

FISH-EYES

By Ted Swartz and Lee Eshleman

THE FEEDING AND THE BOATRIDE

Scripture: Matthew 14

Setting: On a hillside. Several months later.

Props: two chairs placed to form imaginary boat, one behind the other

Time: 15-16 minutes

(PETER and ANDREW are in poses of boredom and exhaustion.)

PETER: Does he know what time it is?

ANDREW: I don't know. How long's he been talking?

PETER: Three days.

ANDREW: Someone should talk to him.

PETER: I agree. Someone should talk to him.

ANDREW: I think SOMEONE should talk to him.

PETER: I'm not gonna talk to him.

ANDREW: Well, I'm not gonna talk to him.

PETER: I'm not gonna do it.

ANDREW: Well, I'm sure not gonna do it. Sometimes I don't even think he speaks our language. What if I go up there and he starts talking in those preables again? Because I don't-

PETER: Parables. Andrew, they're called parables.

ANDREW: Whatever! The point is they don't make sense. "A good measure pressed down, shaken up and running out over the mustard seeds

Purchasing this script grants performance
and duplication rights.

with the yeast of the Pharisees. What's that supposed to mean:
"Yeast of the Pharisees"?

PETER: I don't know. You know what gets to me is when he uses numbers. You know how I am with numbers. I've got a little problem with numbers. I think he knows it, too.

ANDREW: Yeah?

PETER: Yeah, he looks at me like I'm supposed to know this stuff: "Hey Pete: 144." I hate that.

ANDREW: You know what gets to me is when he draws. Somebody asks a great question, everybody leans forward to see what he'll say, and he's down here doodling in the dirt. It's embarrassing. Sometimes I just want to kind of slide up there and... *(Erases it with his foot)*

PETER: Okay. Okay. I'll talk to him this time but you have got to talk to him next time.

ANDREW: Deal. *(They shake.)* Fisherman shake? *(Special handshake)*

PETER: *(Moves down stage center, to Jesus)* Uh, Jesus. Can we have a word with you? Oh, it won't take long and then you can get right back to it. Well, it's just this Lord: it's getting toward supper time, these people have been here all day, and we were thinking maybe you should send them all home so they could get something to eat. *(Pause)* Beg pardon?

(Runs back to ANDREW.)

ANDREW: What did he say?

PETER: He said WE should give them something to eat.

ANDREW: Riiiiiiight. Us. There are thousands people here. With what?

PETER: *(To Jesus.)* With what? We should find something.

(to ANDREW) He said we should find something.
Purchasing this script grants performance
and duplication rights.

ANDREW: What does it mean?

PETER: I think it means we should find something.

ANDREW: Are you sure it's not a preable? Cause he may be—

PETER: It's not a parable. He uses a different tone of voice for parables.

ANDREW: So what, we're supposed to literally find something? I don't have anything.

PETER: You go that way and I'll go this way.

(PETER and ANDREW go out into the audience, asking people for food. They accept anything that's offered, then go back up on stage.)

PETER: Did you get anything?

ANDREW: Yeah, a few things. How about you?

PETER: About the same.

ANDREW: Oh, here's a late entry. Thanks, Phil.

PETER: Well, the basket's cute, but that still ain't much. *(To Jesus)* What? Yes, we've been out there. Collecting that food. What do we have? Well we've got these loaves of bread, a couple of fish, *(Filling in some of the items collected)* Oh, we should bless it? I guess we should. *(They set it all down and bow their heads, glancing up occasionally to sneak a peek at Jesus and the food.)* Amen.

ANDREW: Amen.

PETER: Oh, we should pass it out now. All of it? *(Pause)* No, I didn't think it was funny either, Lord. He says we should make a line and he's gonna break it and we're gonna pass it out.

ANDREW: Well, this shouldn't take very long.

Purchasing this script grants performance
and duplication rights.

(They form a fire brigade line and begin passing out the food. They think they are done. More comes. They are incredulous. Finally they are laughing and amazed.)

PETER: Andy, we've got bread!

ANDREW: We've got bread!

PETER: We've got fish!

ANDREW: We've got fish!

PETER: Keep it going! *(Finally ANDREW slows down.)* What?

ANDREW: Tell Jesus, the people are fed up.

PETER: I don't think I can say it like that.

ANDREW: Just look ... everybody has something.

PETER: Lord, we've got enough. *(Listens; laughs hysterically)*

ANDREW: What did he say?

PETER: The leftovers.

ANDREW: What about the leftovers?

PETER: He says we're supposed to pick up the leftovers.

ANDREW: *(Laughs)* That's a good one.

(They both laugh. PETER stops abruptly.)

PETER: You're not kidding are you? He says we're supposed to pick up the leftovers in baskets.

ANDREW: I'm not even gonna ask.

PETER: I wouldn't.

Purchasing this script grants performance
and duplication rights.

(They go out into the house, asking that the audience return all leftovers. They return, placing the imaginary baskets upstage.)

PETER: All done, Lord. How many baskets are there? Oh good, numbers.
(Counts) Eleven.

ANDREW: There's 12.

PETER: What?

ANDREW: There's three rows with four baskets each, so you multiply.

PETER: Twelve. There's 12, Lord. *(Listens)* And what does it mean?

BOTH: Auuuuuuuuugh!

ANDREW: Why can't 12 just be 12?

PETER: Does everything have to be a teachable moment with this guy?

ANDREW: It's just a number. Wait, Peter. There's 12 baskets.

PETER: I got that.

ANDREW: And there's 12 of us. And there's 12 tribes of Israel. Twelve, 12 and 12. That's what it means. *(Raises hand)* Ooooooh. Call on us. Call on us. *(Ducks behind PETER)* You tell him.

PETER: Jesus, try this one on. There's 12 baskets. There's 12 of us. And there are 12 tribes of Israel. *(Listens)* And what does THAT mean?

BOTH: Auuuuuuuuugh!

PETER: Where does he think we're gonna get the information to fill in his blanks?

ANDREW: I thought that was good. *(Pause)* Huddle.

PETER: Huddle. *(They huddle)*

Purchasing this script grants performance
and duplication rights.

ANDREW: I got it.... yeast of the Pharisees.

PETER: What's that have to do with it?

ANDREW: What do you make bread with?

PETER: Not just yeast.

ANDREW: So what? Baking powder of the Pharisees?

PETER: You know, I'll bet it's a fig tree thing.

ANDREW: What?

PETER: He hates fig trees. Everywhere we go, we got dead fig trees.

ANDREW: *(After a pause)* Let's just go with the usual.

TOGETHER: *(To Jesus)* We don't know. *(Listen)* What? You want us to get in the boat?

ANDREW: Are you gonna come with us?

PETER: You'll catch up.

(Slow take to each other.)

ANDREW: Does he have his own boat?

PETER: Just get in the boat.

(They step into the boat and begin to row. ANDREW looks up.)

ANDREW: Why are we doing this?

PETER: I just do as I'm told.

ANDREW: Look up ahead. We're heading right into a storm.
Purchasing this script grants performance
and duplication rights.

PETER: It doesn't look good does it?

ANDREW: No. We should turn around and go back.

PETER: Hey, I just do as I'm told. He says pick up the bread, I pick up the bread. He says get in the boat, I get in the boat. He says row, I just row.

(They row for a time. PETER sees, but doesn't see, something out on the water. He looks again. Rows very slowly. Finally reaches for ANDREW.) Andrew! (Taps ANDREW's head and then points. ANDREW does a double take.)

ANDREW: Just row!

(They begin to row furiously. They scream and huddle together, looking. PETER looks harder.)

PETER: Andrew.

ANDREW: What?

PETER: That's Jesus out there.

ANDREW: *(Relieved momentarily)* Phew!

(Then realizes this isn't any better. Jumps into PETER's lap.)

BOTH: AUUUUUUUUGGHHHHH!

PETER: He doesn't have a boat!

ANDREW: But he's catchin' up.

PETER: Walkin' on the water.

(PETER sees Jesus signal to him. Does the "who me?" gesture. Shakes his head no. And again, vigorously, then:) Okay, you stay there.

ANDREW: Peter you are not gonna actually—

Purchasing this script grants performance and duplication rights.

PETER: Ssssssh!!!

ANDREW: Peter, you can't swim!

PETER: SSSSSSSSH!! *(He jumps out of the boat and begins a spongy walk.)* Jesus, I'm not sure we should be able to be doing this. *(He plunges. Jesus pulls him back up.)* Thanks, Lord, maybe we should just get back into the boat.

(ANDREW pulls him in.)

ANDREW: What did you think you were doing out there?

PETER: I don't know. It just seemed like a good idea at the time. Did you see? I had three steps!

ANDREW: Lord, get in the boat. *(Helps him in)* You really scared us.

(One last blow to the boat sends them reeling, then it is calm. They spin around, look at the sky, amazed. Look at Jesus.)

PETER: How did you do that?

ANDREW: *(To Peter)* How did you do that?

END

Please make the following notation in printed bulletins or other matter related to your performance of the piece: © 1994, 2001, Ted Swartz & Lee Eshleman ("Ted & Lee"). All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Purchasing this script grants performance
and duplication rights.