

A PUPPET PLAY IN ONE ACT

Even the Rocks Will Cry Out

Based on Luke 19:36–40 · Written by Carrie Elderberry



SUITABLE FOR
Ages 5 and up

CAST SIZE
7 puppets

PERFORMANCE TIME
7–10 minutes

PROPS REQUIRED
Three rock puppets (wadded paper bags); a hand-held curtain for scene changes

MAIN THEME

God chooses our ages and our days; the rest of creation is content to wait and praise Him, and one day even the stones will.

Carrie Elderberry's Gospel Puppets · gospelpuppets.org

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To print just the play on its own, print pages 5-8.

PRODUCTION OVERVIEW

Synopsis

CHILD 1 is frustrated with always being a bit younger than a cousin (CHILD 2), and is looking forward to “catching up” for a few months with a birthday. SPARKY and the GRANDMA-and some ROCKS- help the children take a different view of the created order.

Spiritual Concept

People are seldom content with the way God has ordained our lives to be; age and time are particular problems for many of us. We forget that it is our Creator who chooses our ages and the number of our days, and if we don't worship him, “the stones along the road would burst into cheers” according to Luke 19:40 (NLT). The rest of creation is trusting and praising God, both patient and eager for Christ's return and his promise to make all things new.

Age Suitability

Ages 5 and up. Even the elderly will resonate with wanting to be younger than they are.

Performance Time

7-10 minutes

CAST & TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Characters (in order of appearance)

CHILD 1 – has a birthday soon and will “catch up” briefly with a cousin who is already nine. Is frustrated by always being a bit younger than an older cousin

SPARKY – a dog who can understand everything the humans say, but only speaks to the audience when the “people puppets” are out of earshot. Reflects the trust in God's timing that is shared by the rest of creation

GRANDMA – A loving older woman, a wise follower of Jesus who helps her grandchildren grow in wisdom

CHILD 2 – the older cousin who is also impatient to stay “older” as if that is somehow an advantage. But also open to correction and is ready to admit wrongdoing.

ROCK 1 – the “middle-aged” igneous rock, forged by fire and enthusiasm

ROCK 2 – the “youngest” sedimentary rock, a bit worried about just being made of layers of mud

ROCK 3 – the “elderly” metamorphic rock, working on a song of praise for when Jesus returns

Prop Options

- Wonderful rock “puppets” can be made by simply wadding up brown paper bags. No working mouth is needed if you wiggle each rock a bit whenever it is talking. Just make sure the puppeteer’s hand fits inside comfortably. A bit of black or grey paint, and some googly eyes will really bring them to life. Photos of the author’s own rock puppets:
<https://gospelpuppets.org/puppet-resources/rock-puppets>
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PERFORMANCE NOTES FOR PUPPETEERS

New to puppets? General prep, technique, and voice tips live at gospelpuppets.org/getting-started.

Character Notes

Grandma’s empathy with the children’s self-centeredness and their resentment at God’s timing helps them to see it clearly and without defensiveness. SPARKY and the ROCKS reinforce the contrast between people (with our sin-nature, wanting to be in charge) and the rest of creation.

SPARKY’s “Woofs” are reactions, not filler. Give each one its own beat so the audience can read it (puzzled, pleased, going a little nuts) before the humans carry on. SPARKY’s two speeches straight to the audience are asides: turn out front, a little confidential, as if the humans can’t hear.

The ROCKS are in no hurry. Play them slow and warm. "Rock time" is a running gag, so land each one on the beat and let the laugh settle before the next line comes in.

ROCK 2's "just sedimentary" is the tender moment of the rock scene. Take a small pause before ROCK 3's "That's alright, dear," so the reassurance lands.

Staging

If your space is sufficient, the first four puppets can move to the wings and "watch" the ROCKS perform. If they do: they need to stay alert and focus on the rocks, not create any distraction or go limp.

A wonderful fun way to include more people, especially pre-readers desperate to help, is to have a hand-held "curtain" ready for the two scene-changes. Have someone call out "Scene change!" and the helpers can run up and screen the center stage for a moment, while chimes are rung and while the puppets switch places.

Button the ending: after the final "Goodbye!" hold everyone, ROCKS included, in a one-beat freeze before the bow.

Reading the Script

CAPS = volume/intensity or emphasis.

Ellipsis (...) = the author's pacing notation.

EVEN THE ROCKS WILL CRY OUT

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Jesus replied, "If they (my followers) kept quiet, the stones along the road would burst into cheers!"

Luke 19:40 (NLT)

(Enter CHILD 1 and SPARKY)

CHILD 1: Sparky! Guess what! My birthday is on Friday!

SPARKY: Woof!

CHILD 1: I'll FINALLY be nine! I can't wait. I'm FINALLY going to be as old as my cousin.

SPARKY: Woof?

CHILD 1: Yes, my cousin has been teasing me for the last six months! It's been so annoying. I'm sick of it!

SPARKY: Woof!

CHILD 1: I forgot something. You stay here, I'll be right back.

(Exit CHILD 1)

SPARKY: These humans are so foolish with their worries about their ages. When they are young, they are in such a hurry to get older, and when they are old, they wish they were younger! They don't understand that God created them exactly the way he wants them.

(Enter GRANDMA and CHILD 2)

GRANDMA: Well hello Sparky!

SPARKY: Woof!

GRANDMA: Good girl! Now where did my other grand-mouse go?

SPARKY: Woof!

CHILD 2: Grandma, are you coming to the birthday party on Friday?

GRANDMA: Of course! That's why I am visiting, this week.

CHILD 2: My cousin has been teasing me for the last six months, that finally we will be the same age again. It's so annoying! I am sick of it. And I'll have to wait six more months to be the older one, again. I'll FINALLY be TEN.

GRANDMA: Isn't it funny how much we worry about our ages?

CHILD 2: What?

SPARKY: Woof! Woof!

GRANDMA: When we are young, we are in such a hurry to get older, and when we are old, we wish we were younger!

SPARKY: (go a little nuts) Woof! Woof! Woof!

GRANDMA: And the truth is, we are exactly how old we are SUPPOSED to be, every day! God is the one that gives us our life, he is the one who chooses the day of our birth, and also the day of our death.

SPARKY: (jump around) Woof! Woof! Woof!

GRANDMA: Goodness Sparky, settle down. (look up) Is there a squirrel or something?

CHILD 2: Grandma, I never thought about it that way. I really need to stop teasing other kids, who are younger than me.

GRANDMA: Good idea. Let Jesus help you with that.

CHILD 2: And I should try not to be jealous of the older kids?

GRANDMA: Yep.

CHILD 2: Wow, that's going to be hard!

GRANDMA: And people MY age need to be content with being OUR ages. That can be tough! We old folks need Jesus, too.

CHILD 2: Grandma? Let's go find my cousin? I need to say "sorry".

SPARKY: Woof!

(Exit GRANDMA, and CHILD 2)

SPARKY: Let's imagine what it would be like if the rest of God's creation were aware of each other's ages! After all, this is a puppet show where anybody can talk! OK? Scene change!

(Helpers can hold up a curtain while chimes are rung)

(Exit SPARKY. Enter THREE ROCKS)

ROCK 1: Any day now, Jesus is coming back!

ROCK 2: Yes! And the humans will finally be able to hear us SHOUT! Praise the Lord!

ROCK 3: I've been working on a little song in honor of the day.

ROCK 1: Really? Can we hear it?

ROCK 3: It's not quite ready yet. But do you remember that glorious day, when Jesus was riding the young colt into Jerusalem? And he praised US.

ROCKS 1 and 2: Oh yes!

ROCK 3: That story has traveled all over the whole earth!

ROCK 1: It was such an honor. Every rock knows it.

ROCK 2: Jesus said if the people didn't cheer for him, the rocks would!

ROCK 3: Seems like just yesterday-

ROCK 2: In "rock time".

ROCK 1: And Jesus is coming back soon!

ROCK 2: Especially in "rock time"!

ROCK 3: I've been waiting a lot longer than either of you two...

ROCK 1: Why do you say that?

ROCK 3: Well, I am a metamorphic rock. I was formed at the very beginning of the earth.

ROCK 1: Oh, right! And I am igneous, from a volcanic eruption. I guess you could call me "middle-aged".

ROCK 2: I suppose you both think of me as the youngest, since I am just sedimentary, from layers of mud pressed together...

ROCK 3: That's alright, dear. We think you're adorable!

ROCK 1: Perfect just the way you are, the way God designed you to be.

ROCK 2: Oh good! And so we can all praise the name of Jesus together!

ROCK 3: I had better hurry up with my song. Jesus has promised to come back soon!

ROCK 1: Let's give the other puppets a bit more time, let's see if those children have made peace. Ok?

ROCKS 2 and 3: Ok! Scene change!

(Helpers hold up a curtain while chimes are rung)

(Exit all ROCKS. Enter Grandma, CHILD 1, CHILD 2, and SPARKY)

GRANDMA: I'm so glad you two little grandmice have made peace.

CHILD 1 and CHILD 2: We are sorry, Grandma!

SPARKY: Woof!

GRANDMA: Sparky is glad too.

SPARKY: Woof!

GRANDMA: You know something? Thinking about birthdays, and age differences, has got me thinking about the birth of this world, this whole creation. Do you two know about the new birth of the WORLD, that will happen when Jesus returns?

CHILD 1: What do you mean?

GRANDMA: The Bible says that all of God's creation will be made new, soon, when Jesus returns. I'm sure even the ROCKS are looking forward to that day!

SPARKY: Woof!

CHILD 2: Oh! I was just reading about rocks. There are very old rocks and very young rocks and even "middle-aged" rocks.

SPARKY: Woof!

GRANDMA: And there are many places in the Bible that speak about the rocks singing, and praising God, and even wanting to cheer for Jesus.

CHILD 1: And I bet THEY never worry about who is the oldest, or who is the youngest. Ha!

(ROCKS peek out)

ROCKS: Can we help with the ending?

SPARKY: Sure! 1,2,3:

ALL: You can read more about the rocks cheering for Jesus in the book of Luke, chapter 19. Goodbye!

THE END

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

Discussion Questions

1. Why are children impatient to be older?
2. Why are old people jealous of those younger?
3. What will happen to us when Jesus returns?
4. What will happen to the rest of creation then?

Related Bible Passages

Primary Text: Luke 19:36-40 – Jesus rides into Jerusalem, the crowds spread their garments and shout blessings, and when the Pharisees tell Him to silence them He answers that the stones along the road would burst into cheers.

Song Suggestions

- “How Good It Is” – Chris Tomlin –
<https://open.spotify.com/track/0vJ0Xz0ybkJy7yQsdVt0Jg>
- “Boasting” – Lecrae, Anthony Evans –
<https://open.spotify.com/track/2wP0FWblffejB5CwqXWY9u>

Ministry Context

This play works well for a series on the imminent (soon!) return of Jesus, being ready every day to see his face and worship him. It also works well for a series on the struggles we face with our sin-nature (even after praying a “sinner’s prayer”) with wanting to be in charge, and needing to surrender everything to God.

Bible Background

36 As he (Jesus) rode along, the crowds spread out their garments on the road ahead of him. 37 When he reached the place where the road started down the Mount of Olives, all of his followers began to shout and sing as they walked along, praising God for all the wonderful miracles they had seen. 38 “Blessings on the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in highest heaven!” 39 But some of the Pharisees among the crowd said, “Teacher, rebuke your followers for saying things like that!” 40 He replied, “If they kept quiet, the stones along the road would burst into cheers!” (NLT)