



A musical in one act

Written by Pete Davidson & Larry Slocum

Based on the book of Jonah

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Setting is a classroom with chairs and desks. Sea sounds playing in the background.

Props: Chairs and desks, various classroom materials, Cat in the hat-Hat. Sign: Travel to Nineveh \$79.00, Travel to Tarshis \$329, Dawn the Next Day. Various Toys, Stuffed toy, Beach Ball, Beach chair, Beach Stuff, Cell phone, Binoculars, Umbrella, Tall lamp, Chair, sunglasses, Stuff for a make-shift shelter, water, 2 EMT’s shirt/hat. 10 – ¾ “ Insulation board 2’x4’ one side painted with rocks, other side painted to look like boards for booth and side of boat.

Cast of Charters

Teacher	Jonah	Righteous Rudy
Nineveh Ticket Seller	Tarshis Ticket Seller	Phillip
Paul	Silas	James
Sailors	Elvis	God
Silas	Ruth	Andrew
Peter	James	Simon
Cleopas	Ninevites	Seaport People

Jonah Chapter 5 – Act 1

Scene 1

(Opening: Stage is set in classroom with props for the play all over.)



Teacher 1 & 2: *(Starts to sing: **God's Man For Hire** All other characters begin to come on stage singing the chorus. Then everyone sings the last verse facing the audience.)*

God's Man For Hire - CHORUS:

Jonah heard the word of the Lord *(Teacher sings the first line and He said,)*
He say, This word is really absurd. *(the person playing Jonah sings the part.*
He say, How can I follow the word of the Lord?
He say, How can I follow the word of the Lord?

1. He say, "I'm gonna do it my way. *(Jonah)*
I bought a fare to go the wrong way.
How can I follow what God would say?
Not me, I'm not the one, Not me **CHORUS**
2. Sailors in a storm threw him overboard. *(Actors playing the sailors)*
While in the deep he prayed to the Lord.
Now I see that I will follow the word, *(Jonah)*
Use me, Yes Lord, Use me **CHORUS**
3. He did the job of God's desire *(Teacher sings 2 lines and He said,)*
And saved his enemy from the fire
He say, I didn't want to be God's 'man for hire' *(Jonah)*
Why me? Why me? **CHORUS:**

Final CHORUS: *(Everyone)*

Have you heard the word of the Lord?
Have you done what you have heard?
Have you been the one to follow God's word?
Have you been the one to follow God's word?

(As the last verse finishes student sit in their chairs.)

Teacher 1 & 2: Here's a riddle for you, "What do you call someone who knows what to do but doesn't do it?"

(Different actors respond with...)

Actors: Lazy, Scaredy Cat, Hypocrite, Self-Righteous, Pharisees, Complacent, Smug

(Teacher calls on Righteous Rudy.)

Righteous Rudy: Jonah

(Begin: Salvation Vamp)

Teacher 1: That's right. Our Sunday School lesson today is about the prophet Jonah. The lesson is called *Jonah - Chapter Five*. It's called *Jonah - Chapter Five* because the book of Jonah has only four chapters. *Chapter Five* will tell the story of how your life changed after you heard of Jonah.

Teacher 2: To learn about Jonah we are going to perform a play. So to start I need someone to play Jonah –
(The actors raise their hands with enthusiasm).

But you haven't even heard what Jonah has to do.

You may get swallowed by a big fish or beaten up or something.

(The actors continue to be enthusiastic. Teacher picks Jonah.)

"Ok ____, you will be Jonah."

(The teacher puts a crazy hat on the actor playing Jonah to show there is a difference from the other actors – use a cat in the hat- or some other tall hat.

Jonah moves to center stage.)

Teacher 1: Let's start our play.

Jonah was a prophet. Can someone tell me what it means to be a prophet?

(Everyone looks puzzled except Righteous Rudy.)

Righteous Rudy: A prophet is someone who knows that God is kindhearted and full of love. And when a prophet hears a message from God they choose to share that message. A prophet is God's messenger.

Teacher 1: That's right Rudy.

(Looking surprised that he knew the answer.)

Your response was so clear when you said, "And when a prophet hears a message from God they choose to share that message." The prophet Jonah was God's messenger who lived over 5,000 years ago. We are still telling his story today because hearing from God is a big deal. Our play is about the choices Jonah made when God asked him to share His message with the people of Nineveh. Jonah was given a **choice**. When Jonah finally chose to speak the message God

gave him, stuff happened; people changed their ways. The word of God is powerful. The story of Jonah starts out like this:

Righteous Rudy: “The word of the Lord came to Jonah, son of Amitite – Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it,”

Teacher 2: Let’s stop there for a moment. The Bible does not tell us how the word of the Lord came to Jonah. Maybe he was playing baseball?

(Actors form a baseball game. Jonah is at bat. All the actors are taunting him with, “Hey batter, go to Nineveh and preach against it.” He pantomimes making a big hit. All the actors are saying, “Go to Nineveh and preach against it.”)

Or maybe he was sleeping? *(Jonah falls asleep on the stage. All the actors surround him and whisper loudly, “Go to Nineveh and preach against it.”)* But the Bible does tell us that God talks to His people. Has God ever spoken to you? Have you heard the word of the Lord? Have you done what you have heard? Have you been the one to follow God’s word? Let’s continue our story, Rudy...

(Begin Nineveh Vamp)

Righteous Rudy: “The word of the Lord came to Jonah, son of Amitite - Go to the great city of Nineveh

and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me.”

Teacher 2: So Jonah heard the word of God – he knew what he was supposed to do but did he do it? Let’s listen to the next line in the scripture –

Righteous Rudy: “But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish.”

Scene 2

Teacher 1: WHY? Why didn’t he go to Nineveh? Was he afraid of the people of Nineveh – the Ninevites? Let’s learn about that great city:



(Start song. Act out Ninevites movements. Have kids clap along, and clap in someone’s face in meanness.

Have children in a circle surrounded by the Ninevites. Ninevites circle the childrens. Have a Ninevite take a stuffed animal from a child and laugh. At the end of the song the Ninevites throw all the stuffed animals off stage.

I like to break the law & stay out all night
I always get revenge & I will win that fight
I’ll beat you up & give you a fright

‘Cause I’m a Ninevite (Oh No)
‘Cause I’m a Ninevite (Oh No)
I’ll take what you like

Hey Buddy, Hey Friend are you willing to share?
We can play your game, yea, we’ll play fair
We’ll hurt your feelings but we don’t care

‘Cause we’re the Ninevites (Oh No)
‘Cause we’re the Ninevites (Oh No)
We take what you like

We hide in the dark & stay out of sight
Always find a shadow – we don't like the light
We respect what's wrong & resent what's right

'Cause we're the Ninevites (Oh No)
'Cause we're the Ninevites (Oh No)
We take what you like

We like to break the law & stay out all night
We always get revenge & we will win that fight
We will beat you up & give you a fright

'Cause we're the Ninevites (Oh No)
'Cause we're the Ninevites (Oh No)
We take what you like

(Song Ends) (Fade in Port sounds.)

Teacher 1: Jonah did not like the Ninevites. But Jonah knew that the word of the Lord had power and if he spoke of God's love, the Ninevites would turn from their wickedness. Jonah knew that if he shared the wonderful news that God loves them, their lives would be changed! For some reason, Jonah chose to ignore what God wanted. So, what did he do?
Rudy..



Righteous Rudy: "But Jonah ran away from the Lord and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port."

(There are two Ticket booths. One with a sign: Nineveh – travel to Nineveh - On sale today for \$79. Actor in booth is excited- "Get your

ticket now.” Other booth has a sign: Tarshish \$329.00 - with tired, bored actor in the booth.) (Fade in: Jonah Got a Secret)

Actor in window of Nineveh ticket booth:

So, what’ll it be bud? Goin’ to Nineveh?

Jonah: I’ll take one ticket to Tarshish.

Righteous Rudy: “After paying the fair, he went aboard the boat and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the Lord.”

(Music: Jonah Got A Secret)

Jonah got a secret, so he decide to flee
Gonna go to Tarshish, away across the sea,
(God) Don’t follow me.
He get aboard de boat and pay da fare
A storm rock de boat give everyone a scare.
Voted off de boat, Voted off de Boat, Voted off de Boat, he was voted

Jonah got a secret he cannot keep,
De sailors were afraid but Jonah went to sleep
How can you sleep?
The storm rock de boat now wake up and pray
Help to save our boat, with mercy your God may
Voted off de boat, Voted off de Boat, Voted off de Boat, he was voted
Instrumental one verse
Voted off de boat, Voted off de Boat, Voted off de Boat, he was voted

Jonah had a secret now everybody know,
The Lord will follow Jonah everywhere he go, Now it show.
Throw the cargo off the boat, What else can we do?
Jonah on the boat to the sea we’ll throw him too.
Voted off de boat, Voted off de Boat, Voted off de Boat, he was voted
Jonah had a secret, now things were turning bad.

When he told his secret it make everybody sad. The Lord was mad.
He was voted off the boat, throw into the sea
With Jonah off the boat things were calm as de could be
Voted off de boat, Voted off de Boat, Voted off de Boat, he was voted

(Music fades as Whale Drums and dialog begins)

Phillip: So let me get this straight. Jonah got on a boat
and went the opposite way that God wanted him
to go. The storm hit and Jonah realized that he
couldn't run from what God wanted him to do.

Teacher 1: That's right.

Paul: What did the other sailors think?

Teacher 2: They didn't know why this was happening.

*(Whale Drums with shouting voices begin- Violent storm, Great Wind,
Calamity, Throw the cargo overboard, let's row harder, Oh NO, Help
us, The ship is sinking.)*

The captain of the ship found Jonah sleeping
below deck. Everyone asked Jonah,

Paul: Jonah, who is responsible for making all this
trouble for us?

Silas: Where do you come from?

James: What is your country?

Andrew: From what people are you?

Jonah: I am a Hebrew and I worship the Lord, the God of
heaven, who made the sea and the land.

Righteous Rudy: "This terrified them. The sea was getting
rougher and rougher. So, they asked him,"

Paul & James: What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?

Jonah: Pick me up and throw me into the sea and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you.

Righteous Rudy: “Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before. Then they cried to the Lord,”

All Sailors O Lord, please do not let us die for taking this man’s life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you oh Lord have done what you pleased.

Righteous Rudy: “Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard...*(splash sound)* and the sea grew calm.”

(2 seconds of quiet. Then whale drums start again)

Teacher 2: The boat was sailing away. Jonah began to sink.

Scene 3

Righteous Rudy: “But the Lord provided a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish for three days and three nights.”



(Music: Belly Slime drums played very quietly under dialog below)

Phillip: It must have been scary inside that fish for three days.

Teacher 1: Jonah was scared but God loved Jonah and wanted what was best for him. When Jonah was swallowed by the fish he was saved from drowning. God was helping Jonah make the right decision. Your parents show that same kind of love for you when they help you choose a better way. You might want to stay up late but your parents insist you go to bed, they know what's best for you and God knew what was best for Jonah.

Paul: What did Jonah do?

Righteous Rudy: "From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the Lord his God. He said...

Lord You hear my cry.

You answered me. You saved my life.

My thanks are given to you. I sacrifice unto you.

What I have vowed I will do. Salvation only from you.

I sing a song of great salvation for my..

(Start song Belly Slime immediately after "What did Jonah do?")

(Ending chord of Belly Slime is played as dialog begins.

Vamp "Do What")

Elvis: Hey Jonah, what's shaking

Jonah: Elvis? Are you alive?

Elvis: Yes, I'm alive. So, if I've got this straight, you wanted your friends to like you so you ran from what the Lord wanted you to do. Now you don't know what to do. Do you listen to God or keep going your own way? Maybe I could help or maybe you'd like to phone a friend.

Jonah: I'd like to phone a friend.

Elvis: OK, who would you like to call?

Jonah: I'll call God.

(Elvis hands him a phone.

Jonah reaches a recording:

Recording: Hello, you have reached Heaven. This call may be monitored or recorded for quality assurance or training purposes. To reach Michael guarding the gate press one, Moses- press two, to reach God just stay on the line, He knows you are calling.

God: Hello Jonah,

Jonah: Hey God, can we talk?

God: Sure.

(Begin song – Do What?)

Elvis: Jonah started talking to God on his mobilephone

Jonah: I know what I had to do before I left my home

Elvis: God said to Jonah,

God: The Ninevites need my word, And I'm sending you, I

know that sounds absurd.

Chorus 1:

God: But Jonah, you gotta do it.

Jonah: Do What?

God joined by a few actors: Jonah, you gotta do it.

Jonah: Do What?

Everyone joins God: Jonah, you gotta do it.

Jonah: Do What?

God: A Do what I've asked you to do.

Everyone: Do What, Do What, Do What, Sho be do be
Do What, Do What, Do What, Sho be do be do

Jonah: When I was thrown in the water and the waves crashed
over me.

I thought that I would sink to the bottom of the sea.

God: Jonah, I picked you as a prophet to talk to the
Ninevites.

I know you didn't want to do it because they might
take my advice.

Chorus 1:

Jonah: I'm cold, confused and lonely in the belly of this
really, smelly fish

But I'm praying to you Lord, I'm gonna do what you
wish.

God: Jonah, I need my message sent to the Ninevites.
And you've decided to deliver all of my saving, sound
bites.

Chorus 2:

God: Jonah, you're gonna do it.

Jonah: I am.

God joined by a few actors: Jonah, you're gonna do it.

Jonah: I am

Everyone joins God: Jonah, you're gonna do it.

Jonah: I am.

Jonah: I'm gonna do what you asked me to do.

Everyone: Do What, Do What, Do What, Sho be do be
Do What, Do What , Do What, Sho be do be do

(He hangs up and Elvis moves in. Vamp keeps going under dialog.)

Elvis: What are you going to do Jonah? You going to listen to God or keep going your way. It's your choice.

(Vamp ends as Jonah speaks)

Jonah: What I have vowed I will make good. Salvation comes from the Lord.

(The scene changes. Vamp – Speak of Me. It's a beach scene with everyone playing on the beach or chasing each other. Have actors wear funny hats, etc. Music fade as there is a loud thump and actor look and point offstage.)

Silas: Look at that big fish.

Ruth: It looks like a whale.

Andrew: Sure is acting funny.

Peter: Look, it's coming closer to shore

All Actors: Look out!!

Righteous Rudy: “And the Lord commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.”

(Jonah comes tumbling onto the stage covered in seaweed, bubblewrap. Jonah is confused and embarrassed as he was spit out of the fish.

He slowly stands up. The actors begin to move back as if they are scared of Jonah.)

James: Man, sure smells like fish around here.

(Everyone else agrees. Speak of me vamp ends.)

Jonah: Can anyone point the way to Ninevah?

(All the actors at once point off stage behind Jonah. Then they slowly back off stage and leave Jonah at center stage. He looks at the audience and begins his monologue. Begin Salvation vamp.)

Scene 4

Jonah: God told me to go to Nineveh and I went the other way because Nineveh is the enemy of our people. I know God wants us to love our neighbors and share his grace with everyone. But I thought it would be better for the people of the world if Nineveh was burned down. Those Ninevites are just bad people. How can God expect me to love bad people? So, I went the other way because I know that if I preached the good news to the Ninevites, if I told the Ninevites what God wanted me to say - they would change their ways.



So, I chose to go to Tarshish and I went down to Joppa. Then I went down to the hold of the ship. Then they threw me overboard and I went down to the bottom of the ocean, then down to the bottom of the earth itself. Every time I chose my own way I went down. That sure was a lot of going down.

I was confused. I didn't know what to do. I could not tell my right hand from my left. I kept going down and God kept giving me one more chance to share His love. Maybe that's what it means when God tells us, "And All peoples of the earth will be blessed through you." (*Genesis 12:3*)

(Actors begin to slowly construct the wall. The wall is to be done with the gate in front of Jonah just as he finishes his last line.)

God wants us to tell everybody about His love and He kept giving me one more chance to do that. It's like God said to me, "I'll give you one more chance Jonah." He kept giving me one more chance.

(Fade out Jonah vamp, "I'll give you one more chance" vamp starts)

That's what he wants me to tell the Ninevites, I'll give you one more chance.

(Just as he says, the last - I'll give you one more chance – he walks through the city gate and "I'll give you one more chance"

song begins. The wall is an angle so the audience can see Jonah as he bursts through the gate singing. All the actors are milling about as Ninevites and turn around to look at who is talking to them.)

CHORUS:

I'll give you one more chance to do some good
I'll give you one more chance do as you could
I'll give you one more chance to do some good
I'll give you one more chance do as you could

1. Now listen to me Nineveh I'm talkin' to you
40 more days and you'll be through
God said he loves you – turn your lives around
Or in 40 more days you'll be burned to the ground
2. The Ninevites must have been waiting to hear
Because they listened to Jonah everyone was sincere
They put on sackcloth and prayed all day
We love you Lord – don't take our lives away
3. God saw what they did & how they changed their ways
He had compassion on the people and their lives were saved
To tell God message you have to be brave
The message today is, "Jesus saves"

*(Everyone looks at him and wonders what is going on here. As the song progresses they start to participate. By the end of the song they are singing the chorus, enjoying Jonah's words, etc.)
(Jonah sees everyone happy and praising God. He walks back through the city gates. The gate is taken down. The kids move offstage. Jonah is left alone once again.)*

Teacher 2: Jonah was furious that the people of Nineveh were going to live. He lost his temper. He yelled at God,

Jonah: God! I knew it—when I was back home, I knew this was going to happen! That's why I ran the other way to Tarshish! I knew you were all grace and mercy, full of love and ready at the drop of a hat to forgive everybody! So, God, if you won't kill them, kill me! I'm better off dead!

(Serious pause: echo the dead.)

Scene 5

Teacher 2: *(ask question with thoughtful, quite voice)* You know what God did, He asked Jonah, “What do you have to be angry about?” But Jonah did not answer God – instead...



Righteous Rudy: “Jonah went out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the Ninevites.”

(Begin “Speak of Me” Vamp)

(Scene: Jonah is sitting on the floor outside the city and watching. Sunlamp turned on. Actors comes up selling binoculars, water, chair, sunglasses, stuff to make a make-shift shelter. Various actors say, “Great for temporary shade.” “I hear it’s going to be hot tomorrow.” Make crowd noise. Jonah buys several items. Takes a seat on the chair, etc.)

Righteous Rudy: “Then the Lord God provided a vine and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the vine.

(Someone comes out stands by Jonah and opens umbrella over him to represent the vine.)

(Simon walks by - comments to Jonah)

Simon: Sure is hot here today. *(pause)*

Jonah: *(with anger)* Supposed to get hotter tomorrow. *(Pause)*
(Cleopas walks up and greets Simon as an old friend.)

Cleopas: Hey look at that vine, WOW! You’ve got a nice shady spot under this vine.

Simon: I’ve never seen one like that around here.

Jonah: *(say with angry face)* Yea, it’s pretty cool. It just grew up over me. I feel happy the vine is shading me.

Cleopas: I would feel happy too.

Simon: You say you feel happy but you look angry.

Jonah: I am angry.

Cleopas: Why?

Jonah: Look down there. Nineveh is having a party. They are praising God and praying.

Simon: So you feel angry because they are happy?

Jonah: Yes. I feel so angry I could die.

Cleopas: That’s weird – wanting to die because the Ninevites are happy.

Jonah: Those Ninevites are bad people and I feel angry because God is sharing his love with them. Those Ninevites don't deserve God's love.

Simon: I thought God's love was for everyone.

Jonah: It's not, at least not for the Ninevites. You from around here?

Cleopas: No, we're on our way to Nineveh. We heard they were having a party just like you said. You comin'?

Jonah: No, I'm just going to hang here. (*Simon & Cleopas leave.*) I can't believe God is going to let the Ninevites live. I feel so angry to see them celebrating. I wish I had never chosen to have come here.

Righteous Rudy: "But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the vine so that it withered."

(Someone walks across the stage with a sign – "Dawn The Next Day" as the scripture is being read.

Person with umbrella falls over when Righteous Rudy says, "Withered"- medic's come out and haul actor off stage.

Simon & Cleopas come by again –Talking about the great party they had last night in Nineveh.)

Simon: Sure is hot today!

Cleopas: (*To Jonah*) - Where is your vine?

Jonah: It's gone. I feel so faint - It would be better for me to die than to live.

Simon: You want to die because your vine is gone? You told us yesterday that it just grew there. Now you want to die because it's gone?

So what you're saying is -

The vine lives and you're happy

Nineveh lives and you're angry

The vine dies and you're angry

Nineveh dies and you're happy

Jonah: Umm, could you say that again?

Cleopas: Sure-

When God provided the vine - you felt happy.

The vine died and you felt angry.

If the Ninevites died you would be happy.

But God provided forgiveness to the Ninevites, so you felt angry.

(Jonah acts out the words. When he is finished Jonah is tied up in knots. Then the actors move back leaving Jonah as Scripture is read.)

Righteous Rudy: The Lord said, "You have been concerned about this vine, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. But Nineveh has more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, and many cattle as well. Should I not be concerned about that great city?" *(Jonah looks*

confused as he glances from hand to hand when the scripture is read. Jonah looks peacefully toward heaven when he hears the last question asked. As “Speak of Me” vamp begins the teacher steps in and starts the ending monologue as actors begin to come back on stage moving to the beat. They should all be on stage by: “I have a riddle for you...”)

Teacher 1: So God saved the Ninevites because they turned from their wicked ways and God helped Jonah do what is right. Our God is a patient and gracious teacher. Then after Jonah did what was right he became angry because the love he preached saved the Ninevites. Everyone needs to realize that Jonah is just like you. He is just like me. We know that God wants us to tell the world about His love but we run the other way.

Teachers 2: The good news today is we don’t have to run the other way because we have someone who will help us tell everyone about God’s love - someone Jonah did not have – we have Jesus who is with us to the very end of the age. Matt 28: 16 -20. Jesus will help us tell the good news of God’s love to our friends, our neighbors, everyone in the country, and even across the world.

Teachers 1 & 2: So, Here’s a riddle for you, “What do you call

someone who knows what to do and does it?"

(All the cast points to the audience and shouts)

Everyone: You!

Ending song: *Speak of Me*

CHORUS: When you go out in the world

Speak of me, Speak of me

Though you are young and in this world

Speak of me, Speak of me

1. You've heard the story told

Now share the news you hold

God will give you words to say

He'll even light the way

Open up your heart

No reason not to start today - **CHORUS**

2. Make this story come alive

Begin to write Chapter 5

God will give you words to say

He'll even light the way

Open up your heart

No reason not to start today

CHORUS

Repeat Verse 1

(Curtain calls as singing stops. Then as song changes beat everyone is invited on the stage to greet the actors.)

Notes:

