

PG-13 NOTE: This play contains dialogue relating to the topics of teen pregnancy, sex outside of marriage, and abortion, all of which may be viewed by some parents as inappropriate for young children. Directors, please read the script, consider your intended and anticipated audience, and use your own discretion regarding whether to produce this drama. Parental guidance is advised for any pre-teens attending the play.

Contemporary Christmas

by gratefulsue

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All Scriptures are taken from: Holy Bible, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION ®, NIV ®
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For inquiries, please go to www.gratefulsue.com and submit your questions on the Contact page or email gratefulsue@gmail.com.

Characters:

Tom—Father; salesman in a furniture store

Jane—Mother; homemaker

Brittany—17-year-old daughter of Tom and Jane; Junior in high school; her hair, clothes, and make-up indicate a slightly rebellious attitude, bright nail-polish

Bobby—11-year-old son of Tom and Jane; Brittany's brother; fifth grader

Jack—18-year-old boyfriend of Brittany; Senior in high school

Optional—Any number of vocalists and/or musicians desired for Scene 3, and a choir director for the Christmas Program

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SCENE 1 - Christmas Presents

Note: Instructions for Directors and actors are in brackets []. They are not part of the dialogue. Words in *italics* in the script indicate an intended audible emphasis by the actors.

[The stage is divided roughly in half, with a kitchen and dining area on one side and a living room area on the other side. The kitchen area contains a sink and countertop near a small dinner table for four. Next to the counter is a coat rack with one or two coats on it and a door to the outside. On the opposite side of the table is a living room area containing a couch, end table, lamp, stuffed chair, and a medium-sized, decorated Christmas tree. The decorations on the tree should not be so fancy as to be distracting. Three members of the family are at the dinner table eating. One seat is empty—for Tom, who comes in late. Brittany is listening to songs on her phone with ear buds as she eats.]

Tom: [Entering the house through the door in the kitchen,] Hey guys. Sorry I'm late for dinner, Jane. [He gives Jane a hug and a kiss, and hangs up his coat on the coat rack. He washes his hands, then heads to the table, greeting Bobby and Brittany, touching each on the shoulder.]

Tom: Hi, Bobby.

Bobby: [Looking at him and smiling.] Hi, Dad!

Tom: Hi, Brittany.

Brittany: [She nods her head without looking up.] Hey.

Tom: [Directed at Jane, as he takes his seat at the table] You wouldn't believe the traffic coming home. There was a bad accident on the freeway. I think there may have been fatalities.

Jane: Oh! I hate to hear that. I worry about you coming home that way every day. That could have been you!

Tom: Hey, I'm ready to go home to Heaven, whenever the Lord calls me.

Jane: Still, did you *have* to stay late at work? Traffic is so much worse after 6:00.

Tom: Yeah, you know how it is. People always come into the store fifteen minutes before I get off, and act like they want to buy a whole bedroom set of furniture. So, I work with them for 45 minutes and then they decide they aren't interested after all. [Takes his seat at the table, pats Bobby on the head, and touches Brittany on the shoulder.]

Jane: Any sales earlier in the day?

Tom: No, not for me. Chuck Smith always seems to get them. Customers run to him like ants at a picnic. [Tom reaches over and pulls out one of Brittany's ear buds to her music. She makes a face, but unplugs the other one and temporarily sets her phone aside for dinner. However, she still checks and sends text messages on her cell phone occasionally, during the meal.]

Jane: This "working on commission" sure is hard to deal with at Christmas time.

Tom: Oh, we'll be alright. So, Bobby, have you decided what you want for Christmas this year?
A new bike? Or, maybe some more Legos?

Bobby: Noooo, Dad. My friend Jason has an X-Box. That's what I want, so I can play "Call of Duty!"

Tom: Uhh, you're a little young for that, Buddy. In fact, some people might say your friend Jason is a little young for that, too. He's in the seventh grade. You however, are only in *fifth* grade!

Brittany: I know... You could get him a set of handcuffs for Christmas.

Bobby: Yeah, cool idea!!

Brittany: Then, you could handcuff him to his bed and throw away the key!

Bobby: [Angrily,] Hey!!

Jane: Brittany! Don't say such unkind things to your brother!

Brittany: He deserves it! He is such a little brat. I caught him in my bedroom last night, using my nail polish without asking me. Why? To paint his cars! In addition, he got red nail polish on my bedspread. Now there is a permanent spot, where I tried to get it off with nail polish remover.

Tom: Bobby, is that right? [Bobby nods.] Well, that explains a lot. So... tell her you're sorry.

Bobby: [Grudgingly] I'm sorry. It was an accident.

Tom: I can understand why you're upset, Honey. It was wrong for Bobby to use your nail polish without asking. Still, you don't need to come down quite so hard on him. Can't you give him a little grace? Ya' know... *undeserved* kindness? He knows he was wrong.

Brittany: Well, according to the laws of the "jolly old man in a red suit," what he *does* deserve is a stocking full of coal. No grace there! I was always told "Santa won't give you *anything* for Christmas unless you're a "good little girl." Bobby hardly qualifies as a "good little boy," [pause] except for the "boy" part, and the "*little*" part. [She glares at him, and he at her.]

Jane: Brittany!

Tom: Now listen, Honey. It's true, Bobby shouldn't have gotten into your nail polish... and he will be using his allowance to get you two new bottles to make up for it.

Bobby: Aww, DAD! [Brittany smiles, and gloats at Bobby triumphantly.]

Tom: [Looking at Bobby,] That's right. [Now, addressing both children,] But, the point is that no one in this house is perfect. We all blow it sometimes... including me. We just have to forgive each other and move on. Bobby will get *something* for Christmas. That's the

“Christmas spirit.” God showed His grace toward us by giving us a *wonderful gift* we didn’t deserve. He sent *Jesus* to die for our sins, so we could be forgiven... just because He loves us.

Brittany: [bored] Yeah... whatever. If He wanted to give me a gift, He could have just given me a car...

Jane: [Rather uncomfortably changing the subject,] Ahem, uh, speaking of Christmas time, don’t forget, the church Christmas program is tonight. The choir is performing, and there’ll be a short drama about the story of Jesus’ birth. You know, with the manger and the stable...

Tom: Oh yeah. That’s right! [He looks at his watch.]

Jane: We’ll need to leave in about 15 minutes if we want to get good seats.

Brittany: [sarcastically] Yeah, ‘cause you might not ever know what happens to Mary and Joseph when there’s [She makes air quotes with her hands] “no room at the Inn,” if you’re sitting in the back.

Jane: Brittany! Must you really make fun of the Nativity!?

Brittany: [Unconvincingly,] Oh, soory, Mom.

SCENE 2 - Virgin Mary

[Jane begins clearing the table. Brittany has moved to the couch and is busy texting friends on her phone.]

Tom: So, Bobby, you remember the Christmas story—right? [Bobby shrugs, as if to say, “I don’t know.”] [Tom begins a long narrative summarizing Christmas.] Okay, well, the Virgin Mary has a baby boy. She and Joseph name Him “Jesus” because an angel told Mary and Joseph that’s what the baby’s name is supposed to be.

Bobby: [Interrupting] Dad...

Tom: [Deep in thought, doesn’t hear Bobby] Jesus is born in a stable, and Mary puts Him in a manger. The family gets visits from shepherds,

Bobby: [With a little more emphasis] Dad...

Tom: [Oblivious, continues] And later, some wise men visit, who came from the East. Oh yeah, and there is this bright star that appears...

Bobby: [Almost yelling] DAD!!

Tom: [In a somewhat loud, irritated voice] What?!

Bobby: What does “virgin” mean? You said, “The *virgin* Mary had a baby boy.”

Brittany: [Suddenly in tune to the conversation] Ha! This ought’a be good...

Tom: Umm... ask your mother. [Jane looks annoyed with Tom.]

Bobby: Mom, what does “virgin” mean? Dad said “the Virgin Mary” had a baby. I thought a “Virgin Mary” was that drink Granddad orders at restaurants. [Brittany, amused, and wondering what will come next, looks at her mom.]

Jane: [Jane pauses from her work in the kitchen.] Well honey... ya’ know... usually, God uses a

mommy AND a daddy to make a baby.

Brittany: [low voice] Cop out... [She returns to texting her friends on her phone.]

Jane: [Continuing] Mary was the Mommy for Jesus, but there wasn't a human Daddy involved! So, Mary is called a "Virgin." Mary's pregnancy was a real *miracle!* It couldn't possibly have happened without God's help. In fact, Mary was *still* a virgin for a while, *after* Joseph became her husband, and *after* baby Jesus was born. That's one of the many reasons why Jesus is so special. He's different from all of us. I mean, he's a man and all, but he's also the Son of God!

Bobby: OOOOhhhhh!

Tom: [to Jane] Nice save, Jane!

Jane: Thanks. Now Bobby, run to your room and change into a collared shirt please, before we leave. [Bobby leaves the kitchen table and exits the stage via the living room. side.]
Brittany, you ARE coming with us to the program tonight, *right?* It should be great music! What do you say? Are you coming?

Brittany: No thanks. [With dry humor, says...] I'd rather leave my cell phone out in the rain than have to go to that Christmas program. Besides, Jack just asked me to come over to his place tonight.

Jane: You're seeing Jack again? That'll be every night this week!

Brittany: So? When I first started dating Jack, three months ago, you said you liked him!

Jane: Well, yes... he *seems* like a nice boy. But honey, we barely know him! *Every night* this week? I think that's a bit much for a 17-year-old! Do you know anything about his parents?

Brittany: Chill out!! We're just helping each other with Chemistry!

Jane: [trying to entice her] You know, you could invite Jack to *come with us* to the Christmas program... he might enjoy it! You still have the rest of the weekend to do your Chemistry homework...

Brittany: Sorry, we have better things to do with our time than listen to “Away in a Manger” and songs about baby Jesus! [she receives a text message from Jack] Oh, that’s Jack. He says he’s waiting out front. Gotta go! [She grabs her back pack, and a coat from the coat rack. Exits through the kitchen door, saying,] Bye.

Tom: [As Brittany is leaving, says] Don’t stay out too late, honey...

Jane: [Pause] Tom, I’m worried about her. She seems so distant lately. Something isn’t right...

Tom: Oh, relax Jane. You remember how much time we spent with each other when we were dating, don’t you?

Jane: *YES*, I remember... That’s *exactly* why *I AM* worried!

SCENE 3 - Christmas program

[This is an optional scene. If musicians and vocalists are available, switch the scenery to look like the inside of a church or a theatre stage. Your mini choir or ensemble would “perform” on one side of the stage, with a choir director leading. A few chairs should be set up on the opposite side of the stage also, to look like a portion of the “audience” watching the “performers.” Just three or four rows of chairs. A few seats are occupied with other audience members. As the lights come up, Tom, Jane and Bobby (wearing a shirt with a collar) enter and take their seats in the second row of audience chairs. Accompaniment for the songs may be nothing (all numbers sung acapella), a lone piano, various instruments (depending on what the space limits are for the venue), or pre-recorded backing tapes (instruments only); Director’s choice.

The choir director welcomes everyone in the stage audience to the program and introduces each number performed, at least two, or at most four, Christmas songs, depending on how much time you want it to take. One of the numbers performed should be, “O Holy Night,” at least three verses, sung by a soloist with the choir adding harmonies, since it is mentioned in Scene 5. The “audience” *on stage* should clap after each number finishes, and the choir director should turn and face the *stage audience* and bow before turning back to the choir to begin the next number. The lights go down on Scene 3 as the final number is being performed, but before the song ends, indicating that the main audience is not viewing the entire performance.

If no good live vocalists are available, to perform as the “choir” in the “Christmas Program,” simply skip Scene 3 and go to Scene 4.]

SCENE 4 - Not Studying

[Jack's parent's house. Brittany and Jack are sitting next to each other on a nicer looking couch, with matching end tables on both ends, his arm is around her. The coffee table in front of them has a Chemistry book and a few papers from school. Back packs are on the floor.]

Jack: [Speaking slowly, in shock] Wow, Brittany!! That's a real trip. Are you sure?

Brittany: Yes, I'm sure. I took the test three times. You think *you're* depressed... how do you think *I* feel?

Jack: [silence at first] I can't believe you're pregnant!

Brittany: I know... neither can I! What am I going to say to my parents? My mom is gonna kill me!

Jack: Yeah, she creeps me out. She's always asking questions or, inviting me to do things with your family.

Brittany: She's just wants to get to know you.

Jack: Well, she'll be sorry she ever met me once she finds out you're pregnant! [Another period of silence.] We can't let my grandma know about this! If she finds out I got a girl pregnant, she may change her mind about paying my tuition for college next year.

Brittany: [Clearly offended,] Is that all you can think about? *Your* money for college? Excuse me, but, *I'm* the one who's pregnant here!

Jack: Um, yeah, right... sorry. Look, ya' know, there are ways to take care of this and make it go away... where no one else would ever have to find out. It's *super* easy. Let me ask around and get some answers for you. If you get an abortion, you can finish out your Junior and Senior year in high school, and I can go to State College in the fall. We can

just pretend the whole thing never happened.

Brittany: Oh... and *THAT'S* supposed to make me feel better??

Jack: Well, *I don't know*... [standing, agitated, pacing] it would sure make things *easier*! For you, too! I mean, you can keep the kid if you want to... what do you *want* me to say??!

Brittany: I don't know! [10 seconds of silence] If I keep the baby, I'd have to drop out of school. That would be horrible! I'd be away from my friends. I'd have to get a GED. And, I can forget about going to prom. But, what about *us*, Jack? What would that do to *us*?

Jack: [Sitting back down next to her on the couch, he leans over and gives her a kiss on the lips. He would linger, but she turns her head away.] Well... we would have all next semester before I graduate, and through the end of the summer to be together. If Grandma finds out and pulls her finances for my college tuition, then I'd have to go to the community college and get a job. So, if that happens, I would still be around. And, if she never finds out, then I guess I could still see you and the kid, when I come home from State College on breaks. [Or, insert the name of a college at least 3 hours away from your location]

Brittany: [Sarcastically,] Oh, that sounds great... visit "me and the kid," once every three months or so! Going to State College is more important than being with me. Meanwhile, you're away at school, going to parties, and probably dating around.

Jack: Hey, who says I'll be "dating around?"

Brittany: [Serious tone,] Well, I don't hear you saying anything about getting married!

[Awkward silence.] Jack, what about me? I'll get stuck here with "the kid!" But, I still have another year of high school. I don't want to have to drop out! You know I was planning on attending college too, and getting an English degree. My dad would be so

disappointed. He loves my writing. My friends would all think I'm a freak... and I can forget going to prom. But, getting an abortion is so drastic. Half the school would *judge* me if they find out I got an abortion, and the other half would think I'm *stupid*, if I don't!

Jack: Yeah... well [pauses], we don't have to figure it all out tonight, Babe. We have a little time. Everything will be okay, though. Don't worry. [She places her head on his shoulder.] Do you want to do any Chemistry homework, or would you rather put that off?

Brittany: [After a minute, she says,] Jack, I'm sorry, but I just don't feel very well right now... and I sure don't want to study chemistry. Would it be okay if you just take me home early, please?

Jack: Yeah, sure Babe... whatever you want... [He stands and begins collecting her Chemistry book, papers and back pack, while she looks miserable, on the couch. Then, he takes her by the hand, to leave.]

SCENE 5 - Contemporary Crossroad

[Tom is sitting on the couch in his living room, reading his Bible. Brittany enters, still upset from her time with Jack. She places her backpack on the kitchen table and hangs her coat on the rack.]

Tom: Oh, hey Brittany. [Tom glances over his shoulder at her.]

Brittany: Hey. [She heads to sink or the refrigerator to get a drink/soda].

Tom: How did your studying go?

Brittany: Fine... we didn't finish. [Pause.] What are you reading? [She joins him on the couch.]

Tom: The first couple chapters of the book of Luke, in the Bible. I wanted to refresh my mind about the details of the Christmas story. [Pause.] You missed a great program tonight! It was very inspiring. This one guy sang "O Holy Night," [or, insert the name of some other number the musicians/choir/soloist performed during Scene 3] and it just about knocked my socks off... we missed having you there.

Brittany: Believe me, you wouldn't have wanted me there. I don't belong at church stuff.

Tom: Now, what's that supposed to mean?

Brittany: Nothing.

Tom: [awkward pause] Ya' know, your mom has been a little worried about you lately.

[Brittany rolls her eyes] Is there something going on at school that we should know about, or with you and Jack, maybe? Maybe we can help...

Brittany: There's nothing you can do to help me. I've already messed up too much for anybody to help me now.

Tom: [Putting down his Bible on the table,] Well, I'm not sure what you think is *so big* that no one can help you. But, even if that is true, I know that *God* can help you, if you will just

let Him.

Brittany: Oh, *really*? I doubt it! [She stands up, turns away from her father, starting to leave and go to her bedroom.]

Tom: Brittany, Honey, wait! Tell me what's going on. [She pauses, struggling with whether or not to tell her Dad the news.] You know you can tell me. I don't bite! [Then, with her back still to her father,]

Brittany: Dad, I'm pregnant. I found out yesterday. [Turning to face him, says,] How is God supposed to help me with that?

Tom: You... you're pregnant?

Brittany: Yeah.

Tom: You're sure?

Brittany: *Yes*, Dad.

Tom: You and Jack...

Brittany: YES! [Awkward silence. Tom gestures being stunned, stands, paces, taking it all in.]

Brittany: I'm really sorry, Dad. I feel really stupid. [She puts her head in her hands and starts crying. He walks over to her and gives her a hug.] What's Mom gonna say?

Tom: Oh, you'd be surprised... She may understand more than you think. [Pause.] So, would this be why you said you, quote, "didn't belong" at the Christmas program tonight?

Brittany: Well, DUH... Church people all act like they're perfect! But, I obviously am not! God's not interested in people like me, who don't go to church or "follow the rules."

Tom: Now Honey, as I recall, we were talking about that at dinner tonight. No one is perfect. Not you, not me, not your brother, not the people who go to Christmas programs... We

all blow it sometimes. Everyone sins, sometimes multiple times in one day! Jesus is the only person who has ever lived a perfect life and *never* sinned, and He's *God!* So, *no wonder* He's perfect! [Tom pauses. Brittany is listening, but doesn't comment.] Remember, a few minutes ago, I said that I thought God could help you with your problem, no matter what it was?

Brittany: Yeah.

Tom: Well, I still think that. Come sit down and chat with me for a bit. [He sits down on the couch and pats the cushion where he wants Brittany to sit, then continues talking.] It's not that God's going to make your problems go away, like magic or something. But, I do still believe that God wants to help you! He loves you, and wants to take you in His arms and hold you. He wants to carry you through this crisis, er, I mean, this... "*development*," I should say. What do you say, honey? Can we talk about this for a few minutes? [Brittany is skeptical and embarrassed, yet reluctantly sits down on the couch and looks away from her father's gaze.]

Scene 6 - Bobby's Bedroom

[Bedroom containing a bed, a chair with Bobby's clothes laid on it, and his shoes on the floor in front of the chair. There is a small area rug on the floor, next to his bed. Bobby is sitting up in his bed, in his pajamas. Jane is standing next to the bed.]

Jane: What did you like best in the Christmas Program, Bobby?

Bobby: Well, the singing was all right. But, what I really liked was the play, especially the parts when the angels appeared. That was cool!

Jane: You mean like when an angel told Mary she was going to have a baby?

Bobby: Yeah, and those other times, too... like with Joseph, and with the shepherds. Then, the wise men had a special dream, telling them to avoid Jerusalem on their way home. I didn't know that there was a dude that wanted to kill Jesus right after He was born!

Jane: You mean King Herod. Yes. The Bible says there were some other times too, when the Lord sent angels. Those times weren't included in the play. Angels told Joseph to leave Bethlehem with Mary and baby Jesus, and go to Egypt, to get away from King Herod. Later, angels told him when it was safe to take Mary and the baby back to Israel because Herod had died. God the Father was very careful to protect His Son, Jesus, wasn't He?

Bobby: Yeah He was! I wish I could see an angel! Hey, but why didn't God protect Jesus later, when those other people wanted to nail Him to the cross? [Jane sits down on the edge of the bed.]

Jane: Well, we often don't know why God allows good people to suffer and die. But, with Jesus, we *do know* why. God allowed Jesus to suffer and die on the cross in order to accomplish a greater good, something more important, to benefit all of humanity.

Bobby: What do you mean?

Jane: Well, you know that sin is wrong and has to be punished, right? [Bobby nods his head, “Yes.”] Part of the punishment that people receive is feeling separated from God and other people, when we do wrong things in this life. If those sins are never removed, we’re in danger of being separated from God *forever* in eternity. Jesus knew that, but He loves us and wants us to be with Him forever. So, Jesus *willingly* went to the cross. He died in our place, so that He could take the punishment that *we* deserved for our sins. Jesus was perfect. He didn’t have any sins of his own that needed to be punished. Yet, through that one “bad” thing that happened to Jesus, all people are now able to become friends with God when we believe in Jesus, God’s Son!

Bobby: I believe in Jesus...

Jane: Yes, I know you do. You believe that He lived, and that’s a good start...

Bobby: [Trying to justify himself:] And, I try to be nice to kids at school. And, I didn’t mean to get nail polish on Brittany’s bedspread! Honest. That was an accident!

Jane: I’m sure it was; and, that’s good that you try to be nice to the other kids at school. But, you must *stop* trusting in your own good deeds—even just a little bit, to make yourself right with God.

Bobby: How come?

Jane: Because you would have to be *perfect* and *never* sin. But, *no one’s* perfect... except for Jesus. That’s why He’s the *only one* who can pay for and forgive our sins.

Bobby: Oooh.

Jane: The passengers in an airplane all know that their own efforts contribute *nothing* toward safely reaching their destination. Rather, they place *their trust in the pilot* who is at the

instrument panel and knows how to fly and land the plane safely. When it comes to eternal life, Jesus is the only pilot we can trust. He is the only one who can bring us to Heaven safely, because He died to pay for our sins. Believing in Jesus as our Savior and Lord is our connection to Heaven and the Heavenly Father. Plus, trusting in Him while the plane is in the air makes our flight less stressful, even when there is turbulence. The same idea is true for us on the ground, as we trust in Jesus and try to please God while living our lives.

Bobby: Okay. I think I get it.

Jane: Bobby, [pause] was it an “accident” that you took Brittany’s nail polish without first asking her permission?

Bobby: [Looking down, ashamed but honest,] Well... No.

Jane: Like I said, No one is perfect. We all sin. That just confirms that you need a Savior, just like all the rest of us. So, what do you think about Jesus? Do you think you’re ready to trust in Jesus alone to forgive your sins, come into your life to guide you, and to give you the gift of eternal life?

Bobby: [He nods,] Yes.

Jane: Okay, that’s great! Well then, would you like to talk to Him about it tonight, when you say your prayers?

Bobby: Yes, I would. [Pause.] Mom, will you help me? I don’t know what to say.

Jane: Sure, Bobby. How about if I suggest some things you could say and then you put it in your own words?

Bobby: Okay.

Jane: [She tenderly places her hand on his back.] Why don’t you start out by thanking God for

sending His son, Jesus, to earth, to teach us about God, and to pay for the sins of the world.

Bobby: [Bobby bows his head, closes his eyes, and folds his hands in prayer, maintaining this posture all through the prayer.] Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to teach us about You, and to pay for our sins.

Jane: Tell Him you're sorry for the bad things you say and do... things that make God sad, like taking Brittany's nail polish without asking her permission.

Bobby: I'm sorry I keep doing bad things. I'm sorry I took Brittany's nail polish.

Jane: You can tell God that you believe in His Son, Jesus.

Bobby: I believe in your Son, Jesus.

Jane: Thank Jesus for dying for your sins, for forgiving you, and for giving you eternal life.

Bobby: Thank you, Jesus, for dying for my sins and for giving me eternal life.

Jane: Ask Him to help you follow Him and to please Him every day.

Bobby: Help me to follow You and make you happy every day.

Jane: In Jesus' name, Amen.

Bobby: In Jesus' name, Amen. [He looks up.] So, now I'll go to Heaven now, when I die?

Jane: Yes, Bobby. That's what the New Testament teaches. Do you remember your memory verse from Sunday School? "For God so loved the world, [At this point, Bobby joins in with his mother and recites the end of the verse with her...]

Jane and Bobby: "... that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." [John 3:16 NIV]

Bobby: But, that seems so easy. What if I still do bad things in the future?

Jane: Let me ask you a question. Do you think that your dad and I would ever kick you out of our

family, or stop loving you?

Bobby: [He shakes his head, and says,] “No.”

Jane: But, what if you did something *really* bad, like selling drugs when you were older, or stealing from people?

Bobby: [Hesitatingly] Well... I don't know. I don't think so.

Jane: That's right. There's a lot of things you could do that would hurt Dad and me and make us very sad. There are also some things that have punishments or consequences, just like tonight. Dad told you that you will need to buy Brittany two new bottles of nail polish from your allowance.

Bobby: Oh yeah.

Jane: That was your consequence, as well as hurting your friendship with your sister. Or, if you were older, and you sold illegal drugs, you might get caught and have to go to prison. But, your dad and I would *never* disown you! You will *always* be a loved member of our family. It's the same with God. You have just been born into His family. The Bible calls this being “born again.” Today is your “spiritual” birthday! God loves you and will not disown you. There may be some sins you commit that will have worse consequences than others, but God will always be your Heavenly Father.

Bobby: I get it. That's pretty cool!

Jane: Yes, it is! It's amazing love! Now why don't you get some sleep.

Bobby: Okay Mom, and thanks!

Jane: You're welcome! Good night, Bobby; I love you.

Bobby: I love you, too. 'Night. [She gives him a kiss goodnight, then leaves the room. [Bobby lies-down and settles himself under the covers as the lights go out.]

SCENE 7 – Jesus in the Front Seat

[Tom and Brittany: in same places on stage as they were at the end of scene 5, as lights go up.]

Brittany: Why would God care about a pregnant, unmarried teenager? I'm sure He has more important things to worry about than my situation.

Tom: Hmm. Can you think of any pregnant, unmarried teenagers mentioned in the Bible? [He closes it, picks it up off the coffee table and holds it up briefly, for her to see.]

Brittany: Dad, you know I don't read the Bible anymore! [Tom gives her a look that says, "You know the answer to this question!" She pauses, and then the answer hits her.] Oooh... I guess you're talking about Jesus' mother, Mary...

Tom: Bingo! That's right. Mary was in your exact same position! [Pauses.] Well, not *exactly* your position... but *still*, a very uncomfortable place... especially for her day. Can you imagine all of the whispers and stares she endured while she was pregnant with Jesus, before and maybe even *after* she and Joseph had married? Maybe some towns people heard her story, [He changes the inflection of his voice to sound like a town gossip.] "She *says* she saw an angel who told her she would get pregnant without having sex, and her baby will be the Messiah." Meanwhile, they're all thinking, "Sure, Mary. Nice try. We all know what *really* happened. You're such an embarrassment to your parents."

Brittany: Gee, I never really thought about it. I guess that *would* have been really hard for her.

Tom: Yes. Mary was the first person to learn about this unusual plan of God, and she would have to present this new information to her parents, and perhaps siblings, all of whom may have been very skeptical at first. Yet, she didn't panic. She looked to her future with a strong faith in God to guide and protect her.

Brittany: That's wild.

Tom: And, think about Joseph. We know that he had planned to break off the arranged marriage quietly. We don't know how much time passed before the angel appeared to him and told him it was okay to take Mary as his wife. With Mary pregnant, he knew he would be privately accused of guilt by association. But, he trusted God with his future.

Brittany: Yeah, but Mary and Joseph hadn't done anything stupid... and she was pregnant with *Jesus*.

Tom: Okay, so your situation is a little different. *Nevertheless*, my point is that God isn't surprised by or worried about your situation. He cares about *both you and Jack*. This is the perfect time to pray and ask God for wisdom about what to do. There will be a lot of questions you'll need to answer for yourself in the coming days.

Brittany: No kidding, believe me, I know! That's all I've been thinking about the last 24 hours.

Tom: The first question will be whether you should you keep the child or end the pregnancy. Your mother and I will support you in whatever decision you make. If you carry the baby to term, would you keep it, or would you put the child up for adoption? That's a terrific option. There are lots of couples who would love to have children but are unable to have their own.

Brittany: Oh yeah. I hadn't even thought about adoption.

Tom: If you keep the child, would you marry Jack, or would you stay single? Are you sure you love him, and he loves you, and that he is the man you want to spend the rest of your life with?

Brittany: Yeah, I don't know. I'm... I'm not really sure... Sometimes, he seems really selfish.

Tom: That's a very important question. You've heard the saying, "two wrongs don't make a

right.” I might alter that to say, “Two mistakes don’t cancel each other out and make a solid future.” Marrying the wrong person could end up making you miserable the rest of your life, that is, if you don’t divorce! On the other hand, even if you get an abortion and end the pregnancy, that decision will also bring consequences, since it’s irreversible and you might later have regrets. You would then live with *that* decision for the rest of your life.

Brittany: [With a sigh,] Uhh, it’s all so heavy and confusing!

Tom: Well for now, honey, let’s focus on the positive. You *do have* one really great thing going for you!

Brittany: And, what’s that?

Tom: You’re a Christian! And, as a believer, it only makes sense for you to ask your Heavenly Father for guidance. He alone, really knows what’s best for you, and God certainly wants to be involved in your life. [Tom pauses before continuing. Brittany looks doubtful.]

Brittany, do you remember when you first believed in Christ and accepted Him as your Savior, when you were 9 years old?

Brittany: [Nodding her head,] Yes, I do.

Tom: What happened right after that?

Brittany: I was baptized, and I read my Bible every night before going to bed.

Tom: What else?

Brittany: Well, I prayed about everything, and I would talk to my friends at school about Jesus, all the time. I’m sure I was really annoying!

Tom: [Laughing.] That’s quite possible. At times, even your mother and I were a little annoyed! But, did you feel far away from God, or close?

Brittany: I felt very close to Him. I still remember that feeling... I also remember that He answered a lot of my prayers.

Tom: Exactly.

Brittany: But that was when I was little and naïve. How can believing in Jesus help me now, with being 17 and pregnant?

Tom: Jesus is called our “Wonderful Counselor.” [Isa. 9:6] You are going to have a lot of tough questions to answer in the next few days. Wouldn’t you rather deal with all those questions with the help of a “counselor” who knows you better than you know yourself? Someone who is all wise, and good, and knows the future? Someone who loves you *even more* than your mom and I do?

Brittany: [She nods her head and says,] Yes, I would.

Tom: Awesome. Ya’ know, when you first were learning to drive, either Mom, or I, always sat in the front passenger’s seat to be sure you were following all the rules of the road, to keep you safe and to give you directions on how to drive, or where to go. Do you remember that?

Brittany: Yeah, of course. What’s your point?

Tom: After a while, you were able to drive on your own and you didn’t need us in the car with you anymore. Being a Christian is a little like that, but different in one way. Accepting Jesus as your Savior and Lord is like inviting Him into your car, to sit in the front passenger’s seat. Jesus still lets *you* drive the car, but He can give you important advice and directions. *Unlike* parents, though, Jesus never gets out of the car. The Bible says, “He will never leave you or forsake you.” [Hebrews 13:5 NIV] For the believer, Jesus is always with us. But, sometimes, people don’t want to listen to His directions anymore

and they make Jesus sit in the back seat. Then, they turn up the radio, and put other people, or distractions in the front seat, to drown out His voice.

Brittany: [Chuckling mildly,] Haha, I guess that would be me? So, you're saying, I need to invite Him to sit in the front seat again.

Tom: Exactly. And, an apology wouldn't hurt anything, either.

Brittany: [She smiles, amused by the analogy.] Yeah. No joke. I guess you're right, Dad.

[Getting serious again,] But, what am I going to say to Mom? She's going to flip out!

Tom: She'll be surprised, yes. But, I don't think she'll be angry. She's familiar with your situation.

Brittany: What are you talking about? Did she find my pregnancy tests in the trash?

Tom: No, no. That's not what I mean. Besides, if she had, she would have told me. [Hesitating, thinking,] Um, Brittany, has it ever struck you as odd that you were born a little less than nine months after Mom and I were married?

Brittany: No. Mom told me that she got pregnant on her wedding night, and I came before the due date. That happens a lot... what are you saying?

Tom: Right. Well, um, that may just be a bit of a fib that she told you. The truth is, she got pregnant about three weeks *before* her wedding night.

Brittany: Three weeks before?? Are you kidding me?

Tom: No, I'm dead serious... I should know.

Brittany: Oh my gosh! [Silence for a minute, as it all sinks in.] Is that why you guys eloped?

Tom: Yes, it is. Your Mom didn't want people gossiping and talking badly about her or me behind our backs. But, our situation was a little different than yours. We were a couple of years older than you and Jack are now. We already knew we loved each other and that we

wanted to get married. We couldn't really afford a big wedding though, so it just made sense to elope! It ticked off her sister more than anybody, because she wanted to be in our wedding. But, everyone else handled it fine.

Brittany: Oh my gosh. I *cannot believe* I never figured that out before, and that you and Mom were in the same predicament I'm in right now! What a trip!

Tom: We prayed about it, and God definitely helped us make the right decisions. You are such a blessing to our lives, and your mom and I have been happily married, seventeen and a half years, even though our finances have always been pretty tight.

Brittany: And, so that's why you never finished your degree, because you had to work full time to support Mom?

Tom: Yes, and I was happy to do so.

Brittany: Wow... So, does this have anything to do with the fact that Mom is always giving me a hard time about spending so much time with Jack?

Tom: Of course it does. She knows all about the temptations of young love! As do I, naturally. But, I'll talk to your mom, tonight. Tomorrow's Saturday, and I'm off from work. Maybe Jane can drop off Bobby at a friend's house. Then, the three of us can all talk some more about this tomorrow. In the meantime, get a good night's sleep, and let's just take one day at a time. God hasn't forgotten about you. Maybe, now is a good time for you to reconnect with Him? God loves you, and I love you, too, Honey. [He gives her a hug.]

Brittany: Thanks, Daddy. I love you!!

Jane: [Walking in on the "I love yous,"] Well, there certainly is a lot of love floating around this house tonight. I guess we *are* in the Christmas Spirit! Tom, I have some great news about Bobby...

Tom: Really? [Standing] I can't wait to hear it! [Brittany also stands to turn toward her mom.]

Let's get ready for bed and you can tell me all about it. Oh, and I have some news for you, too! Some, some... *interesting* news. [They begin walking out of the living room area, arm in arm, heading for the bedroom, leaving Brittany behind on the couch.]

Jane: Really? What is it? [She looks back at Brittany, with a nervous look on her face.]

Brittany: Goodnight Mom, goodnight Dad. [She's quite relieved to not have to face her mom.]

Tom: Well, we'll get to that. You first—tell me about Bobby... [Jane begins to tell Tom about her conversation with Bobby, and him believing in Jesus for eternal life.]

[Brittany sits back down on the couch, gives a big sigh, hesitates, then picks up her Dad's Bible, looks at the cover, turns her head to make sure her parents are gone, and then finds Luke and begins reading silently, as the curtain closes. Consider performing a song at the end of the play, such as "Glorious Day (Living He Loved Me)" by Casting Crowns. It has excellent lyrics. If you do, begin the underscore here.]