

"Bible Thumpers"
a ten-minute play
by
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BIBLE THUMPERS - a ten-minute one-act play

Synopsis:

Jeremy welcomes new dancer Mark aboard Noah's Ark, a display at a biblically-themed strip club. One may be gay and the other straight, but the duo's fast friendship keeps them both afloat.

Cast: 2M

JEREMY, 20

MARK, 19

Setting: Bible Thumpers, a Bible-themed gay strip club

Time: now

JEREMY, shirtless, sits in a boat.
MARK, shirtless and wearing a speedo,
gets in the boat and sits opposite.
They size each other up.

JEREMY

Hello and welcome aboard Noah's Ark! My name is Jeremy. Would you like some bubbles?

Jeremy blows bubbles.

MARK

Is that for the act?

JEREMY

Uh-huh!

MARK

Save it for the act.

Jeremy stops with the bubbles. Mark
tries to stretch out.

MARK

God this is a small boat.

JEREMY

Yeah, it's only five foot by three foot. Trevor measured it once. Trevor's the guy who was here before you.

MARK

There's water in here.

JEREMY

Yeah, and sponges. We're one of the wet displays. But it's odd that an ark would have water inside of it, isn't it?

MARK

This whole place is odd.

JEREMY

It's not bad, especially compared to some of the other places you could work. And the wet displays make more money than the regular ones.

MARK

That's good.

JEREMY

Yeah it is.

MARK

Yeah it is.

JEREMY
What's your name?

MARK
Mark.

JEREMY
Hey.

MARK
Hey.

Pause.

MARK
So how long you been doin' this?

JEREMY
At Bible Thumpers? I been here for five months.

MARK
And you make enough money to keep you here?

JEREMY
Oh yeah! When I first started, I thought the exact same thing: Who's gonna go to a Bible-themed gay strip club? But it turns out? A lot! Turns out it fills some sort of fetish niche.

MARK
Doesn't do it for me.

JEREMY
No? You should look around on your break, they hire a little of everything here. The older guys get the classic roles-- Moses, Joseph, Methuseleh. If you're into feet you can anoint a beggar. When I got hired, they said if I was a little taller I could've been Jesus. It's a good gig. You just stand there and lean.

Jeremy strikes a crucifix pose.

MARK
So tell me how this works.

JEREMY
Okay. When there's customers we just keep ourselves wet and go-go dance. The speedos stay on--also a big advantage over some other places--and the bills in your speedo go to you and the bills in my speedo go to me, and whatever they throw in the ark we divide up at the end of the shift.

MARK

The money's gonna get all wet.

JEREMY

Totally. You just run a hair dryer over it.

MARK

Shit, I can't afford to go out and buy new appliances.

JEREMY

That's okay, you can use mine. Are you saving up for something?

MARK

Definitely. Long story.

JEREMY

(Looking at clock)

Well we have... five minutes before the doors open.

MARK

Well, it's got to do with my girlfriend Sherri.

JEREMY

Girlfriend. Oh.

MARK

Anyway, she's totally cool. You'd like her. We knew each other longer, but we've been going out for a couple months. And she tells me last week she's pregnant. So she doesn't think and she tells her folks right away and they freak. And they call my mom and her boyfriend Ken and they unload on me and fuck 'em all, I don't want to see any of them again.

JEREMY

Aw, man.

MARK

So Sherri gets kicked out, I get kicked out. I tell you, you don't even know what that's like.

JEREMY

Actually--not for that reason, but yeah, I do.

MARK

So now we got to deal with it.

(Thumps the ark)

Dammit this is a small boat!

JEREMY

So, Mark--

MARK

This is Noah's Ark, right? Which one of us is Noah?

JEREMY

Neither of us. I think we're the animals. You know, two by two. We're just--sexy animals.

MARK

You and me? Repopulatin' the earth? How does that work?

JEREMY

Mark, can I ask you something?

MARK

What?

JEREMY

I'm just curious. How much money do you need?

MARK

We figured it out. We have another two weeks or so to pull some cash together. But it's gotta happen by the 31st. It'll cost 1200 bucks. We got a little saved up. So how much can I make in this place?

JEREMY

It depends, but at least you picked a good time. I hear business really picks up in the spring, as everyone feels sexy again and it's Easter. But maybe-- I mean--

MARK

What?

JEREMY

Have you and Sherri talked about it? I mean, is this what you really want to do?

MARK

Don't you start! I get enough of that from my mom and Ken. Everyone can't wait to judge us and give advice, I'm tired of it.

JEREMY

Just asking, not trying to... Sorry.

MARK

'S alright.

A pause.

MARK

So what about you? You doin' okay for yourself?

JEREMY

Yeah. Like I said, the money's decent...

MARK

I mean, you know, how you doin'?

JEREMY

Oh! Good, Mark. Thanks for asking. That's sweet.

MARK

(Acknowledging)

Hey.

JEREMY

Life's good. I bought a new bike. My sister called me, said she just got accepted into Columbia, which is totally what she wanted. So I'm proud of her. And on Mondays and Thursdays I can get into Bally's Total Fitness for free because I used to date the guy at the desk.

MARK

You guys have it lucky.

JEREMY

Really? What guys are those?

MARK

Gay guys. Guys-who-like-guys guys. 'Cause you never have to worry about one of you getting the other one pregnant.

JEREMY

No, I guess we don't have to worry about that...

MARK

And you guys do well with girls for some reason. Really well. I can name at least five girls who'd rather hang out with a gay guy than their boyfriends.

JEREMY

Maybe they feel at ease with us. We're not trying to get to know them. In the biblical sense.

MARK

In the what?

JEREMY

Like trying to get in their pants.

MARK

Oh yeah.

JEREMY
Mark?

MARK
Yeah?

JEREMY
You're not uncomfortable with this?

MARK
Well the boat's too small!

JEREMY
I mean, with me dancing with you, and guys are gonna come in, look at you, want you. Won't it be...awkward?

MARK
Hey. It's a job, and I hope it's a good-paying one. Let 'em look. Let 'em want. 'Cause every dollar that comes in is a dollar closer to me and Sherri getting ourselves out of this mess.

JEREMY
Fair enough.

MARK
It's life, you know? It's short. Why not dance in a five-by-three-foot tub with another guy in a speedo?

Mark and Jeremy regard each other:
friends. A moment, then Jeremy decides.

JEREMY
Tell you what. Since you're just starting, why don't you take all of the money that goes into the ark.

MARK
You said half. We divvy it up at the end.

JEREMY
I know.

MARK
We hit it with your hair dryer and divvy it up.

JEREMY
I know, but you should take it. I want you to have it.

MARK
Really?

JEREMY
Yeah.

MARK

Aw, thanks man.

JEREMY

Jeremy.

MARK

Thanks Jeremy.

JEREMY

I just wish it was under happier circumstances for you.

MARK

Believe me, anything to get the parents out of our hair is happier circumstances. Tell you something though, the place we get has gotta be bigger than this boat.

JEREMY

You're getting a place?

MARK

Yeah. 600 a month, 600 security deposit. We gotta raise that kid with a roof over our heads.

JEREMY

Two by two.

MARK

Yeah. I guess, yeah. For you though... One by three, four by four, it's whatever number you want.

They share a smile.

MUSIC CUE: Madonna's "Like a Prayer"
(or other dance music) begins.

JEREMY

That's our cue. You dance. I'll start the bubbles!

Mark dances. Jeremy blows bubbles,
dances. As they get into the act:

LIGHTS and MUSIC fade together.