

THE MEANS OF GRACE

OVERVIEW OF THE MEANS OF GRACE

SKIT

Characters: Gatekeeper, Two Penitent People, Three Impenitent People

Setting: They are standing in line ready to enter a secure area.

FYI: Have Gatekeeper use a set of keys to pretend to lock and open a door.

(Penitents and Impenitents are standing in line according to the order below. The Gatekeeper is addressing the crowd or line of people.)

Gatekeeper: This is a secure area. Not everyone will be permitted to enter. This will depend on your credentials. I will need some identification, so be prepared. *(addressing Penitent 1)* Your identification, please.

Penitent 1: Yes. I identify with Jesus who took away my sins. I asked Him to forgive me. Because He died for my sin and because He rose three days later, I know I'm forgiven. Is that enough?

Gatekeeper: Sounds complete. *(Gatekeeper unlocks door and lets Penitent 1 through. The door shuts.)*

Gatekeeper: Next please. *(addressing Penitent 2)* Your identification, please.

Penitent 2: Identification? I thought I had it all together. I really messed up. Everything got crazy. I just don't know what to do. I don't really have much to give to you. I'm really sorry.

Gatekeeper: You talkin' to me?

Penitent 2: Um, yes. Aren't you the one I'm supposed to talk to if you're going to let me in?

Gatekeeper: Sort of, not really. I just check credentials, but I don't judge.

Penitent 2: I guess I don't really deserve a break. I'm leaning on the mercy of Christ.

Gatekeeper: Good place to be. God is gracious, and He forgives you. Let me get the door for you.

(Gatekeeper unlocks door and lets Penitent 2 through. The door shuts.)

Gatekeeper: Next, please. *(addressing Impenitent 1)* Your identification, please.

Impenitent 1: I identify with the world, but I really want to be part of this group. And hey, since everyone here wants to see what's behind that door, then sure, why not? Let me through.

Gatekeeper: Anything else?

Impenitent 1: Nope. Just let me go where those others went. I think it's that key, isn't it?

Gatekeeper: Yes, it's that key. But no, I can't unlock the door. Please step aside.

Impenitent 1: What? But I never . . .

(Impenitent 1 leaves the line in disgust.)

Gatekeeper: Next please. *(addressing Impenitent 2)* Your identification, please.

Impenitent 2: No, thank you.

Gatekeeper: Nothing?

Impenitent 2: Nope. Nothing.

Gatekeeper: Well, um, bye.

(Impenitent 2 leaves the line indifferently.)

Gatekeeper: Next, please. *(addressing Impenitent 3)* Your identification, please.

Impenitent 3: Okay, here's the deal. I'm prepared to pay whatever is necessary for you to open that door. You see, it's horrible. I admit it. No escaping. To take care of a life's worth of sins, I'm expecting a high price. So what is it?

Gatekeeper: Death.

Impenitent 3: Death? You want me to die?

Gatekeeper: I'm afraid not even that would do it.

There's nothing you can pay or do. Jesus died on the cross for your sinful life. He did that for you. Yes, the cost was enormous, but it has already been paid.

Impenitent 3: Look, I know it's bad, but can we work something out here?

Gatekeeper: It's already been worked out.

Impenitent 3: I didn't need Him to do that for me. I am willing to pay something. I am!

DISCUSSION

What is the real key to the kingdom of heaven?

Faith in Jesus unlocks the door to the kingdom of heaven.

How do people receive the key to the kingdom of heaven? Faith is a gift. We receive it by the working of the Holy Spirit through the means of grace, the Word and the Sacraments. These are God's greatest gifts to the Christian Church.