

Sketches – Church – myfishbites.com

Jesus at the church

There is a bouncer (sorry, 'usher') on the church door, deciding who can come into church and who can't.

Bouncer - (*sees Jesus walking up to him*). Sorry mate, this is a church.

Jesus - Yes, I've come to see my friends and make new friends.

Bouncer - You have friends here? Can't have, never seen you round here before. It's very exclusive round here, it's a church you know. We can't just have anyone walking in. You'll have to take a membership application form. All we need is your name, address, job, residential location, salary above £20k and your golf club membership number. Easy.

Jesus - But the Bible says, wherever Jesus is, his church is there too.

Bouncer - If you say so, sounds a bit funny to me. Anyway mate, you've got long hair. You look a bit like a hippy or a tramp. You should get it cut.

Jesus - The Word of God says that God looks at the heart, not at man's outward experience.

Bouncer - God may well say that. But round here, we have a strict dress code that involves wearing your Sunday best before you get in here. We want to see a suit, or a shirt and tie. If you forget the tie, we have a church tie that you can rent for the service for a fiver, or it's yours for a tenner.

Jesus - The Word of God shows that the church is for all sorts of people, no matter who or what they wear. Did not Jesus talk and dine with the tax collector, as well as those who others considered low-lives, but who Jesus honoured.

Bouncer - That's gonna be another problem here mate. You should find yourself somewhere else to go on a Sunday. This place is for good people, holy people, the ones what know God. You can't come in a church if you don't know about God. And we don't want low lifes in here. We've got a reputation to uphold

Jesus - The Bible says that Jesus made himself of no reputation, in order to serve and give his life freely as a sacrifice for sin.

Bouncer - Well, you must be reading the wrong version of the Bible. Round here, we've got a reputation. We don't want anyone just walking in here, what would the neighbours say, what would the bishop say, what would those mob from the other parish say? No way mate. We're keeping things clean in this place.

Jesus - To be clean is to be changed by God inside. We can be dirty on the outside, yet clean inside by God.

Bouncer - Well my friend, we don't want any dirt in here. We've only just put a new carpet down, plus the floor's been polished and we don't want no scratches on that, you hear me?! And another thing, that long tunic thing of yours. It looks like a skirt, looks a bit cissy to me.

Jesus - Our life is about more than what we wear. Seek first the Kingdom of God and these other things will be given to you.

Bouncer - If you say so mate. But as far as this church is concerned, we want you to wear good clothes. We can't just let anyone into the church, where would we be then my son?

Jesus - But the Word of God tells us that God came for the sick. The well have no need for a doctor.

Bouncer - You're a doctor are you? Where's your badge then? You're not one of these foreign doctors nicking our jobs are ya?

Jesus - In the Kingdom of God, there is no longer slave nor free, Jew or Gentile.

Bouncer - Well if you're a Jew, there's a Synagogue about 2 blocks from here. Can't miss it. But you can't come in here dressed like that my friend, we've got health and safety issues. If you tripped over on that big tunic of yours, I expect you'd be suing us before we'd had chance to say sorry. No, that won't do, won't do at all. You can't come in here wearing that. And besides, it's a Communion service today, bet you've come here trying to nick the wine and get yourself a free meal.

Jesus - The Word of God says that man cannot live on bread alone, but from every Word that comes from the mouth of God.

Bouncer - Mate, you're a bit strange I'll give you that. You can eat the pages of the Bible if you're that hungry, but meself, I prefer a nice Sunday lunch, just me and the family. Makes me feel hungry thinking about that. Can't wait to get out of here and get home for some nosh I tell you.

Jesus - The Bible said that the early church shared with one another, for the greater good.

Bouncer - I'll tell you a secret my friend. *(leans over and whispers)* No-one shares round here, it's a free for all. Wait til the cars get here, it's a case of me before you. The best seats will be taken quickly too, just you wait.

Jesus - The Bible tells us not to sit at the place on honour but to be humble. If you sit at the front, you may well find the master of the house asks you to move. But if you sit at the back, the master may well ask you to come to the front and to honour you.

Bouncer - That may be so, but things work differently around here I can tell you. No, it's the big cheeses that get the best seats. Had a whole bunch of posh chairs made the bigwigs. Made from wood taken from Israel. The very best. Cost thousands. Oh no, you can't sit in one of those chairs. They're for special people only.

Jesus - It doesn't matter where you sit, it matters who you are inside.

Bouncer - Not round here, it's all about being the best. Got a PCC meeting soon, you wait. It'll be push and shove as to who thinks they should sit at the front. The campaigns have started already, leaflets talking about how much work in the community people do, how spiritual they are etc.

Jesus - Proverbs makes it clear that the main thing that Jesus hates is pride. I will sit with the children.

Bouncer - Children? Oh no, they don't go into the main sanctuary area. Far too noisy and messy. No, they go up once a year so that the adults can coo over them and say how lovely they look. Just don't take any photos or videos, only the church official DVD will be available, priced at £24.99. Oh no, especially with a Communion service. They don't want kids up there messing up the place do they?

Jesus - The New testament tells of a story of how little children came running to Jesus. When the disciples tried to push them away, Jesus said 'let the children come to me'. He explained how his followers should have a child-like faith.

Bouncer - Well they don't read that story round here. You do say some funny things don't ya? Nah, they don't listen to children round these parts. It's all about the elders, and they really are elders. They are the ones that get to pray. Nah, you've got to earn your service in this place. No speaking til you get to sit on one of the posh seats. We can't have just anyone doing things in the house of God, it wouldn't be decent.

Jesus - I remember a story from the Old Testament about the shepherd boy, David. When God sent Samuel to look to appoint the new King, it was David who God chose. He was the youngest and out in the fields looking after the sheep. But God chose him.

Bouncer - That's not how it's told round here. I reckon the old man didn't like the boy, slipped this Samuel guy a bit of money, you know what I mean. Kind of like, 'go on son, take him away, he's a bit useless, keeps playing a harp. It's a bit pathetic if you ask me. Take him away.' The prophet guy probably took the bribe and took David. Happens round here a lot. In fact, I may be able to let you in if you're, er, able to 'help' me out..

Jesus - (*as he leaves*). It seems I have much work to do in cleaning and cleansing the church.

Bouncer - Oh, you don't need to worry about that mate, we've got the window cleaners coming in tomorrow. Bye!!

Questions

1. What do we have right in our churches?
2. Where do we go wrong in our churches?
3. What should our priorities be and how can we make a positive difference? (Not just criticising)
4. How would you design a promotional video or flyer to present your church?