever you say, I am not quitting the Church, Fred.

FRED: I want to save you before it becomes too late.

ADRIAN: Don't worry about me. I go to the church and listen to what the Bible says.

FRED: Religion makes people do crazy things. Remember what Karl Marx said? 'Religion is the opium of the people.'

ADRIAN: That one was a foolish guy.

FRED: Do you know the story of the esoteric sect, the Solar Temple?

ADRIAN: No.

FRED: What do you mean 'no'?

ADRIAN: Because I don't know.

FRED: All the sect members committed a collective suicide organised by their founder guru Joseph and Luc Jouret.

ADRIAN: You said yourself it was a sect.

FRED: It doesn't matter whether it is a sect or a well-known religious group. All of them have the same objectives, maintaining their supremacy over others. They're all hypocrites and cheats. Most of them have a false modesty and righteousness like Moliere wrote in Tartuffe. Having sex with married, non-married girls, including small boys, doesn't tell them anything. Think about the Vatican and the priests' scandals? They think it is better to sin in private, not in public, to deflect public outrage.

ADRIAN: I belong to the Pentecostal Church.

FRED: What difference does it make, Pentecostal, Catholic, or others? Think back to what you told me one day. Your family was very religious, and you suffered a lot because of their hypocrisy. Admit that we have something in common.

ADRIAN: People react differently. We had a similar problem, but it doesn't make me an atheist. I can't live without God. Bible has rules, and I intend to follow them without asking inappropriate questions. My father wasn't an example, but the church helped me become an honourable person.

FRED: Honourable person? Maybe your father was not like mine. I regularly had to attend church at a young age

because I had no choice. It was compulsory whether you liked it or not. A not attendance had some consequences, a punishment, the deprivation of meals. My stepmother mistreated me, accusing me of being responsible for everything happening in the house. I had grown up with the idea that "Lord said you must do everything your parents ask you." You should not doubt God's Word; otherwise, he will send you to hell. I realised today it was a kind of child abuse-disguised. I am still asking myself, why do religious members misbehave in the name of God?

- ADRIAN: I recognise that fanatics exist, but judging them is not my place.
- FRED: Don't let your Pastor turn you into a fanatic. You are an intelligent man.
- ADRIAN: Are you sure it is the only reason you hate the church?
- FRED: No. A lot of reasons. One of them is the GHHC.
- ADRIAN: What is that?
- FRED: Gossip, hatred, hypocrisy, and competition. That is the reason most people enjoy gathering in the church.
- ADRIAN LAUGHS LOUDLY. ADRIAN LOOKS AT FRED'S BAG. HE WANTS TO OPEN IT, FRED PICKS IT UP.
- ADRIAN: What is it in your bag?
- FRED: (DODGING THE QUESTION) I want to show you something which can change your mind about the church.
- ADRIAN: Show me your bag first. What are you carrying in your bag? Maybe you are hiding employment service (benefit?) forms.
- FRED: No, I don't do the employment service (benefit?) thing. I am a businessman.
- ADRIAN: I saw you enter the employment service (benefit?) offices.
- FRED: It wasn't me.
- ADRIAN: Yes, it was.
- FRED: It wasn't. Did you call me when you saw me?
- ADRIAN: No. I did not.

FRED: Shame. That means it wasn't me.

ADRIAN: Whatever. What products do you sell?

FRED: (WHISPERING IN ADRIAN'S EAR.) It's a secret.

ADRIAN: What kind of secret? I am your friend. Just tell me.

FRED: What part of the word secret don't you understand, Adrian?

ADRIAN: Oh, Fred, please don't give me that.

FRED: (WHISPERING.) I offer services.

ADRIAN: (WHISPERING IN FRED'S EAR.) What services?

FRED: (WHISPERING.) I'm....an escort.

ADRIAN: (LAUGHS LOUDLY) What? Are you a male escort? Holly cow.

FRED: Not out loud, Adrian, please, and people will hear you. It is an excellent job.

ADRIAN: A job? It's a con job, mate.

FRED: It is not. I entertain women, giving them joy and all the pleasure they need.

ADRIAN: Serious?

FRED: It is better than getting money from poor people in the church.

ADRIAN: I don't take the money from people.

FRED: You help your Pastor. When you buy something from the thief, you become a receiver.

FRED TURNS ON HIS LAPTOP AND FINDS AN ARTICLE ON GOOGLE.

FRED: Let me read it for you.

ADRIAN: I can read it myself.

FRED HANDS A PAPER TO ADRIAN.

ADRIAN: A Christian priest busted for raping girls.

FRED: Did you see it?

ADRIAN: I am still reading. Yamata, Kyoto – Christian... He's a Japanese.

FRED: So?

ADRIAN: Why didn't you say so?

- FRED: What do you mean? Have you got problems with the Japanese?
- ADRIAN: No. ... hmm, just... they are not Christian.
- FRED: What do you mean they are not Christian?
- ADRIAN: They have a different religion.
- FRED: I know that most of them revere the forces of nature, an animist belief, and shamanism, but I can assure you that some are also Christians.
- ADRIAN: I see. (CONTINUES THE READING) "Christian cult leader Tamotsu Nagata, the suspected rapist of several elementary school-age girls, was arrested on Wednesday, police said." (TO FRED.) As I said, he is just a Japanese Christian.
- FRED FINDS ANOTHER ARTICLE ON GOOGLE.
- FRED: What about this one?
- ADRIAN: You are ready for anything to make me accept your viewpoint.
- FRED: Not at all. (READING AGAIN) Let me read for you something which is not Japanese. Open your ears. 'The Catholic Church abuse cases are a series of allegations, investigations, trials, and convictions of minor sexual abuse Crimes committed by Catholic priests, nuns, and members of Roman Catholic orders against children as young as...'
- ADRIAN: I know that one because we had a priest in our neighbourhood when we were children. When we saw him cycling, we said to him, "Good morning, the priest who likes making love." He answered us without stopping his bike: "Did I do things to your mums?" Like I said before, I am not Catholic, and I am a member of a Pentecostal Church.
- FRED: As I said to you, that makes no difference. I have a lot of documents about that kind of subject and see this one.
- ADRIAN: Gregory Ivan Hawkins, 54, is the Pastor... (AFTER THE READING) He is pure protestant, but not a Pentecostal.
- FRED: So? Read all the documents, please.
- ADRIAN: (READING.) Gregory Ivan Hawkins, 54, is the Pastor... of Zion Plaza Church in Tulsa Okla. He was charged on July the 23rd, 2013, with four counts of molestation, two

counts of assault involving the abuse of a teenage relative.

FRED'S MOBILE PHONE RINGS.

FRED: Excuse me for a moment. It sounds like I need to answer this call. (ANGRILY ON PHONE) Why? What made you change your mind? Are you tired, eh? I don't believe you. You should call me around six o'clock. What are you up to? Nothing else?

HE HANGS UP AND APPROACHES ADRIAN.

ADRIAN: Why are you so upset?

FRED: She's not going to the club tonight.

ADRIAN: Who?

FRED: My girlfriend. She is not coming with me to the club tonight.

ADRIAN: Maybe something else came up. Or maybe she found someone else.

FRED LOOKS AT HIM.

ADRIAN: I am joking. You know. Women change their minds like the weather. Sit down. Don't make yourself depressed. Anyway, what makes you think like that? Has she cheated on you before?

FRED: No.

ADRIAN: What is the problem, then?

FRED: Just, hmm... I love her so much.

FRED SITS AND STARTS CHECKING THE LAPTOP AGAIN.

ADRIAN: Trust her and think positively. Everything will be good. Do you need some advice?

FRED: (LAUGHING) Advice from you?

ADRIAN: Yes. Why not? Don't give one hundred percent of your love to a woman, and give her only sixty percent and keep forty for you. So, when she decides to leave you, you will not suffer as much.

FRED: Where did you learn that?

ADRIAN: On the television.

FRED: Son of a bitch. Did you become a love specialist?

BOTH LAUGH.

ADRIAN: Take some cold water, drink, and you will forget about it.

FRED: You are incredible.

ADRIAN: I can sometimes be like that.

FRED: I see.

ADRIAN: Sometimes, try to read the Bible.

FRED: Oh no, Adrian! I have read a lot Bible.

ADRIAN: So what? It is suitable for your spirituality.

FRED: What spirituality? I meditate all the time. Isn't that spirituality? I need some fresh air, not spirituality. Oh, your Pastor's Laptop is updated.

ADRIAN: (LOUDLY.) Pastor Mitchel, your Laptop is ready.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (OFFSTAGE) I am coming.

ADRIAN STARTS READING AGAIN, THE INTERNET PAPER.

ADRIAN: Gregory Ivan Hawkins! Yamata Kyoto!

ENTER PASTOR MITCHEL.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Yamamoto? Are you learning Japanese now?

ADRIAN: No. We are talking about bad pastors in Japan.

PASTOR MITCHEL: What is this again? Japanese cannot be pastors. They do other things such as Kendo, karate, and those different things...

ADRIAN: Kendo and karate are sport, not religion.

PASTOR MITCHEL: It is their religion.

ADRIAN: Come and read.

ADRIAN SHOWS THE INTERNET PAGE TO PASTOR MITCHEL.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I can't believe that.

ADRIAN: Of course, they are also Christians.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Sacrilege. Are you kidding me? Where have you ever heard of a Japanese pastor?

ADRIAN: I also had some doubts before reading this document, but now I am convinced they exist.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Bullshit.

ADRIAN: Pastor?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Sorry, but you are losing your faith. They're fake.

ADRIAN: Why do you think they are fake?

PASTOR MITCHEL: This is because they're fake. That's all. Why don't you create a karate club with your pagan friend?

ADRIAN: You are being unfair, now.

PASTOR MITCHEL: You have to stop your friendship with that pagan guy. He's corrupting you.

ADRIAN: Have you ever asked why some people are pagans? Maybe there are many questions without answers in religion.

PASTOR MITCHEL: What are you up to, Adrian? Are you losing your faith?

ADRIAN: You have already said that.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (AFTER READING.) Bullshit.

ADRIAN: Pastor!

PASTOR MITCHEL: Oh, sorry! Bible answers every single question.

ADRIAN: Are you sure about that?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Of course, Adrian. Don't you understand that your friend wants to put you in deep shit with the Lord?

ADRIAN: Pastor?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Oh shit! Sorry again.

FRED: (TO ADRIAN.) That is the case with your Pastor. When I went to the church during my childhood, the priest told us that he who sins several times, knowing that it is a sin, sins against the spirit. He swears, and he says sorry all the time, and that is awful.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO FRED.) You, shut up ... (TO ADRIAN). All those articles are fake.

ADRIAN: Why can't you imagine the possibility that they are authentic?

PASTOR MITCHEL: I can't.

ADRIAN: Read this one.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Japanese again?

ADRIAN: No.

ADRIAN'S MOBILE PHONE RINGS.

ADRIAN: (ON THE PHONE.) No, I haven't seen any yet. I know, but I don't want to get married at twenty years old like you. No. I don't need a post-pack. I will let you know when I am ready. No, I don't want to get married right now. I am telling you, I don't need a post-pack. I will choose my wife when I am ready. I don't need your money, dad. Church? Yes, I am still attending the church. I will speak to you later. Yes. Call me tomorrow. I am swamped right now. Yes, I know that.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Your dad?

ADRIAN: Yes.

FRED: I think he is right.

ADRIAN: Pardon? I don't need that.

PASTOR MITCHEL: This is the first time your friend and I agree on something. You must obey your father as the Bible says

ADRIAN: I understand, Pastor Mitchel, but I am not ready yet. I need answers to a lot of things.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Well! You can call on God. I might confess that I call on God at any time I have some doubts. God loves you, Adrian. Bible says: "Everything you ask will be given to you." It is the word of the eternal of the armies

FRED: Are you kidding me?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Not at all.

ADRIAN: Do you mean as a pastor, you have his number?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Yes, of course.

FRED: It is very spiritual.

PASTOR MITCHEL TALKS IN TONGUES. WHEN HE FINISHES, HE TAKES THE PHONE FROM HIS POCKET HE MOVES TO THE CORNER OF THE STAGE. THEN, HE STARTS TALKING. ADRIAN AND FRED LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Yes, Lord. It is your servant. Yes. (HE WALKS TO THE CORNER OF THE STAGE.) I recognise that Adrian is a little bit stubborn, but I will try. Yes, my Lord. I will tell him. Amen!

HE FINISHES TALKING.

ADRIAN & FRED: We did not hear your phone ringing.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Lord always operates with miracles.

ADRIAN: What did he say?
PASTOR MITCHEL: He will ring you soon.
FRED: Oh, what next!
PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO FRED.) Man of little faith. Don't be distracted by your friend. Talk to God. Tell him everything you need.
ADRIAN: What do you want me to tell him?
PASTOR MITCHEL: Tell him everything you want. Use your brain.
ADRIAN: My brain? Very encouraging!
FRED: Do you believe that guy?
ADRIAN: (WITH HUMOUR) Let me try.
FRED: That would be better.

PASTOR MITCHEL'S PHONE RINGS. HE MOVES TO THE CORNER OF THE STAGE. THEN, HE EXITS.

FRED: Your pastor is a mental case.
ADRIAN: Maybe, maybe not.
FRED: I also have some calls to make.

FRED EXITS. ADRIAN STAYS ALONE ON THE STAGE. HE CONTINUES DOING THE BOOKS. ENTER A GUARD WHO PRETENDS HE HAS FORGOTTEN SOMETHING BEHIND THE CUPBOARD. HE TURNS ON THE FAN THEN HE TAKES THE MICROPHONE. SUDDENLY, A LOUD NOISE SOUNDS. IT IS LIKE A HUGE CLAP OF THUNDER, AND THE STAGE IS LIT WITH A BLINDING LIGHT. A WILD GUST OF WIND SWEEPS EVERYTHING FROM THE TABLE... ADRIAN DROPS TO HIS KNEES IN TERROR AND PUTS HIS HANDS OVER HIS HEAD, HE STARTS SWEATING PROFUSELY, AND HIS HEART IS RACING.

ADRIAN: Who is that?
VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: (IMPOSING VOICE.) Don't be afraid, Adrian. I am the one you are looking for. I am your God, the Alpha, the Omega, the beginning, and the last.
ADRIAN: Are you real? Are you the same who appeared to Moses?
VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: Yes, I am.
ADRIAN: May I see you?
VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: No man can see me and live. My face shall not be seen. Even Moses did not see my face.
ADRIAN: It's been a long time since you have appeared to people.

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: I do appear, but indirectly. Sometimes I send someone else—for example, the apparition of the Virgin Mary in Lourdes.

ADRIAN: What about Joan of Arc?

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: Who was that person?

ADRIAN: Don't you know her? Have you ever heard about the Hundred years war, which started in 1337 and ended in 1453?

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: It's very revolting. Why did they fight?

ADRIAN: You are in an excellent position to know that. Do you know her?

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: I remember her. Was she the one they threw in the water?

ADRIAN: No. She was burnt alive.

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: Oh yes. That was very sad. Who did such a horrible thing?

ADRIAN: I thought you knew everything.

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: I did not say I had forgotten about her. Anyway, it is not a big deal. Let me think. Oh, yes. I appeared to her once.

ADRIAN: But you did not prevent her from being burned alive.

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: I could not help her because she committed a blaspheme.

ADRIAN: How can she blaspheme if you don't know her? How come she became a saint?

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: How could I know; churches propel many humans to the rank of saints?

ADRIAN: Really?

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: Yes.

ADRIAN: I trust you. I have another question for you. Why don't you prevent all crimes which happen in this world?

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: I recognise that people are not happy thinking that I don't do anything about those crimes, especially those committed by religion. But as you know, everything has its moment.

ADRIAN: It's true. You are the Almighty, the Master of the Universe. In our country, adults can also dance to the sound of drums played by the young. You don't mind me giving you some ideas, do you?

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: Of course not.

ADRIAN: Can't you use your power to stop every bad thing they do?

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: When I created Adam and Eve, I gave them free will to accept or not what I say.

ADRIAN: You mean, kind of like democracy.

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: No. More than that. It is the theocracy.

ADRIAN: Theocracy is a disguised dictatorship.

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: My theocracy is different. I allow people to express themselves as I did to Adam and Eve.

ADRIAN: I believe you, dear Almighty, but people continue to blame you because they suffer all the time.

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: I know that. Blaming me for the abuses and all misery is easy. I am the God of patience and the most theocratic of all.

ADRIAN: They blame you because you created the world. If the economy and the health system of a country collapse, the president is the one people must blame. Have you got a government?

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: Naturally, I have a government composed of angels who are my ministers.

ADRIAN: Who is your premier minister?

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: My beloved son Emmanuel is the premier minister.

ADRIAN: If he is your beloved son, why did you allow him to be killed?

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: The prophecy had to be accomplished.

ADRIAN: Prophecy? You could avoid that kind of pain.

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: It was an atoning sacrifice, and it was the only way to clear humans of their sin.

ADRIAN: I still believe you could have found another way to proceed.

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: What would you do in my place?

ADRIAN: How should I know? You are the Almighty.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (OFFSTAGE) Are you talking to yourself, Adrian?

ADRIAN: Yes.

VOICE OF THE ALMIGHTY: (LAUGHING LOUDLY AND REPEATING) I only appear once.

SUDDENLY THE VOICE STOPS. ENTER FRED.

FRED: Are you talking to yourself, Adrian?

ADRIAN: Yes.

FRED: I heard you talking with someone.

ADRIAN: I was on the phone.

FRED: Oh, okay if you say so.

ADRIAN: I had some business with...

FRED: (INTERRUPTING) ... What kind of business was that?

ADRIAN: The kind of business that is not yours.

FRED: I see. I want to tell you something.

ADRIAN: What do you want, now?

FRED: I am suspecting my girlfriend of cheating on me.

ADRIAN: It is normal. Does she know you do escort?

FRED: No.

ADRIAN: They always know.

FRED: What do you mean?

ADRIAN: Women always know when a man is cheating. Did you interrupt my business for that?

FRED: Escort is not cheating. It is a business.

ADRIAN: Are you sure it is not cheating?

FRED: That is fine. Leave it. I am sure you were talking with someone.

ADRIAN: If I tell you, you will not believe me.

FRED: My ears are all yours.

ADRIAN: Well. I was talking with God, the Almighty.

FRED: (LAUGHS LOUDLY.) What? Are you serious?

ADRIAN: Yes, I am.

FRED: No. You are just kidding me, aren't you?

HE SITS.

I can't wait. Shoot.

ADRIAN: Nothing to shoot. What makes you think that your girlfriend is cheating on you?

FRED: Don't dodge the question, please!

ADRIAN: Fred!

FRED: It's a kind of intuition.

ADRIAN: Intuition?

FRED: My intuition is always right.

ADRIAN: Oh, okay, if you think so.

FRED: I am sure she is.

ADRIAN: Sometimes intuition can be wrong.

FRED: I don't know. Sometimes her phone is turned off. The only excuse she gives me when I get her is, 'It was on silent mode.

ADRIAN: You are just jealous, Fred.

FRED: Jealous? No.

ADRIAN: You can't admit it. You know what?

FRED: Women do that most of the time.

ADRIAN: How can you be such a misogynist? Men do that too. When they are with someone else, they turn the phone off most of the time.

FRED: Please tell me what I can do.

ADRIAN: I can't believe the master of women is asking me that.

FRED: Please!

ADRIAN: That's fine. The only way is to trust her.

FRED: You are not helping me.

ADRIAN: I don't know what else to tell you.

FRED: How can you be so unhelpful, Adrian? I am sure it is because you read the Bible too much.

ENTER PASTOR MITCHEL AND HIS BODYGUARDS.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO ADRIAN) I heard you talking to yourself.

ADRIAN: Not at all. I was talking with the Almighty.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (PRETENDING) Do you mean God, the Almighty?

ADRIAN: Yes. You told me he would call me, and he did.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Oh, yes. I did. Are you sure you are not lying to me?

ADRIAN: Why should I lie to you?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Maybe you want to impress me.

ADRIAN: Impress you with what, Pastor?

PASTOR MITCHEL: By talking to the Lord.

ADRIAN: You told me he would call me. So, he did.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Maybe it was in your dreams. Many people dream of talking with kings, queens, presidents, celebrities... the truth is they don't.

ADRIAN: Do you remember what you told me? 'Ask, and you will be given. That is what I did.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I was just joking.

FRED: Lord's ways are always impenetrable.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Shut up. I am not talking to you. (TO ADRIAN.) If the Lord wants to speak to someone, it will be me and not you.

ADRIAN: Why is that?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Why? Because I am your Pastor.

ADRIAN: You are wrong.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Oh no. I am not wrong. God follows the church's hierarchy

ADRIAN: Well, this time, he preferred me. That is maybe because I am a good guy. He wanted to tell me lots of things, but Fred interrupted us.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Will he come back?

ADRIAN: You know better than me, and he never comes back. You need to revise your Bible, Pastor.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Hmm!

FRED: Oh! Reverend Pastor is jealous.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Jealous? No.

FRED: If you are not jealous, why has your face changed like that??

PASTOR MITCHEL: It is not your business.

ADRIAN: Don't be jealous, my dear Pastor. One day, he will talk to you.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I know you are lying to me. You did not talk to the Lord.

ADRIAN: Are you playing the Apostle Thomas?

FRED: Yes, he is playing the apostrophe, Thomas.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO FRED) Shut up. You don't even know who Apostle Thomas was.

FRED: How can you say that? You don't even know my religious past. He is the one who did not believe in Christ's resurrection, dear Reverend.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Stop calling me dear Reverend.

FRED: You are a dear Reverend.

PASTOR MITCHEL: This is a discussion among Christians. It is not your business. (TO ADRIAN) Anyway, I was joking when I told you that.

FRED: Dear Church Minister, don't joke with the Lord's plans. I am warning you.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO FRED.) You shut up. I am not talking to you. (TO ADRIAN.) Tell me. What did you ask him?

ADRIAN: I asked him about the hypocrisy of religion.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Why did you ask God such a stupid question?

ADRIAN: Do you think hypocrisy is not a sin?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Not really.

ADRIAN: Why do you mean, not really? You are not serious, are you?

FRED: Did he answer you?

ADRIAN: Yes, but he did not enlighten me on some of my doubts. He was always blaming Satan for being responsible for what was happening in the world.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I am happy he told you himself the world is under Satan's influence. The duplicity of evil is too complex for Christians like us. Satan is a real strong being. The

Lord is good, and he loves you and allows you to accomplish everything you desire.

ADRIAN: Do you think?

PASTOR MITCHEL: You don't believe in Satan's power, do you?

ADRIAN: Not anymore. You see, you make him a scapegoat.

PASTOR MITCHEL: It is not because he is a God of love; he can't get angry. It happened in the past.

FRED: If the Lord is love, he should be hefty enough to deal with Satan and all the evil in the Universe, and he must be evil himself to have the capacity and not to do anything about it.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO FRED.) Are you challenging God?

FRED: I am not challenging him, and I constantly challenge those who serve him with hypocrisy.

PASTOR MITCHEL: What do you mean? I am not a hypocrite.

FRED: I did not say your name. I am sorry, guys. If you excuse me, I'm going to leave you specialists of God.

ADRIAN: Stay, please!

FRED: I can't stay here anymore. I can't stand this man anymore.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Let this son of bitch, go.

FRED: Who are you calling a son of bitch?

PASTOR MITCHEL: You.

FRED APPROACHES PASTOR MICHEL THEN TAKES HIM BY HIS THROAT.
PASTOR'S BODYGUARDS TAKE OUT FRED'S HANDS ON THE PASTOR.

ADRIAN: You are adults, and you must stop it right now. How can you do that in the church?

PASTOR MITCHEL: One day, Emmanuel was furious. He scattered people who were dealing in front of the temple. I will not hesitate to do like him.

ADRIAN: For God's sake! You are not Emmanuel. You are a Pastor.

PASTOR MITCHEL STARTS JUMPING.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Out from here, you evil spirit! Lord, bless this house. Bless my brother Adrian, let him not fall into this trap.

ADRIAN: I don't recognise you anymore.

PASTOR MITCHEL: What are you talking about?

ADRIAN: I am talking about your way of life. You cannot encourage people by acting like criminals.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (FURIOUS) He will break him like he did Egyptians when they enslaved Israel.

FRED: Break the Egyptians? (TO THE PASTOR) If we ask the Egyptians, they will undoubtedly give us a different story version.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Bible is the only book that tells the truth.

FRED: Everyone tells stories in his way. What about the Koran, the Tanhak, the Tipitaka, the Vedas, and the Kojiki?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Shut the f...

ADRIAN LOOKS AT PASTOR MITCHEL.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Lord does not recognise those books.

FRED: Why is that?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Those people have rejected his son, Emmanuel.

FRED: So what?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Everyone must accept his son, Emmanuel. They consider him a simple prophet, which isn't very good. As I said before, sending him to Earth was an expiatory sacrifice. He is the lamb that has to free the world of its sin, and the salute comes from him.

FRED: Is it like a father who has two children but only loves one.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Not at all. The Lord loves everyone, and he likes testing his people.

FRED: You mean he likes playing with people's lives?

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO FRED) Don't make me say what I didn't say. In fourteen seventy-three BC, the Israelites encamped in the plains of Moab. They were hanging on Moses' words. Then a problematic mission awaited them on the other side of the Jordan: the Lord wanted them to defeat the seven Canaanite nations, strong nations, who occupied the Promised Land. The words of Moses, however, were reassuring: " The Lord will lead them to you, and you must beat them. "Israel should not ally

with these nations, for they deserve no favour. – Deuteronomy chapter one, verses one and two. Yet Lord spared a family from the first city that Israel attacked. The inhabitants of four other cities have also benefited from the protection of God. Why? What does the Lord say about the remarkable events that brought these Canaanites to life? And how will we imitate God?

- FRED: Excellent speech, but I don't even know what that means. He was watching people dying. I can't believe that.
- PASTOR MITCHEL: He created human beings to live forever, but not destroy them.
- FRED: If he created a life for a purpose, why end it before fulfilling that purpose?
- PASTOR MITCHEL: He admits to having sent Satan to tempt human beings, but he didn't do that to annoy them. But on the other hand, human beings need to be punished. They are all like children, and you should shake them a little before listening to them.
- FRED: Including you!
- PASTOR MITCHEL: No. I am his servant.
- FRED: His servant?
- PASTOR MITCHEL: Yes, his servant. What is this? A Spanish inquisition?
- ADRIAN: Oh! Oh! Oh! Can't you two behave like adults? I am fed up listening to you all the time.
- PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO ADRIAN) Don't you see that he's corrupting you?
- ADRIAN: I don't need your help. I am big enough to take care of myself.
- FRED TAKES A BOTTLE OF WINE AND PLASTIC CUPS FROM HIS BAG. HE PUTS THREE PLASTIC CUPS ON THE TABLE AND SERVES WINE.
- FRED: I suggest peace now. Cheers! Let's forget everything.
- PASTOR MITCHEL STANDS AWAY FROM THE BOTTLE OF WINE.
- ADRIAN: Chill out! It is just a drink, after all.
- PASTOR MITCHEL: Do you know that God's servant does not drink alcohol?
- ADRIAN: I am not sure about that, Pastor.
- FRED: One day, I saw you drinking whisky.

ADRIAN: Is it true Pastor?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Do you believe him, Adrien? He's lying.

ADRIAN: I don't know, Pastor.

FRED: Can you, please, give me your Bible, dear Reverend. I will show you what the Bible says about the matter.

PASTOR MITCHEL REFUSES, BUT ADRIAN GRABS IT AND GIVES IT TO FRED.
FRED OPENS THE BIBLE.

FRED: (READING) Paul's first letter to Timothy says, 'No longer drink water exclusively, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments.' And you know that during a party, Jesus turned water into wine. Now, what is the problem?

PASTOR MITCHEL: At that time, the wine did not contain alcohol.

FRED: Rubbish. Wine contains alcohol since the world is the world. Tell me. If the wine did not have a drink at that time, how come people were sometimes drunk? Why does the Bible speak about a patriarch whose daughter intoxicated?

PASTOR MITCHEL: You know. Specific biblical versions had misinterpreted this Lot's story. Look. In another letter of Paul to Timothy, it says, 'They must not drink the alcohol.'

FRED: Who?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Leaders of the Church.

FRED: Can you please give me the chapter?

PASTOR MITCHEL: (HESITATING) Hmm...Hmm... I forgot.

FRED: If I remember very well, I think that chapter says: "Deacons likewise must be dignified, not addicted to too much wine." You see, all your pastors omit that willingly.

PASTOR MITCHEL: We don't. You are misinterpreting the Holy Scriptures.

FRED: Let me tell you a story. It happened at a wedding party in the North of France. Everyone was obliged to drink sweet drinks while the Pastor was in the venue. Some members were annoyed. A lot of members refused to dance because they were playing religious music.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Okay.

FRED: When the Pastor left the party, it was a stream of alcohol, and then the music changed rhythm. It was kind of when the cat is away; the mouse will dance. Is it not an example of hypocrisy in most of your church? Are you sure the Almighty approves of this kind of attitude?

PASTOR MITCHEL: You're lying.

ADRIAN: No, Pastor Mitchel. I was there too.

PASTOR MITCHEL: That is a lie.

FRED: I did not finish yet. I have another story. That is about pastors who illegally raise money in the church. Tell me, where do they put that money?

PASTOR MITCHEL: I don't want to hear your stories. You don't need to stick with that guy. He doesn't like God.

ADRIAN: Pastor, everything Fred is saying about the church is true. Many pastors mercilessly take poor members' money to make themselves rich.

PASTOR MITCHEL: That is not fair, Adrian. I am your friend, and you can't accuse me like that. You are one of us.

ADRIAN: I did not accuse you. Why do you react like that? Do you know what? He who feels guilty response. It would be best if you questioned yourself.

PASTOR MITCHEL: What are you talking about, Adrian?

ADRIAN: I want to help you. I am also allowing you to correct your vices. If I don't do that, no one will do it.

PASTOR MITCHEL'S MOBILE RINGS. HE HESITATES TO PICK IT UP.

ADRIAN: Your phone, Pastor. It is ringing.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I know. I can see it.

HE PICKS IT UP.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Yes, Sir. I understand. It is a matter of urgency. Give me fifteen minutes.

ADRIAN: What is the problem?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Nothing significant. Just a little business.

ADRIAN: Are you sure you are not hiding something from me?

PASTOR MITCHEL: I have never lied to you before, Adrian. I will not start today.

ADRIAN: Hope that you didn't get yourself in trouble.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Me, in trouble? No. I will be back. I have to bless someone in my office.

EXIT PASTOR MITCHEL.

PASTOR MITCHEL LEAVES. FRED IS CHECKING THE LAPTOP.

FRED: Oh my God!

ADRIEN: What again?

FRED: This guy is a bastard.

ADRIEN: What now?

FRED: Come and see.

ADRIEN: I'm busy, Fred.

FRED: Please, Adrien. You will thank me.

ADRIEN APPROACHES FRED.

ADRIEN: Oh my God! Pornography.

FRED: You said so.

ADRIEN: He can't do that. I think his nephew uses his computer a lot.

FRED: How do you know?

ADRIEN: I know because his nephew is a real bastard. He told me.

FRED: And you believed him?

ADRIEN: Of course, I do.

FRED: Why is he in a rush?

ADRIAN: He said he has to bless someone in his office.

FRED: Your Pastor behaves weirdly, I told you.

ADRIAN: I can stake my life on it. He is not telling me the truth. I am sure that he is in trouble.

FRED: He is hiding something. Tell me something. Were you seriously talking to the Almighty?

ADRIAN: No. I was pulling the Pastor's legs, and I knew it was one of his bodyguard's voices.

FRED: Really?

ADRIAN: Yes.

FRED: What a son of bitch!

FRED APPROACHES THE PASTOR OFFICE'S DOOR. HE HEARS THE PASTOR TALKING AND MOANING.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (VOICE OFFSTAGE.) You will see the impossibilities being made possible. Every blockage of the barrier will be unblocked for you. Everything you are looking for, you will get it. I pray for you that the ticket for Dubai comes. Let it go. You will have everything you want. Say amen in the name of Emmanuel.

FRED LOOKS OUT OF THE HOLE ON THE OFFICE DOOR. HE SEES THE PASTOR AND A YOUNG GIRL.

THE WOMAN: (VOICE OFFSTAGE) Amen!

PASTOR MITCHEL IS SPEAKING IN TONGUES.

FRED: Oh my God! That's too intense and spiritual.

ADRIAN: What now?

FRED: Adrian, come, please. You will NOT believe that.

ADRIAN APPROACHES HIM. HE LOOKS AT THE HOLE AND SEES THE PASTOR WITH A YOUNG GIRL.

ADRIAN: Maybe he is blessing her.

FRED: What do you mean, a blessing?

ADRIAN: Blessing like blessing someone.

FRED: Of course, yes. I know that kind of blessing. She is the one I saw with him at the movie. Adrian, come and look.

ADRIAN: Maybe he is blessing her.

BOTH LAUGH.

FRED: Do you know her?

ADRIAN: Yes, it is the sister Bernadette. She is in the choir.

FRED: Wait a minute. She is the one I saw with him. My, my, my.

WHILE THEY ARE WATCHING, PASTOR MITCHEL OPENS THE DOOR. THEY QUICKLY LEAVE. PASTOR MITCHEL ENTERS THE STAGE, SWEATING.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (EMBARRASSED) Oh my God! The demon who possessed this girl was powerful. In the name of God, he left.

ADRIAN AND FRED LOOK AT PASTOR MITCHEL WITHOUT SAYING A WORD

PASTOR MITCHEL: What?

ADRIAN & FRED: Nothing.

PASTOR MITCHEL: What do you mean, nothing? Why are you staring at me? Have you never seen someone sweating?

ADRIAN: You, tell us.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Tell you what?

ADRIAN: We saw you trying to kiss that woman.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Oh, that! I was blessing her.

FRED: Or kissing her.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I was just tempted by Satan.

ADRIAN & FRED: Oh! Tempted by Satan.

PASTOR MITCHEL: So, what?

ADRIAN: Couldn't you bless her here inside the church?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Blessing in the office is powerful.

ADRIAN & FRED: Powerful! Oh, that!

PASTOR MITCHEL: Yes, powerful.

ADRIAN: (TO FRED.) Maybe we could give him the benefit of the doubt, Fred.

FRED: Do you think?

THEY LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

ADRIAN & FRED: Oh yes! It can be done.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Guys! That kind of girl can tempt everyone. Satan tempted even Emmanuel.

ADRIAN & FRED: We know, but not in that way.

ADRIAN: You are not Emmanuel.

FRED: True.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (INTERRUPTING AND TO ADRIAN.) Is that your friend still here?

ADRIAN: He is not the problem. We need to talk, Pastor.

PASTOR MITCHEL: What do you want to talk about?

ADRIAN: What is the mortal sin between refusing the Lord's word and committing fornication?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Why this question?

ADRIAN: You know why I am asking this question.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I don't know what you are talking about.

ADRIAN: Come on, Pastor Mitchel! You know that very well.

PASTOR MITCHEL: If you need something, I tell you I am ready to help.

ADRIAN: I don't want anything from you, Pastor Mitchel. All I want is the truth.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I am your friend.

ADRIAN: You can't corrupt me, and I refuse to be an accomplice. One day, all the money you receive from the church members will put you in trouble, and everything will blow up.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I don't do anything illegal. Paul's second letter to the Corinthians chapter nine and verse six says, 'But as to this, he that sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and he that bountifully will also reap. '

ADRIAN: How come most of the pastors are cons? They use this kind of verse to con their members—pity those who give ten percent of their salary every month.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I don't con church members. Besides, my members freely give money to the Lord.

ADRIAN: Does the Lord need the money? Look at you, Pastor. A television channel which supposes to be for the church community belongs to you. You have a nice car bought with the church money. I also heard that you own hotels in different countries. You expose yourself when you send some packs in the third world.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I do what the Lord asks me to do. What exactly is the problem?

ADRIAN: Have you no shame when you receive money from poor people? You oblige them to pay ten percent of their money. Let me do the calculation for you. Hundred forty-seven pounds, times ten, divide two hundred.

PASTOR MITCHEL: It is only fourteen pounds seventy pence. So, what is the problem?

ADRIAN: What is the problem?

ADRIAN: They also give money every Sunday.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Adrian! They don't give so much.

FRED: Only one pound a month? Do you think it is not enough?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Mind your own business.

FRED: Think, Adrian. Dear Reverend. Tell Adrian the way you enjoy the church money. Tell him about those young girls you take to the movie and the restaurant. Tell Adrian about those girls you kiss publicly.

ADRIAN: Is it true Pastor?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Don't listen to him.

ADRIAN: Answer my question. Is he telling the truth?

PASTOR MITCHEL BOWS HIS HEAD.

ADRIAN: All these years, I thought I knew you. Tell me about the three and a half million you collected for the church complexes? I heard that you built luxury flats with that money.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Eh, Adrian! It is me, Pastor Mitchel, your friend. I did not change.

ADRIAN: People should give voluntarily. And the money should be kept in the church community account for expenses and help to members. You put it in your pocket. Look at your car, your dress, and your jewels. You even have bodyguards. Did Emmanuel have bodyguards?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Yes, his apostles. Didn't you read that Peter cut one of the soldiers' ears?

ADRIAN: I also know that Jesus was not happy with that.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I don't approve of all the wrong actions of my bodyguards. They are there to protect me. There is lots of competition in our world.

ADRIAN: You mean in the world of false church ministers?

PASTOR MITCHEL: I am not one of them. I hold a degree in the Bible, and my ministry comes from Nazareth.

FRED: Oh! Did you learn about scamming members in Nazareth?

PASTOR MITCHEL: I am a respectable pastor, but I need to eat, pay my rent and expenses.

FRED: Do you know what? I need some fresh air.

FRED LEAVES THE STAGE.

ADRIAN: Ah!

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO ADRIAN) Are you telling me that you will denounce me?

ADRIAN: No. You will do it by yourself.

PASTOR MITCHEL: No way!

ADRIAN: Yes, way.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I will lose everything, my members, church, and television channel.

ADRIAN: The Lord will appreciate it.

PASTOR MITCHEL: We are in the jungle, Adrian, don't you see? You must eat people before being eaten.

ADRIAN: Oh my God! Fred was right. I defended you when he told me that you are not the one I thought you were. You are a heartless person.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Are you listening to your gay friend?

ADRIAN: You cannot even understand what I keep telling you. Fred is not gay. He is far more honest than you.

PASTOR MITCHEL: He is an evil spirit and a womaniser.

ADRIAN: Are you not? After Fred saw you with a girl, I tried to find some information. The girl's name is Kate. Everyone knows that you go out with her, and she is not the only one. Rumors say you slept with more than five young women from the church. Do you know the silly thing? They started being jealous of each other.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I don't have time for gossips.

ADRIAN: Small talk? I wouldn't be so sure if I were you.

PASTOR MITCHEL: They are all liars. Some church members want to put me down and take my place. Be sure, my friend, it won't happen. I am God's servant. I am like Moses, and I transmit commandments, and they obey.

ADRIAN: That is what I was talking about. Everything is about you, and you think you are the centre of everything. That is too bad for a man who claims to be God's servant.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I am a human being, you know.

ADRIAN: Your church members trusted you.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I often asked you to join me, but you have never accepted.

ADRIAN: You know me, Pastor Mitchel. I am not like that. I don't have money, but I will not do such things.

PASTOR MITCHEL: You are the most stubborn man I have ever known.

ADRIAN: I am not a stubborn person. I want to be honest.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Honest people don't become rich.

ADRIAN: Thank you, God's servant.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Why are you thanking me?

ADRIAN: You've given me the answer I was looking for.

PASTOR MITCHEL: What answer?

ADRIAN: To become rich, you must con people. Well! Whatever the means. Being a church minister allows you to ruin the most vulnerable people, and I now understand the method by which the Lord permits terrible people to get everything.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I am not a bad guy. You are wrong, and I see myself as God's sheep. I help members find passion, cure impotence and infertility, help them hold an advanced career, and make them even wealthy.

ADRIAN: That is why you use magic power to impress your members?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Come on, Adrian. Join me.

ADRIAN: No. I have tried to do the right things doing as many good works for people as possible without needing anything in return. But it seems like no matter how much good I do, I only receive lousy karma in return. I know other people who do bad things prosper quickly, but I was still five years ago. They get a lot of money, and they don't care who they hurt to get it. I hope that they will receive their punishment one day.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Maybe not in this life.

ADRIAN: It's a joke for you, isn't it? It is one of the reasons I am asking myself some questions about the church.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Shortly, everything will be fine.

- ADRIAN: When? In Paradise? I don't recognise you anymore. Where has the friend gone who was ready to help when people had problems?
- PASTOR MITCHEL: I am the same person. I suggested paying you monthly, but you refused. You are an intelligent man, Adrian. Stop your madness. You can't change the world, and the world will remain as it is.
- ADRIAN: I am not trying to change the world, and I am just trying to stop people like you who are still taking advantage of poor and vulnerable people. Two years ago, a ten-year-old girl was sent back to Africa accused of witchcraft. I asked you if you were involved, you said you were not.
- PASTOR MITCHEL: Have you been investigating me now?
- ADRIAN: I want my friend back.
- PASTOR MITCHEL: It is too late. I can't give up on everything I worked for.
- ADRIAN: For God's sake, you did not work hard for that. You are simply stealing money from your members.
- PASTOR MITCHEL: Feeling betrayed by another person is acceptable, but from you, I feel disappointed.
- ADRIAN: I am not the one to blame, and you need to blame yourself because you chose this path. I can't understand why religion, in general, is full of hypocrisy—people who see themselves as religious hold some values but fail to realise what those values mean.
- PASTOR MITCHEL: Do you believe that you hold the monopoly of morals?
- ADRIAN: You are the Pastor. I heard you talking about your judicial setbacks with your solicitor. It is strange; you are hiding it from me.
- PASTOR MITCHEL: Everything is fine. Why would I hide something from you?
- PASTOR MITCHEL'S MOBILE RINGS INCESSANTLY, BUT HE IS NOT PICKING UP.
- ADRIAN: Why don't you answer your phone? Any trouble, my dear Pastor?
- PASTOR MITCHEL: No.
- PASTOR MITCHEL TURNS OFF THE PHONE.
- ADRIAN: Why can't you pick up the call? Anything wrong? You are a pastor, and you are supposed to show a good and blameless example.

PASTOR MITCHEL: What are you blaming me for? I serve my Lord every day.

ADRIAN: By flirting with the church members? For not being tolerant? By being a hypocrite?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Why am I listening to you?

ADRIAN: Do you think I was born yesterday?

PASTOR MITCHEL: I can't take it anymore. You are becoming crazy. I will be back when you finish your frenzy. Damn it! I already told you they are all gossips.

ADRIAN: Gossips, huh!

PASTOR MITCHEL'S PHONE RINGS AGAIN. HE PICKS UP AND EXITS. AT THE SAME TIME, ADRIAN'S MOBILE PHONE RINGS TOO.

ADRIAN: Yes. Not only is he sleeping with church members, but he is also taking advantage of the church money. I heard that he had built more than two villas somewhere.

THE VOICE: Yes, I can confirm that he has many assets somewhere.

ADRIAN: I know he is a human being, and he can be weak, but as a pastor, he needs to set an example. That is why lots of people don't believe in the church anymore. No. I am not becoming an atheist. I will always trust God. I hate all those pastors who work for money and forget the principle of honesty. I told him everything, but he denied all the facts. I am not quitting God, but I will leave the church.

ENTER PASTOR MITCHEL.

ADRIAN: Pastor Mitchel! I am quitting.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Pardon me?

ADRIAN: You heard me. I am leaving.

PASTOR MITCHEL: May I wait for you tomorrow?

ADRIAN: I said I quit your church. I don't want to work for you anymore.

PASTOR MITCHEL: You have no right to do this to me. You can't quit the Lord.

ADRIAN: I am not quitting the Lord, but your church.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Why?

ADRIAN: Don't you know what is happening, Pastor?

PASTOR MITCHEL: I am sure you don't believe what you say. This is because of that son of bitch, your friend. At least the son of a bitch is gone.

ADRIAN: Can you hear what you are saying?

PASTOR MITCHEL: He is doing everything to separate us. Can't you see that?

ADRIAN: No. You are doing everything to separate us. Not him.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Not at all. We are all human beings, and we can make mistakes. We pray every day because we want to stop making mistakes, but it is not easy. Now can we change the conversation?

ADRIAN: Why? Is that boring you?

PASTOR MITCHEL: We need to talk about something positive, like asking the Lord to bless our church. We now have three and a half million in our account.

ADRIAN: Is it the only thing that interests you?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Of course not. How can you say that?

ADRIAN: God's servants don't have to act like that. You know what, I need answers.

PASTOR MITCHEL: The Lord loves you, Adrian. Through the Bible, he provides enough answers. Maybe you should talk to your father. The Bible says, "Everything you ask will be given to you."

ADRIAN: I know God exists, but your behaviour has started making me doubt him. That is the reason I started asking myself some questions. Why can't he stop his servants from committing sexual crimes and abusing women?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Are you blaming me for something?

ADRIAN: Are you blaming yourself for something? You said you did not abuse that woman in your office. So, what is your problem?

PASTOR MITCHEL: I don't like the way you said it.

ADRIAN: Why?

ENTER FRED.

FRED: I told you. They all act weird.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Shut up. (TO ADRIAN.) I will kill your gay friend.

FRED: (DISTANT) I heard you. I am not gay.

PASTOR MITCHEL: He is not gay. I already told.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Why is he corrupting you?

FRED: (TO ADRIAN) Is he your dad? (TO THE PASTOR) Stop being weird.

PASTOR MITCHEL: (TO FRED.) Get lost.

FRED: Why?

ADRIAN: Yes, why?

PASTOR MITCHEL: I don't like him.

ADRIAN: Why? What did the Bible say about your neighbour?

ADRIAN: Fine. I am quitting.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Because I asked him to leave?

ADRIAN GOES TOWARDS THE EXIT. PASTOR MITCHEL FOLLOWS HIM.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Please, Adrian. Don't go. We can have an arrangement.

ADRIAN STOPS NEAR THE EXITS AND LOOKS AT PASTOR MITCHEL.

ADRIAN: What arrangement?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Please sit down a bit for our friendship's sake. I can help you to find a good job. I have good friends who can help, getting a good salary. I need you in the Church, Adrian. Please, stay.

ADRIAN: Thank you very much for the offer, but I can't. I don't have any more time for the church, and I must concentrate on my studies.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I will pay for your studies.

ADRIAN: No, Pastor. Do you think this is all about the money? Brother Daniel can take my place. He's a good man.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I don't have any confidence in him.

ADRIAN: Didn't Jesus say you must trust each other?

PASTOR MITCHEL: I know that, but he wasn't honest. Distrust also helps us to avoid disappointment. I need a simple man like you.

ADRIAN: What I am doing here is illegal.

PASTOR MITCHEL: The Lord will understand because you are doing his work. My offer will help your studies, and I am sure you need something.

PASTOR MITCHEL TAKES MONEY FROM HIS WALLET.

ADRIAN: I can't, Pastor.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Please, Adrian!

ADRIAN: No Pastor.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Of course. Money is power.

ADRIAN: My last advice as a friend is that you must give up.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Give up? I already told you I couldn't do that. After I had been through when I was building this church, you asked me to stop. What do you want to do after that?

ADRIAN: Find a proper job.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Do you want to do a kitchen porter or cleaning job? Are you asking me to give up on all my privileges?

ADRIAN: Then one day you will be in trouble. And don't come to me.

PASTOR MITCHEL MOBILE PHONE RINGS. HE CHECKS IT AND EXITS.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Don't go yet, please. We need to talk.

FRED: Where is he going again? What's wrong with him?

ADRIAN: He is a busy pastor, you know.

FRED: I don't understand why religious people act like phantoms, disappearing like that.

ADRIAN: What do you mean?

FRED: This guy has a hell of a Jeep. It must have cost a fortune. Where does he get the money from?

ADRIAN: I don't know. Ask him.

FRED: Why do you keep saying 'ask him'?

ADRIAN: You are always asking me questions about him.

FRED: You said you know him better.

ENTER PASTOR MITCHEL.

PASTOR MITCHEL: I am in the shit. I am in the shit. I am in the shit.

ADRIAN AND FRED LOOK AT EACH OTHER.

ADRIAN AND FRED: How shit?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Intense shit!

ADRIAN: I told you. I told you. I told you.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Stop repeating every time, you told me. Have you ever made a mistake? You're supposed to help me.

ADRIAN: How can I help you after hiding things from me?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Don't take it seriously, Adrian.

FRED: Oh! Come on, dear Reverend.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Shut up. It is not your business. You better take care of your escort business.

FRED: Who told you that?

PASTOR MITCHEL: My little finger! I like my little finger.

FRED LOOKS AT ADRIAN.

FRED: (TO ADRIAN.) I will kill you.

ADRIAN: Sorry.

FRED: (TO PASTOR MITCHEL.) Okay. How come your little finger didn't prevent you from being in deep shit? You know what? I'm happy you're in deep shit.

PASTOR MITCHEL: You are evil.

FRED: No, I'm not, but you are.

PASTOR MITCHEL: You are because you don't know Emmanuel.

FRED: Well! You can ask Emmanuel to help you out when you go to prison.

PASTOR MITCHEL: Lord will be with me. By the way, I want to confess something.

ADRIAN & FRED: What?

PASTOR MITCHEL: I lied to you.

ADRIAN & FRED: Oh, yes? About what?

PASTOR MITCHEL: The voice of the Almighty was my bodyguard. It was just a trick.

ADRIAN & FRED: We knew that.

PASTOR MITCHEL: How?

ADRIAN & FRED: The Lord works in mysterious ways.

PASTOR MITCHEL: You, sons of a bitch. Let me confess another lie.

ADRIAN & FRED: What again?

PASTOR MITCHEL: It was me you saw with the girl in the movie.

FRED: (TO ADRIAN.) I told you.

ADRIAN: You were right.

ADRIAN & FRED: So, why are you telling us that?

PASTOR MITCHEL: Well. It is like I am confessing, so the Lord will forgive me.

ALL LAUGH.

ADRIAN: Eh, Fred.

FRED: What?

ADRIAN: Don't think I am quitting the church. I am leaving your church.

PASTOR MITCHEL: What are you talking about?

ADRIAN: I already told you, Pastor.

FRED: (TO ADRIAN) All the churches are the same. You do precisely like a crocodile that flees the land when the rain falls and shelters in the water.

PASTOR MITCHEL: You, son of a bitch.

PASTOR MITCHEL ACCESSES THE PULPIT. THE CHOIR ON THE STAGE SINGING.
BLACKOUT, LIGHTS UP.

CURTAIN