

Scene 9

Grandmother emphasizes the true meaning of Christmas and begins the reading of the Christmas Story

Father picks up the reading on stage 2.

Narrator finishes the reading.

The nativity is acted out as it is read from the Scriptures.

.....I Remember.....

Scene 1

Florida Stage: Lights come up and Grandmother is sitting in rocker, doing some needlework. Two grandchildren are sitting on floor playing Monopoly. Three granddaughters sitting on sofa, playing with their dolls. Another grandchild sits studying a Christmas catalog.

Joy: (watching Bobby move piece) "Aha! You landed on my property. It's going to cost you one hundred bucks. Pay up LITTLE brother!" (holds hand out impatiently, with a big grin)

Bobby: (handing over the play money) "Okay, okay! Just because you're two years older doesn't mean you have to get pushy. And you don't have to be so happy about it either."

Joy: (putting money away) "Why shouldn't I be happy. I'm that much closer to buying a house for my property." (picks up dice to take turn)

Laura: (looking superior) "Must you be so blood thirsty, Joy? It is a game after all."

Joy: (making a face at Laura then throws dice and picks up conversation) " So Squirt, did you get your Christmas list done like Mom said?"

Bobby: "Of course! I put down "Game Boy" and 'Game Gear,' a new baseball glove, and a 'Star Trek' video game for starters. And if you don't stop calling me squirt, I won't let you play with them. Did you get yours done?"

Joy: "Yeh, I got it done." (looking superior)" Of course mine is quite different. I want a microscope and all the stuff that goes with it so I can study all kinds of things like bugs and dirt real close up. Christmas is the greatest!"

Noel: (looking up from catalog) "It sure is the greatest. I have my list almost done, too." (holds up long sheet of paper). "I can't wait to show it to Mommy when she gets back from the mall."

Laura: "Really Noel, you can't possibly believe Mother and Father will get you all of that (pointing at list). After all, there are some others of us in the family. I simply must have this gold pendant with the real diamond chip in it."

Kelli: (looking over) " Well, I want a new cradle for my dolly and some dress up clothes and..."

Sheri: "Yeh, and a toy kitchen and an oven that really bakes."

"GIMME SONG"

(Rap portion done by game players, classical
portion done by 3 grandchildren on sofa)

Grandmother: (sliding her glasses down her nose as she looks at all the kids) "It seems to me that you kids have a bad case of the "gimmes". I think perhaps you have all forgotten the real meaning of Christmas. Why don't you put those lists away and come over here. I have a story that I think you would really like to hear."

Sheri: (coming over) "Yeaaaaa."

Laura: (looking at Grandmother) "That's a good idea, Nana. Some people need to get their priorities straight."

Kelli: (coming over and sitting on floor near rocker) "What kind of story is it? Is it about princesses and frogs and stuff?"

Grandmother: "No, this is a story about a family that lived way out in the boon docks".

Noel: (comes over and climbs on Nana's lap) "What are boon socks, Nana?"

Grandmother: (laughing) "Boon DOCKS. That's a name for an area that is far away from any town or city. Often it's way up in the hills or mountains."

Noel: "Oh!" (thoughtfully) "But they DID have a McDonalds, right?"

Grandmother: (laughing) "I'm afraid not."

Bobby: "WOW! That was REALLY roughing it! "

Grandmother: (still chuckling) "Let's get back to the story. Once upon a time there was a Mommy named Sarah and a Daddy named James, a little girl named Ruthie and two little boys. One was named Jimmy and other was Mark. Well, this Mommy and Daddy almost forgot about the real meaning of Christmas too."

Kids: (surprised and loud) "They did?"

Grandmother: "Unfortunately, they did. It wasn't because they wanted so much (looks accusingly at kids, who respond by looking down) but it was real hard times and it looked like there was not going to be much in the way of presents for the children."

Joy: (looking horrified) "No presents! What did they do?"

Kelli: "Tell us about it Nana?"

Bobby: "Yes, please Nana?"
(all of the kids gather closer to Grandmother's chair.)

Grandmother: (leaning back in rocker, looking off as though seeing the whole incident) "It was wintertime and the weather was nothing like these warm sunny Florida days that you have been enjoying. In fact it was a bitter cold season. Sarah and James were missionaries and their salary didn't really meet their needs and was not regularly paid.

James was away much of the time, traveling from one district to another." (looking at Kelli and Sheri) "Little Ruthie was sick, and none of them were decently clothed. Sarah was at the point where she was patching patches. The water gave out in the well, and the wind blew through cracks in the floor. Their spirits were getting lower and lower.

The people in the parish were kind, and generous too; but the settlement was new and each family was struggling for itself. Little by little, at the time they needed it most, their faith began to waiver...

Deacon White: "My, my, this is a heavy one." (he huffs and puffs his way in the door with the box.) "This sure has been one of our longest cold spells. I'm going to be right glad to get home this night. I plan to park in front of that fireplace and not move for an hour."

Mrs. White: (looking at the Deacon, lovingly) "And I'll see you have a nice big mug of tea while you thaw those old bones out."

Deacon White: (returning her gaze) "This is one special lady I have here."

Father: "It was so kind of you both to go out of your way like this, especially in weather like this. Thank you so very much."

Deacon White: "Oh, no trouble." (starts leading the Mrs. toward door) "Well, you all have a merry Christmas. Good night to you."

Mrs. White: "Yes, Merry Christmas and have a nice night."

Mother: (still stunned) "A merry Christmas to you too."

Father: (calling after him, still overwhelmed) "The Lord bless you."

After the Whites exits, Lights dim on stage and spot comes back up on sleigh. The Whites conclude their song as they "drive off".

At the conclusion of the song spot goes out and lights on mission stage brighten. Father opens the lid of the box. He draws out a warm blanket from the very top. Mother touches it as they stare at it amazed.

Father hands the blanket to his wife and covers his face with his hands.

Father: "I can't touch them. I haven't been true, just when God was trying me to see if I could hold out." (looking at wife) "Do you think I couldn't see how you were suffering? And I had no word of comfort to offer. I know now how to preach the awfulness of turning from God"

Mother: (clinging to him) "James, don't take it to heart like this; I am to blame, I ought to have helped you. We will ask Him together to forgive us."

Father: (putting her away from him) "Wait a moment, dear, I cannot talk now" (he goes to far corner of living room and falls to his knees. Sarah goes to kitchen)

Mother, crying, falls to her knees next to a kitchen chair.

Lights dim and both are spot lighted.

SONG: COUPLE'S PRAYER

Spot lights go out but stage remains dimly lighted as we hear Grandmother's next narration.

No lights come up on Grandmother.

Grandmother: "Sarah's heart just broke and in an instant all the darkness and all the stubbornness rolled away. Jesus came again and stood before her, but with the loving word: 'Daughter'! Sweet promises of tenderness and joy flooded her soul. She was so lost in praise and gratitude that she forgot everything else. It was some time before James came back, but when he did, he, too, had found peace"

Lights re-brighten on Miss. stage at the conclusion of Grandmother's narration.

Father: (rising and moving toward sofa with hand held out to wife. Sarah too, moves toward him and the sofa. Upon meeting they sit together on the sofa, still holding hands.)

Father: "Now, my dear wife, let us thank God together" (they continue to hold hands.) (Looking at wife) "My words are so inadequate. Only the Psalms will do." (bows head) "I will praise thee O Lord, with my whole heart; I will show forth all thy marvelous works."

Mother: "The Lord is my strength and my shield; My heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoices; and with my song will I praise him."

Father and Mother: "I will be glad and rejoice in thy mercy. He brought me up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock. And he hath put a new song in my mouth. Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with benefits, even the God of our salvation"

Lights fade out on Miss. Stage and come up on Grandmother.

Scene 7

Grandmother: (looking off remembering) "It was 11 o'clock and there was the great box, nothing touched but the warm blanket we needed. Grandpa piled on some fresh logs, and we began to examine our treasures."