

Big story of the Bible in mime

On your marks:

This is an activity which can become a presentation by a group. The aim is to have a series of 13 simple mimes for the Old Testament story and 9 for the New Testament. This represents in proportion the length of the Old to the New Testaments in terms of numbers of books.

The minimum number of people involved in the whole Bible mime is 13 or 14 (a 14th is needed only in the 6th Old Testament mime) but smaller groups could act out the scenes with fewer children if necessary, although the significance of 12 is of course important (12 brothers, 12 tribes, 12 disciples).

The hope is that as one continuous presentation, the whole can give some idea of the overall connectedness of the Bible story and show the way in which God has spoken to the world to reveal His love. The presentation will need some rehearsal for it to flow smoothly.

Get set:

You will need some chairs, only one initially but eventually enough for every member of the group in the final scene.

Go!

The Old Testament

1. The first mime represents Creation and then the Fall.

Two people lie on the ground while one hovers over them. The one hovering then steps back as the other two stand upright and join hands with the one who created them. The creator should stand in the middle. After a pause one of the two created ones looks away from the creator and lets go. Soon after, the second created being also lets go. The three now stand, one on one side and two on the other. The creator then takes a chair and stands on it - high and separate from the other two. The creator remains on this chair for the rest of the Old Testament mimes

2. The second mime represents the call of Abraham and Sarah.

The one standing on a chair mimes calling out to people. Two people walk by and respond by listening (hand to ears) and then by walking around the chair as they 'travel'

together, sometimes pausing to kneel.

3. The third mime represents the story of Jacob - the grandson of Abraham and Sarah.

The one standing on the chair is watching out, with his hands shielding his eyes, as one person comes close to the chair and then runs far away and then slowly comes back. On his journey away he pauses to kneel and also on his way back

4. The fourth mime represents story of Jacob's sons.

The one on the chair holds out his hands in blessing. Slowly 12 actors gather around the chair. Then one is pushed away to the other side of the chair. This one walks off and only after some while the others nervously link up with this one again on the other side of the chair.

5. The fifth mime represents in the call of Moses.

The one on the chair beckons with his hands. One actor comes close but is afraid. The actor takes off his shoes and listens and then walks away but returns and to walk around the chair.

6. The sixth mime represents the rescue from Egypt.

The one on the chair points firmly into distance away from where the others are. The 12 from earlier are now close together, guarded by one other. The one who was 'called' in the last scene approaches and points in the same direction as the one on the chair. This one then counts slowly to 10 on his hands. When ten is reached, the one guarding steps aside so that 12 can follow the other away in the direction that is being pointed.

7. The seventh mime represents the giving of the Ten Commandments and the desert wandering.

The one on the chair is writing, in big letters. The 12 walk away from the chair and back again four times pausing each time they are close to the chair to 'hear' the writing.

8. The eighth mime represents the ups and downs of the people of God as they occupy Canaan again.

The one on the chair is praying. The 12 scatter around the chair, sometimes reaching hands towards the one on the chair and sometimes holding their heads in despair.

9. The ninth mime represents God's choosing of a King - King David.

The one on the chair enacts pouring out oil from a flask (anointing) and then holds his hands out in blessing. The 12 look at each other uncertain and then one of them stands up above the rest while the rest crouch down.

10. The tenth mime represents the worship at the temple built by Solomon.

The one on the chair listens intently with his hand to an ear. The 12 circle the chair and lift their hands in worship and then bow to the ground.

11. The twelfth mime represents the division of the kingdom into north and south. Israel

and Judah.

The one on the chair reaches out with hands in two directions. The 12 split into 2 and 10 and go to different sides of the chair.

12. The twelfth mime represents the sending of Prophets to bring the people back to God.

The one on the chair pushes forward open hands, as if sending people. All the others are crouching. From time to time some stand and point toward the chair; then others stand and point in a different direction.

13. The thirteenth mime represents the exile and return of the people of God.

The one on the chair sadly turns away from the people below, who walk off and away into the distance. After a pause, while the one on the chair turns to look out for them, some of the 12 return slowly to the chair but some stay away.

The New Testament

1. This first mime represents the story of Christmas.

The one who was standing on the chair now steps down and very deliberately crouches down among the 12, who are sat on the floor. Most look away; just three turn and look.

2. The second mime the presents Jesus choosing his disciples.

The one who stepped from the chair now stands up and one by one the 12 stand up and follow him, as together they walk in a circle around the chair following the Christ figure.

3. The third mine represents Jesus teaching.

The one from the chair now stands in the middle while the others sit looking up and listening.

4. The fourth mime represents Jesus taking his leave of those who followed him.

The one who is Jesus stands centrally with head bowed, while the others who are sat around, reach out towards the Christ.

5. The fifth mime represents the story of Good Friday.

The Jesus figure stands with arms held out as on a cross. The 12 move far away except for one who stays and stands close.

6. The sixth mime represents the Resurrection.

All 13 are sitting with heads bowed. Suddenly the one among them who is Jesus stands up and the others react with amazement.

7. The seventh mime represents the Ascension and the Great Commission.

The one who is Jesus now goes back to the chair to stand on it and points slowly in every compass direction. The others gather round in a circle and follow where the pointing with

their eyes.

8. The eighth mime represents the taking of the message out into the whole world.

The 12 who were around the chair begin to spread out wider and wider, moving into every corner of the room and pointing to Jesus from where they are.

9. The ninth mime represents the new heavens and the new earth.

Each of the people around the room now picks up a chair and comes and draws close to Jesus on the central chair. Now they too stand on chairs around Jesus. All lift their hands in praise. Then they all reach out and join hands, including Jesus, in God's new beginning!

This mime of the story of the Bible has been kept as simple as possible. It may be that some sort of one line narration is thought appropriate to go alongside each scene, but it can be very powerful if it is left for people to work the story for themselves. Not all details of facial expressions and movements have been recorded here but a group that practices this will begin to add some of their own and thereby make the mime more effective.

If you have a large enough group you could print off the different instructions for the different mimes and give groups the opportunity to rehearse particular sections. The whole can then be brought together as a continuous performance.

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