The Apostles

Laura Dukeshire
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Honors Project
Spring 1995
This "Apostles" project, as you may have already guessed, is rather unconventional. It is a "treatment" for a film script—which has not yet been completed (the script itself is not part of the honors project). I initially prepared this for a company and it is in the form that they requested. The purpose of the treatment is to tell a story and present ideas for making the story happen on screen. The purpose of this story is to characterize and bring the apostles to life.

If you have already leafed through the text, you will discover that I did not focus on form as I would have if I was telling a story in the traditional manner. Instead I focused on presenting ideas and characters in such a way that they can be clearly pictured in the mind's eye. Dialogue, I was told, is optional in a treatment and in some places I chose to include it for characterization purposes.

Like I mentioned before, the purpose of this story is to make the apostles come to life, to seem like real human beings instead of the infallible prudish saints that they are often made out to be. This involved characterizing many apostles that we officially do not know much about.

As you can imagine the creation of this story (which, incidentally begins Tuesday night of the week of the Passover and ends with the conversion of Saul) took a lot of work. Especially
since the only gospel I had ever read in entirety up until this point was St. John. My research required a careful reading of all four of the gospels, a very large chunk of the Desire of Ages, most of Acts of the Apostles, and innumerable consultations with Biblical concordances and Dr. Springett to make certain that what I was making the characters do and say was consistent with what we know of the customs and culture of the time.

Incidentally, my favorite part of the work was characterizing Annas and Caiphas. I wanted to make these men real, to make their thinking, their brand of logic, plausible. I ended up characterizing Annas as an evil man desperately clinging to self-preservation at all cost and Caiphas as a deluded, spineless fool who cannot stand up for what he knows is right.

Although this project is unofficially at a standstill due to some internal problems with the company I was working with, I do not intend to let it sit on the shelf unfinished. This summer, (unless things get rolling again with the company) I am planning to chop it up, turn it into "teen" stories, and find a market.
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Part I
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It is Tuesday night of the week of the Passover. The story opens on the still dark streets of Jerusalem. The silence is interrupted as a group of loud drunken Roman soldiers wander down a deserted street. As the soldiers pass by a house on the corner of a street, a face carefully peeks out from an upstairs window and then quickly pulls the curtain back into place. A secret meeting of the zealots is being held. Simon the zealot and Judas are present at the meeting and Simon the zealot is leading out in an intense discussion with a group of about 11 other zealots. The zealots are excited about the triumphal entry Jesus made into Jerusalem just a few days before. They, like the disciples expect him to be crowned king any day now. The zealots want to find out from Simon and Judas just when and how this event is going to take place and when the zealots will be needed to help drive out the Romans.

"Our army indestructible ... He can raise us from the dead ... heal our wounded ... when's He going to do it ... He's keeping to Himself too much ... why doesn't He try to get in good with the Priests and Pharisees ... would be to our advantage."

Judas interrupts the conversation to announce that he has a
plan to make Jesus proclaim himself king—a foolproof plan. But he will not tell anyone what that plan is because, according to him, it calls for absolute secrecy. At this point, the meeting gets a little louder and angrier as the zealots are infuriated by Judas' insinuation that they can't keep a secret. Seeing his mistake, Judas quickly smooths over his words and lulls them into acceptance of his "great" idea, telling them that they need to be ready constantly because he will try to put "the plan" into action sometime that week. Realizing that they will get no more information out of Judas, the zealots grudgingly accept his answer as the meeting closes with a cameo and fade out on Judas' smiling face nodding good-bye greetings.

The scene reopens on the sunrise on the sea of Galilee. Andrew, Simon Peter, their father Jonah (John), Jesus, and two hired men are bringing in the fishing boat. It has been a good night for fish and the men are in good spirits. Jesus, although in a pleasant mood, looks a little "under the weather." However, Andrew, Peter, and their father joke around with Him about how much better He looks after they convinced Him to come out and have a relaxing night of fishing with them. They take in what they need, dismiss the hired men, and start on up for breakfast at Andrew and Peter's parent's house.

As the men make their way up to the house, the scene shifts to the women inside. Joanna and Mary Magdalene are fixing food while Mary (Jesus' mother) is laying the table. Joanna answers a knock at the door. It is Peter's wife from next door. She looks
haggard and exhausted—the baby was up all night. She asks her mother-in-law if Peter can have his breakfast over there because she wants to go back to bed. Joanna says "Of course" and hustles her back to her house (just next door) and goes over to see the baby.

Mary the mother of Jesus watches the men walking up the beach. She begins to talk to Mary Magdalene and tells her that she is frightened and worried about Jesus—He has been so uncharacteristically glum lately. They talk about His recent references to His own death. Mary the mother of Jesus knows that Jesus is the promised Messiah, but she is His MOTHER and she knows that all this talk of war, of king-making, just is not Jesus. Something is wrong, but she is not sure what it is. She shares these thoughts with Mary Magdalene and tells her that she has already spoken to Elizabeth about her worries. Mary Magdalene considers the other Mary's words and confesses that Jesus' speech that He made when she anointed Him at Simon's banquet has been troubling her. Their conversation is quickly cut short as the door swings open and the men tramp in for breakfast.

As the men take off their heavy cloaks, Joanna comes in, shuts the door, and tells Peter to stay for breakfast. She then tells them that everything is packed for the trip into Jerusalem for the Passover (they are going to visit some of her relatives). After the men finish eating, they gather up the bundles and they and the women leave the house.
Once in Jerusalem, they meet the relatives beside a small eating house. As Andrew and Peter introduce Jesus to their relatives, the scene shifts to a nearby window of the eating house. Inside at a common table Matthew and Thaddeus are eating breakfast with three of Matthew's tax collector friends (Thaddeus is a tanner of leather goods—an occupation that makes him unclean in the eyes of "every day" Jews—thus he hangs out with tax collectors, who are similarly despised).

Prior to his conversion, Matthew was a very shrewd tax collector; a man with a sharp eye for business and money making schemes. Because of Matthew's reputation, his friends are certain that he is onto something with this "Jesus-guy." His friends do not believe that Jesus is the Messiah. And they KNOW that Matthew doesn't either. They are positive that Matthew is keeping something from them and as Matthew repeatedly denies it, and insists that Jesus IS the true Messiah, the conversation gets more and more heated. Finally, the friends angrily get up and leave.

Outside, across the street from the eating house, two younger men, Thomas and Bartholomew are helping an older man set out his tables of goods to sell. When they are not with Jesus, these two help Bartholomew's father with his little grocery market. Thomas is not quick to believe, or decide anything. Although he is good natured he finds it extremely difficult to make up his mind about little things and as a result tends to be somewhat clumsy. Bartholomew and his father, both very witty
men, find him humorous to have around, and they spare him no teasing. At this minute, Bartholomew and Thomas are examining the fruit and vegetables for bad spots. Bartholomew is going noticeably faster than Thomas and they are teasing each other about Thomas' "slowness" and Bartholomew's "lack of accuracy".

"Sure, Thomas, by the time you're done the stuff'll be rotten . . . "Ya, right, I don't know why you're even bothering to go through the motion's" . . . "No bad ones yet?" . . . "By the time you're done we won't have any fruit left on the stand!"

As they argue back and forth a small, rather "nerdy" looking young man hurries up to the stands. It's James the less, the gopher of the group. Because he is always being sent around to fetch things, to give messages, etc., he feels very self-important. In his own eyes, without him, the group would never get anything done. James the less must always be DOING something--or nagging someone else to DO something. Although James the less is not unlike the other disciples in his admiration of Judas Iscariot, he carries this adoration to an extreme. James the less is ever seeking to emulate the businesslike, efficient, self-important treasurer.

James the less breaks into Thomas' and Bartholomew's bantering conversation, eagerly informing the two other disciples of Judas' plan to make Jesus proclaim Himself king. Thomas and Bartholomew are immediately intrigued. As they probe James for answers James' self-importance grows like a balloon. Bartholomew and Thomas begin to get irritated as James' answers get vaguer
and haughtier, until it becomes apparent to Bartholomew's father that James knows absolutely nothing about the plan except that there is one. The old man steps over between the three, pats James the less on the shoulder and asks him to come back when he knows what he's talking about—Bartholomew and Thomas have to get back to work. His ignorance exposed, James' bubble of pride bursts and he hastily reassures them that he'll be back with some more information about the plan.

Upon his dismissal, James the less strides up the street to where Philip is discussing prices with a grocer. Phillip is a "middle man." He is the go-between for the fisherman and the merchants. He negotiates prices for the two groups and tries to find a fair price—one that the fisherman will accept and one that the merchants will pay. James the less quickly walks over to Philip and interrupts his conversation with a clearing of his throat. Philip glances over at him and as James importantly begins to spout out the news of "the plan" a woman's voice suddenly interrupts him. James is perturbed. Her brow creased, the merchant's wife quickly steps out of the house to stand in front of Philip. She ignores James the less, cuts him off, and begins to talk to her husband and Philip. It seems that her friend's husband next door is very sick with a pain in his side—he can't even get up. She wants to know if Phillip has seen Jesus and if he would go and get Him to come over and heal the man.

James the less bursts in telling the woman in a loud voice
that Jesus is going to be KING, and that KINGS are not summoned on the whims of women. The woman rolls her eyes, turns her back to James, quickly reaffirms her request with Phillip (who, with the merchant is desperately trying not to laugh at James) and steps back inside. Mortified, James the less leaves Phillip and the merchant (who can no longer contain themselves and are laughing their heads off) for "greener pastures," that is, Judas Iscariot whom he sees passing on the other side of the road.

Judas is on his way to the temple to meet with the priests to put his "Plan" into action. James the less latches onto him and hassles him for more details. Judas will tell him nothing. Judas realizes that he must somehow lose James before he can go to the temple, so he stops by a bin in a market place and by playing on James' pride gets him to attempt to beat down the price of a bolt of cloth with the merchant.

"I hear he's really tough--he drives a hard bargain! Don't you think Jesus should have some of that purple cloth for a decent robe when he proclaims himself king . . . ."

As James busies himself trying to impress Judas by his "skill" in negotiations, Judas slips away into the crowd.

Judas steps into the temple and walks towards a group of temple priests. He has already been approached several times by the Sanhedrin's spies with "deals" to hand over Jesus to them. They have promised Judas money and power--the two things that Judas wants most. They see him approach and pleasantly ask him if he has reconsidered their generous offer. Judas is at first
hesitant, but the high priest seeing his hesitation quickly chimes in with the offer of money:

"To show our faith in you—that you will make the right decision, take this thirty pieces of silver—the price of a slave—as a token of our trust. Turn Him over to us—quietly, where the people can't rally around and protect Him—and a king's ransom doesn't begin to show our appreciation."

Judas accepts the money and tells them that he will strongly consider what they have said. As Judas leaves the temple and strides down the middle of the now busy market place, James the less catches up to him and asks him where he had disappeared to (James shows him the cloth draped over his arm—he made a "killing!"). Judas, nervous and slightly agitated, murmurs something about an errand as the two hurry off into the crowd.

The scene shifts to Jesus and Phillip quickly walking up the street to the merchant's house to find out about the man with the pain in his side. They meet the merchant's wife and go next door where Jesus heals the man. As they step outside again, Philip marvels at Jesus' gift of healing. Jesus begins to tell him how he and the disciples will do much more, when James the less and Judas practically bump into them. Judas appears relieved to have someone to dump James the less on and eagerly asks Jesus where they are going to eat the Passover and if He needs them to secure a place (a great opportunity to easily create a scenario to hand Jesus over to the priests). Jesus tells him that He has already sent Peter and John to find a room. Noticing Judas' visible
disappointment, Jesus asks if he had had had a place in mind. Judas, realizing what his face is betraying, hastily replies "No, not really," and grabs James the less to leave just as Jesus starts to comment on the bolt of purple cloth. Judas cuts him off, telling him that he and James have to run on an errand and hurries off into the crowd dragging a confused James the less behind him. Jesus just shakes his head as the scene fades out.

The scene fades in on Peter and John as they are walking towards the gate of the city. Suddenly, Peter grabs John's shoulder and stops him.

(Peter) "Now wait a minute--who are we going to ask?"

(John) "You heard what I heard: we're supposed to follow some guy with a jar of water."

(Peter, incredulously) "What guy? Women carry water--maybe Jesus made a mistake--maybe we're supposed to follow a woman--but how are we going to pick the right one?!

(John) "I don't believe it, look (points)!"

(Peter) "A man carrying water. I can't believe it. There's a man carrying water."

(John) "Well, I guess we've seen it all!" As he says this he grabs Peter's arm (who is still standing and staring incredulously) and pulls him along, "Let's go!"

Peter and John follow the man with the water jar to a large house. An older man, is outside arguing with another man over a price for a room for the Passover--the last room available in the building. The man is trying to beat the owner's price down, but
the owner is adamant--take it or leave it. John breaks in and
introduces Peter and himself to the owner as disciples of Jesus
and tells him Jesus' message. Jeremiah, smiles and greets them
heartily--he knows Jesus quite well. Jeremiah dismisses the man
he has been arguing with (who of course protests--Jesus is
getting the room for free!) and eagerly drags the disciples
upstairs to show them what a wonderful place he has prepared.
On the way upstairs, he quickly introduces his sister Naomi and
her son John-Mark who live there with him. He gives them cooking
utensils, shows them where everything is, and he tells them the
place is theirs to do with what they want for as long as Jesus
wants it--no charge! The scene fades out and into the day of the
Passover.

This scene opens in the late afternoon. The usually
bustling streets are practically deserted. Mary the mother of
Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Elizabeth, and Salome are all gathered
together on the first floor of Jeremiah's house. As they wait
for Jesus and the rest of the disciples to show up (some of the
disciples are already upstairs) the women sit and talk together.
They discuss Mary's (Jesus' mother) heightened concerns about
Jesus. All the women except Salome, the mother of James and
John, have come to a consensus that something is wrong with the
understanding of the mission of the Messiah. Salome, however is
a social climber and with her desire to see her boys become
something great, she has stubbornly blinded herself and thus
refuses to take the other women's concerns seriously.
As they talk, a small group of the disciples who have already gathered upstairs are holding a much different type of conversation. Judas Iscariot, James the less, Bartholomew, Thomas, Simon the Canaanite, Matthew, Thaddeus, and Phillip are all arguing about who is going to do what in Jesus' kingdom. Judas, while pretending not to be involved in the argument, is actually the instigator of it. He sits back and waits until he sees that the argument is starting to die down. When this starts to happen, Judas "innocently" heaps fuel back on with some purposely ill-timed comment. In his frustration, Thomas brings up James the less' mention of a plan to make Jesus the Messiah. The argument takes an unexpected turn--for Judas--and the disciples turn on him. They want to know what the plan is and what Judas is going to get out of it. Above their argument, Simon the Canaanite calls out that he sees James the brother of Jesus and James and John coming down the road.

Downstairs, the door opens and the three men come in. Mary the mother of Jesus has sent for James (Jesus brother) via James and John. She wants him to have the Passover with Jesus and the twelve but he refuses, denouncing his brother as a lunatic. They start to argue but James' attention is suddenly diverted over to the conversation taking place between James and John and their mother Salome. Mary and James hear the disciples ask their mother to put in a good word for them to Jesus--discreetly, maybe not something as bold as to sit on his left and right hands like she did last time--just something a mother might say. James (the
brother of Jesus) is angry and he yells at the disciples.

"What kingdom? . . . What king, for that matter . . . just how stupid can you get . . . can't anyone think for themselves around here . . . I don't care about his sermons or his so-called-miracles . . . Jesus is not the Messiah!"

Muttering angrily, James storms out of the door and pushes past Peter, Andrew, and Jesus who have just arrived. They stare after him for a second. Peter and Andrew shrug at each other and they step inside with Jesus.

As Jesus greets his mother and the rest of the women, Salome pulls him aside and begins to talk to him about her sons (who are, of course, mortified). Jesus glances over at them with a raised eyebrow and then turns his attention back to Salome, whom he politely hears out:

"My boys have never been much more than fisherman . . . they're great boys, but think of what that old Martha next door will say if they have a great position in your kingdom . . . since her son finished his rabbinical training, she simply has become unbearable . . . she'll be green with envy . . ."

Meanwhile, James and John are attempting to escape by going upstairs, but they do not make it as the disciples upstairs have started down. They make it down in time to hear Salome's closing arguments in favor of her sons. They all look over at the ever reddening James and John.

"Don't you guys ever give up? . . . what makes you think that you're better than the rest of us . . . how come you've got
your mommy doing it--aren't you big enough yet . . ."

James and John start to get angry and answer back, when Jesus silences everyone by calling out above the noise and raising his hands. He reminds him that positions are not his to give. Jesus tells them how He has looked forward to eating this Passover with them and suggests that they go eat it now. The disciples still on the stairs turn and head up and the rest follow. The women pick up the large trays of food. Jesus, glances over sees that Elizabeth, his aunt (who is much older than the rest) is having difficulty balancing the tray. He casually goes over and takes it from her and carries it up Himself. She thanks Him and follows Him up with a smaller pitcher. Seeing Jesus carrying Elizabeth's tray, Judas rolls his eyes and comments to James the less "Is that the way a "king" should act?" As the women prepare to leave the room, Mary Magdalene announces that she and the other women are going over to her house--just down the street to celebrate the Passover.

As the men begin to sit down at the reclining couches we see the realization on their faces as they all glance at the water pitcher and basin: there is no servant to wash their feet. No one moves. Jesus watches them closely. Finally Peter breaks the silence and says, "Well, Jesus, might as well say the blessing and--." But Jesus is getting up. He goes over to the basin gathers up the stuff and kneels in front of Judas and begins to wash his feet. Judas' face fades away into a memory:

He remembers how he helped Jesus pass out the food when He
fed the five thousand. He remembers how he and Jesus laughed together with a cripple that Jesus healed as he danced around on his new legs. But then he remembers the rich young ruler, how Jesus "practically turned him away" by telling him to give up all he had to the poor. Judas remembers the recent rebuke at Simon's feast. The memory fades into reality and Judas face is troubled as he stares at the man now drying his feet.

Jesus now moves to Peter. Peter's face is still registering shock. He leaps off of the couch and nearly upsets the basin. He bellows:

"Jesus! Don't you even try it! . . . There's no way you're going to wash my feet . . . You're going to be king--start acting like it . . . "

Jesus tells him to be quiet and sit down. If Peter doesn't let Jesus wash his feet he'll have nothing more to do with him. Peter then offers his hands and his head to be washed.

At Mary Magdalene's house Mary Magdalene and Salome lay out the supper on trays while Mary the mother of Jesus and Elizabeth prepare the table in the adjoining room. Mary the mother of Jesus and Elizabeth talk about Jesus' story about the wheat seed (John 12:29) (They were present for this sermon and they heard the voice speaking from heaven) Mary confides in Elizabeth that she fears that Jesus is talking about his own death. They talk about the significance of the sacrifice of the lamb in the Tabernacle and how it points to the Messiah. And they talk about Isaiah 53. Salome cuts off the conversation as she cheerfully
bustles into the room with a tray of food, declaring it time to eat.

We now return to the supper with Jesus and the disciples. Jesus has just finished his last pair of feet. He stands up and as he is putting the basin and pitcher away, he tells the disciples to wash each other's feet like he has done for them. Jesus looks troubled as he sits down. All the disciples are carefully watching Him. He takes the wine and bread and talks about it (the last supper talk—not drawn out, very brief!) Argument again rises about positions of power in the new kingdom. Jesus again patiently explains that His kingdom does not work like those on earth (Luke 22:24-30.) He then informs the disciples that one of them will betray Him. The disciples, shocked, immediately begin to protest loudly. Judas looks uncomfortable as the other disciples ask "Jesus, is it me?" Amidst all the talking and confusion, Peter leans over to John who is sitting beside Jesus and whispers to him to ask Jesus who's going to betray him. John at first hesitates, but then (upon Peter's insistence) drops his head and leans over to Jesus and asks discretely. Jesus whispers back that it is the one he is going to hand the next piece of bread to. John relays the message back to Peter, and they both watch Jesus intently. Jesus glances over at them and passes the bread to Judas. John's eyes bug out "HIM?" he whispers to Jesus.

Jesus replies "Yes."

John looks over at Peter's equally shocked face. Peter's
mouth opens and he whispers to John, "How can it be him--he's one of us--is Jesus sure?" John nods and at this point all attention turns to Judas.

Judas is the only one who has not asked Jesus if it is he who is the betrayer. Judas looks around at the other disciples, shrugs, and then confidently asks, "Jesus, am I the betrayer?"

Jesus looks at him and tells him to go do what he has to do--get it over with. Judas face darkens and he gets up and leaves the room. No one but Jesus, Peter and John knows what Judas has left for. Peter leans over to John and tells him that he has a sword downstairs and that if that Samaritan dog by the name of Judas tries anything ... his name is written on it. Jesus overhears this comment and says to Peter that Satan wants to sift them all like wheat, but that He has prayed for Peter so that his faith will not fail, so that when he has turned back he will strengthen the rest. When Peter insists that he will never turn back, that he will die for Jesus, Jesus foretells Peter's denial (I like the structure of the conversation in John 13, Luke 22). Peter is aghast as Jesus continues talking. (I am planning to use most of Luke 22:35-38 in the script--modernized, of course). The disciples misunderstand the comment about swords, taking Jesus literally, and Thomas informs Jesus that there are only two swords amongst them--John's and Peter's. Jesus dismisses the conversation, "That's enough of that." But the disciples again misunderstand and they now think that Jesus is going to somehow lead the rebellion that very night.
As Jesus talks across the table to Matthew and Thaddeus who are still confused about the new kingdom, a whispered conversation goes on between Bartholomew and Thomas. Thomas can't understand why Jesus wants only two swords--that's not enough for all of them. Bartholomew, now in good spirits teases him "Where's your faith . . . Come on, don't you remember what he did with the loaves and fishes? Man, with two swords--this guy can make millions of them!"

The supper scene fades to outdoors to where Judas is hurrying up the street. We follow him to the temple where he interrupts the priest's passover feast to tell them that tonight's the night, to call their men together. He tells them that he knows that Jesus will go out to Gethsemene tonight--this is the perfect time. The priests send out their "flunkies " to gather together a small mob of sorts. As the "flunkies" hurry away, the high priest tells Judas that he has done them a great service and that he won't be sorry. This scene closes and reopens again as the disciples and Jesus are leaving the borrowed house on the way to Gethsemene. Peter and John are carrying the swords while James the brother of John is carrying a small club. These three disciples travel close to Jesus. Some of the others discuss the whereabouts of Judas.

When they reach Gethsemene, Jesus tells the other disciples to wait there, and He takes James, John and Peter further into the garden. He sits down with them for a moment and confides in them that He feels so crushed with pain and sorrow
that He could die. He implores them to stay awake and pray with him there while he goes a little further into the garden. Concerned, they promise him that they will and Peter hastily reassures Jesus that if anyone tries to bother Him, the swords are ready. Jesus goes a few steps away and falls to the ground and begins to pour out his heart to God. Concerned as they are, the disciples are tired. Peter mentions that he had no sleep the night before—he was fishing. So were James and John. They pray for a little while but gradually they all fall asleep. Just as Peter starts to snore Jesus comes over and shakes him to wake him up.

"Simon, Simon, are you asleep? Wake up! Can't you keep watch for just one hour." He looks over to see that the other two have awakened as well. "Guys, watch and pray with me. I know you're willing, and I know you're tired, but please pray for us."

With this serious admonition, the disciples are now wide awake—for a few minutes. Again they drift off to sleep. An angel from heaven appears to Jesus to strengthen and encourage him. When the angel disappears, Jesus prays for a little while longer and then gets up and goes over to the disciples to wake them up again, as he is telling them to watch and pray with him, they hear a crowd coming. The other disciples have heard it too and they come in to the garden up behind James, John and Peter to find out what the noise is about. Then the mob steps into the clearing. And there is Judas. Jesus steps forward out of the
shadows and asks who they want. One of the soldiers says "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answers "I am He." When Jesus says this, an invisible blast hits the mob and they are knocked down. Quickly they scramble up again and Jesus asks again who they want. Again the soldier ventures "Jesus of Nazareth."

Judas pushes his way forward from where he was hiding amidst the soldiers, smiles condescendingly at the disciples and approaches Jesus as if to embrace and kiss him. Jesus looks him in the eye and asks him, "Judas are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" Jesus tells the soldiers that He is the one they want, to take him and leave the rest alone. At this point all of the disciples realize that Judas is the traitor. James, John and Peter rally around Jesus. Excited, Bartholomew cries out "Master, multiply the swords!" Peter is furious and he goes after Judas with his sword. Judas cries out and runs and ducks behind the servant of the high priest just as Peter is swinging to lop off his head. Peter misses Judas and takes off the ear of the servant, who begins screaming. Jesus yells at Peter to put his sword away, reaches over to the screaming servant and heals his ear. The servant abruptly stops screaming, and he stares at Jesus as he reaches up to feel his new ear. He then looks down at his feet where the old ear lies on the ground.

As the soldiers and the disciples realize that the disciples are outnumbered by weapons AND people, the soldiers start to scatter the disciples. Peter and Bartholomew are furious! Why isn't Jesus helping them? Peter finally cries
out for them to run and all except Jesus take off. John and Peter run far enough to lose the attention of the soldiers, but then turn around to discretely follow the mob to see what is going to happen to Jesus.

Bartholomew, Thomas, Simon the zealot, and James the less all run back to hide at Bartholomew's father's house. They start to go inside when they hear loud voices of soldiers just up the street. Bartholomew figures that his father's house is the first place the soldiers would look for them so they take off down a side street and run to a nearby garden, similar to that of Gethsemené. There they hide themselves and with whispered, anguished voices try to fathom why Jesus didn't multiply the swords to make an army. James the less is still shocked that his idol, Judas, could do such a thing. Simon the zealot is crushed with not only the guilt from deserting Jesus, but with the realization that he could have somehow warned Jesus about "the plan."

"I should have told Him that Judas was up to something! . . . I didn't know he would do something like this . . . I don't understand why Jesus let them take him . . . I can't believe this is happening."

Thomas however, ventures a wistful thought that maybe this IS all part of the plan, maybe Jesus knew about this and is trying to convert the priests. Bartholomew silences him with a look "Boy you're slow tonight . . . Jesus called Judas a traitor . . . ."
After hiding in the bushes for a while, Matthew and Thaddeus decide to go back to the upper room. They rush in the door, and pound up the stairs. As Thaddeus flings open the door he narrowly avoids being corked in the head with James' club. James and Phillip are already hiding out up there and thought that Matthew and Thaddeus were soldiers coming to get them. Thaddeus, out of breath, staggers to one of the recliners while Matthew just slides down a wall to sit on the floor. His face is wet with sweat and tears. He can't believe he let his friend down—the man who accepted him when his own family rejected him. The other's too are racked with guilt. They can't understand why Jesus didn't DO something. Questions rack their minds. Is this part of Jesus' plan to make himself king? Is Jesus really the Messiah? Phillip concludes this scene with a remark that even if Jesus was not the Messiah, they were total losers to abandon him to the soldiers. He was their friend and teacher. They should have had the courage to go down fighting. But even now they don't have the courage to walk the streets to try to find out what happened to Him.

This scene fades away to the courtyard of the high priest. At the gate, John gains clearance because he knows the high priest. Peter has to wait outside until John gets permission to bring him in. John comes back in a minute, speaks to the girl at the gate, and she opens it for Peter. As Peter goes by her, she asks him if he is one of Jesus' disciples. Scared, Peter keeps his head down and says "No." John starts a little at this denial
but says nothing. Peter (still angry with Jesus because he didn't defend them and Himself) is dying of embarrassment. John wants Peter to accompany him past another guard to get a seat at the trial, but Peter refuses. He says that this is as far as he'll go. He can see and hear the trial from there. He quickly strides away before John can protest more. John sighs and makes his way into the trial. The guard makes a show of him. Showing mock courtesy, a scribe shows him to a "front row" seat, so that John will have nothing in his way to see Jesus, the false teacher, unmasked.

It is cold in the courtyard so Peter goes over to a fire where the servants and officials are warming themselves. Peter is trying to be as inconspicuous as possible, but a small group of men and women beside him are trying to make small talk and keep including him in their attempts. Peter repeatedly answers with one-word comments, but one woman just doesn't get the hint. As the fire light reveals Peter's face, this particular woman comments that she hasn't seen Peter around there and she asks him his name and where he's from. Peter is caught off guard and not knowing what else to do, gives her the information. The woman immediately jumps to the conclusion that Peter is a disciple of Jesus (since he's from the same part of the country, thinks Jesus had a disciple named Peter, etc.). Peter, keeping his cool, denies it. But then one of the men looks at him a little closer and asks almost accusingly, "Hey, didn't I see you in the olive garden where they arrested that Jesus tonight?" Peter is
terrified. He violently denies having anything to do with Jesus, denies not knowing what the man is talking about. He curses to make his point. As Peter finishes his tirade, the rooster begins to crow and as it does we see Peter's frightened face turn to that of horror and shame as he realizes what his fear and anger has caused him to do. He quickly turns around to see if Jesus noticed, but He is already being taken away and His back is to Peter. "Oh my God, what have I done!" Peter cries out and rushes out of the courtyard, leaving two very surprised men and John, who has just come over to get him staring after him. Peter runs through the streets into Gethsemane where he falls to the ground sobbing.

This scene fades into the upper room where all of the disciples are present except for John who is following Jesus' trial as best as he can. The women are also in the upper room. Peter is sitting on the floor on the far side of the room. He is depressed and will not talk to anyone. Suddenly there is loud banging at the door: it's John. Hysterically he cries out, "They're going to crucify Him!"

The room is in an uproar, "Why doesn't he do something . . . Is his power gone? . . . Why is he letting this happen? . . . Is he really the Messiah?"

The women are very upset, especially Mary, Jesus' mother. But they have been studying scripture and the news of his death is more of a confirmation of something they had already suspected. Unlike the disciples, whose faith is at an all time
low, Mary and Elizabeth KNOW that Jesus IS the promised Messiah. The women make a somewhat tenacious connection between the sacrificial lamb and Jesus impending death—but they do not yet understand the coming resurrection. The women (with the exception of Salome) have long questioned the idea of Jesus (whom they KNOW is the Messiah) overthrowing the Romans to set up his own earthly kingdom—although it is what they have believed from childhood—it simply is not in Jesus' character. He has never been concerned with pomp and circumstance OR political power. Because the women have these questions, their minds are much more open to a different interpretation of the coming events. Unlike the disciples whose hopes have been dashed, the women's hope and faith is still intact.

In the midst of this, someone mentions Judas Iscariot and John tells them how Judas broke down at the trial—he had actually accepted money for Jesus! He tells them how Judas begged Caiaphas to set Jesus free, how he threw himself at Jesus' feet and then ran out the door screaming.

Mary, Jesus' mother announces that she will attend the crucifixion. John immediately volunteers to take her and the other women. At first some of the disciples hesitate to accompany them and some even protest their going—maybe it's a trap to crucify them too! But John challenges them "You ran away before, can't you at least go and show our friend support—I've been at the trial and they haven't arrested me!" John also adds the idea that perhaps Jesus will come down off of the cross to
save himself: They NEED to be there.

The scene in the upper room fades into Golgotha. Jesus and the thieves have already been crucified. Mary, (Jesus' mother), Mary Magdalene, Salome, and Joanna are with John as near to the cross as the soldiers will allow. The rest of the disciples are more "discreet" standing in little groups, trying to look as disinterested as possible, but their hearts are breaking. They are terrified of the Roman soldiers AND the Jews. They listen and cringe as the rabble around the crosses yells at the three crucified victims. The people taunt Jesus to come down--save yourself! The disciples ask each other why he doesn't come down. All they understand is that all they had hoped for is never to be.

The thief to the right of Jesus repents and Jesus accepts him. As Jesus gives Mary, his mother, to John, the sky begins to grow black. The crowd is hushed, terrified, for it is only six o'clock. It is not just twilight, it is DARK. The disciples are at first terrified with the rest, but then their excitement is renewed. Thaddeus comes up with an idea: This darkness is a supernatural sign--maybe God the Father is going to take Jesus down Himself! Maybe He's still going to set up a kingdom--John was right, this is IT! From this excited scene we rapidly flick back and forth between the preparation of the sacrificial lamb by the priests in the temple and back to Golgotha, back to the temple and then to the excited disciples. One of them calls out to Jesus just as Jesus cries out "It is finished!" From this
we flick back to the temple and watch the horror on the priest's face as the temple curtain is torn in half. He drops his knife and in the confusion, the lamb gets away. Back at Golgotha, the disciples stand shocked. Jesus their friend and their King is dead! It can't be! As the grief overwhelsms them, the Roman centurion, awe-struck, says that Jesus was the son of God. Then this scene goes black.

From this we fade into a scene with Nicodemus and Joseph of Armethea. They shock the priests when they openly go and ask Pilot for Jesus' body. Both men angrily resign from the Council (the priests don't like this as Joseph and Nicodemus are both very rich and powerful men--but this is only the first of their troubles).

Back at the cross the disciples are sitting, huddled together. They are discussing how they are going to bury their friend when they notice two men over at Jesus' cross taking Jesus' body down. James (John's brother) gets up ahead of the rest (who follow suite) and runs over to the cross, shoves Joseph, and violently demands to know what they think they are doing. Nicodemus recognizes James and quickly diffuses him and the others by explaining that they have a tomb for Jesus. The disciples are somewhat relieved (relative to the circumstances) and they help take Jesus down.

This scene fades into the Sabbath day in the temple. The Passover rites are completed and the priests cannot keep the crucifixion from their minds or conversations. They briefly
discuss Judas' death. It seems that rumors are going around that the priests killed Judas too. One of the priests brings up the fact that Jesus said that he would rise again in three days. This jolts the rest as they realize what would happen to them if the disciples managed to pull off a fake resurrection. The people of the city are already angry with the priests as they have killed the man who healed their sick. The streets and the temple are teeming full of people looking for Jesus and his healing touch. One of the priests suggests that they should go and tell Pilot and try to get him to station a guard at Jesus' grave. This they get up and do immediately—even though it is in the middle of the Sabbath day. Pilot gets angry at the priests for such a "stupid waste of the guard", but he quickly relents as the priests tell him how Jesus is supposed to rise again in three days. If the disciples took the body, they could make it look like Jesus had indeed rose up again and they could stir up the people. "And Pilot wouldn't want that again—would he?" the priests solemnly remind him. Pilot gives up again in exasperation and lets them have the guard.

From this scene we go to the station of the gaurds that night. Bartholomew and John sneak out to the tomb—THEY want to make sure no one takes the body (i.e. the priests). It is very dangerous for them to be out, but Jesus' their friend is more important to them. Even if he was not the promised Messiah. But something is very strange: they see a fire flickering through the trees! Why would somebody build a fire by Jesus'tombstone? They
get a little closer and discover that Jesus' tomb is being guarded by a Roman guard. Bartholomew starts "Why those lousy rotten dog-faced Samaritan raised priests--they thought WE were going to--"

John cuts him off as he has just seen the captain of the guard jerk his head up and look about. The Roman captain has heard something. He sends two men off in the direction of John and Bartholomew. There are tense moments as the soldiers are looking through the brush, but the disciples are not discovered. The soldiers figure the noise was some small animal. As they make their way back to the clearing, they discuss what they would like to do with those trouble-making disciples--the reasons why they are out there guarding a dead man in the cold night air instead of home in their beds. They also discuss what they'd like to do to the priests who started this whole thing. The disciples hear this and quietly slip away and go back to the upper room and tell all they have seen and heard. The disciples and the women are disgusted. On premise of the report of what the guards said they'd like to do to them, the disciples decide that they should spend the rest of the night there in the upper room instead of trying to go home and risk meeting up with a group of soldiers. The women are escorted by James and John to Mary Magdalene's house.

Back at the tomb the soldiers are piling more wood on the fire. Some are playing a dice game and some are talking, when suddenly a bright light blinds them all and they are blasted
back, immovable, like dead men. It is the angel. He rolls away the stone and calls Jesus out.
The scene opens at the tomb. It is very early morning. The guard is no longer there. The "left-overs" from the previous night include the broken seal on the stone and the soldiers' belongings scattered about. From this panorama the scene fades to Pilot's chamber where he is questioning the guards privately about what had happened at the tomb. The priests are waiting outside the chambers for Pilot's verdict. They are frightened--the soldiers have already told them what had happened. Already, some of their own, since the night of the crucifixion, have declared that the prophecies all point to Jesus as the true Messiah. The waiting priests discuss what they are to going to do about this arising conversion problem AND what to do with the torn curtain in the temple.

Inside the chamber the soldiers are still trembling from their experience. They tell Pilot all that had happened and what the priests had told them to say. Pilot's face is white--he is terrified. He murmurs something about how he should have listened to his wife. He should have had nothing to do with this man Jesus. The captain of the guard asks him what he said, but Pilot ignores him. He tells the guard that they are to circulate the false story that the priests have given them, that is, that
the disciples stole the body--they are to say anything but the truth!

The scene in Pilot's chamber fades out into a country scene where the women are winding down a pathway to Jesus tomb. Mary (Jesus' mother), Mary Magdalene, Elizabeth, Salome and Joanna are discussing how on earth they are going to get the stone moved away to anoint the body--they figure they certainly won't be able to get the Roman guards to do it--when Mary Magdalene stops short and cries, "Look!" The stone has been rolled away. She runs ahead of the rest and looks in the tomb. Jesus is gone! She then turns around to the other women and tells them to wait there--she's going to go get Peter and John. With that she runs past them, back the way they came. Mary (Jesus' mother) throws up her hands and sits down heavily on a nearby rock. Elizabeth puts her hand on Mary's shoulder as they survey the scene.

"What did they do with my son? ... What a mess! Did they throw a party? ... Did they move Him? ... Where? ... Why? ... He's dead, why can't they let the dead rest in peace!"

Salome glances over to the remains of the fire, and does a double take, "Oh my goodness, those look like bones, did they burn His body!?" She and Joanna start across the small clearing to investigate what Salome thinks are bones, when all of a sudden a young man is sitting beside the tomb in front of them. Joanna and Salome stop short, startled and frightened. There is a strange light around the man and his clothes are shining. Salome grips Joanna's arm as they step back as if to run. The angel
seeing this quickly puts up his hands to show them he is carrying no weapon and tells them not to be afraid of him.

"I know that you are looking for Jesus, but he isn't here anymore. He's risen from the dead like he said he would."

The angel stands up and motions to the tomb, "Come and see for yourselves."

The women gather themselves together, timidity now gone, they quickly go over to look past the angel into the tomb. There they see another angel sitting where Jesus' body had been.

"Jesus isn't here, why are you looking for the living with the dead? Jesus is risen! Don't you remember what he said to you in Galilee?"

The women look at each other. None of them have any idea what he is talking about "No."

The angel smiles at their collective reply and continues to talk to them:

"Don't you remember: Jesus said that the Son of man will be delivered to wicked men and crucified right?" At this the women nod, yes they recall that much. But the angel continues, "But Jesus also said that He would rise again on the third day."

As this thought plants itself in Elizabeth's mind, (we see that she is mentally calculating the days) her face explodes into a radiant smile, "Hey, that's today! Mary, Jesus is alive!" They turn around, the angels forgotten in the excitement. "Jesus is alive!" Joanna looks at the anointing spices in her arms and ("won't be needing these") drops them as the women run back the
way they came to tell the disciples the good news.

The women pound on the door of the upper room and the disciples let them in. They are exuberant. They tell the disciples what they saw, but the disciples don't believe them. Thomas thinks they are hallucinating. James the less says that they are crazy. How could Jesus be risen from the dead when he couldn't even take himself down off of the cross? None of it makes any sense. The women then excitedly remind them that Jesus said He would rise again on the third day. The disciples recall this, but still do not believe.

There is another knock at the door. It is Peter and John. Mary Magdalene had met them on the way back to the upper room and they had gone back with her to the tomb (Mary Magdalene is not with them, she stayed behind). They confirm what the women said about the tomb being empty (but they didn't see any angels and this further confirms the other disciples' sentiments that the women are crazy) and John, like the women, brings it up that Jesus DID say that he would rise again the third day. The disciples say that John is as crazy as the women, but John does not back down—he believes. As they are arguing, someone begins pounding at the door. It is Mary Magdalene. She has just SEEN Jesus! He's alive! The disciples, with the exception of John don't believe her. There is a fade out as the argument starts.

The scene fades back into the upper room. Jesus has already appeared to the disciples when Thomas was absent (I am also skipping the road to Emmaus). Amused, the women watch the
disciples talk to Thomas--now THEY are trying to convince someone that Jesus is alive. The disciples point out how many people have seen Him. Thomas declares that he doesn't care if the whole world has seen Jesus--he hasn't and won't until he touches the scars in His hands and His side! As far as he is concerned, this "Jesus" they've been seeing is a phony, a spirit sent by Satan.

Bartholomew explodes in frustration at Thomas--why does he always have to be so slow to believe the obvious! As he starts lecturing Thomas, Thomas' eyes grow wide and his mouth drops open as he sees Jesus appear behind Bartholomew. Jesus reaches out and puts his hand on Bartholomew's shoulder. Bartholomew jerks around and Jesus smiles and mentions that it wasn't so long ago that Bartholomew and the rest did not believe. He reaches out his hands to Thomas and beckons to him to touch the scars and to feel his side. Thomas rushes forward and embraces Jesus and believes.

The disciples and the women gather around Jesus as he sits down at the table. He tells them that the sacrifice is completed. He tells them that He has satisfied the requirements--now they do not need to go through the priests, or for that matter anyone else, to get to God. Jesus tells them that now HE is their intercessor. Jesus' disciples are incredulous.

"What do you mean? What about the Passover, the lambs, the sin offering? What about the temple? What about driving out the Romans? When's Jesus going to set up his kingdom?"

Mary Magdalene breaks in: "You mean that the duties of the
tribe of Levi are over? The priests are out of a job?"

Jesus, delighted that someone is finally catching on, tells her that she is right. The duties of the priests, as far as intercession goes are over. Their job now is merely to teach about His resurrection--essentially to proclaim themselves that they are "out of work!"

Phillip, who has been listening intently, asks about the Romans. Jesus reply is "What about them?"

"Well, aren't you going to drive them out? You are the Messiah, I've been taught from birth that the Messiah was going to drive out the Romans! Now when are you going to do it."

Jesus sighs and with a "Why me" look tells him "I'm not. Now let me explain this again . . ."

At this point there is a knock at the door. James and John go over to carefully answer it. John calls out for the person to identify themselves, while James stands beside the door frame with his club. It turns out to be James the brother of Jesus. As he steps inside he sees Jesus sitting there at the table. James' mouth drops open in shock, "I saw them bury you--the Roman's declared you dead--but you're not!" Astonished, he turns to Mary (Jesus mother), "Mary, He's alive!"

Mary, the mother of Jesus smiles, "James, that's what I've been trying to tell you."

James declares that Jesus, his brother, is the true Messiah. Jesus acknowledges James' admission and invites him to sit down with them so that He can show them through SCRIPTURE that what
they believe is true. Before Jesus can get in to this, however, one of the disciples asks Jesus what He is planning to do now—since He says He's not going to overthrow the Romans yet. Jesus talks about the Spiritual kingdom that is to come before they inherit the physical kingdom.

Peter is very quiet and subdued. He does not look Jesus in the eye, but Jesus has determined to keep Peter involved in the conversation. Jesus tells them that He won't be with them much longer and that he's got a lot to tell them. The disciples don't understand (they still think he has a plot up his sleeve to overthrow the Romans) but the women do. Mary, Jesus' mother, realizes that He is going to go back to the One who sent him to her. She is sad—she already feels that he is gone—as she reveals this premonition to the rest of the women. Mary Magdalene protests "Why—he's done his duty as Messiah—he's died, he's resurrected hasn't he?" But Elizabeth agrees with Mary, Jesus' mother, although she doesn't know why (scripturally).

From this scene, we go to a room in the temple where the priests have gathered. One priest is talking to the rest, waving his arms around to make his point. His voice is shrill and frightened. He has just seen one of the "saints" that was resurrected with Jesus. That is, one of the "saints" that they, the priests, had had stoned to death on the false evidence (they had paid the "witnesses") of blaspheme.

"I tell you I saw him, I saw him—that guy was dead and now
he's alive too! What did that Jesus do, raise up everyone to come and get us! I tell you that man is alive--He stopped me in the market place . . . (the man gasps for breath) . . . He TOUCHEd me and he TOld me that "Jesus, the Son of God--the one you killed--is risen too." Then he smiled and walked away!

As this priest finishes his testimony, another one bursts in the door screaming that he's just seen Jesus with his disciples. The priest is hysterical, terrified--what is Jesus going to do to them? In his hysteria, he blurts out that he has heard that Jesus' disciples were going to have a meeting in Galilee in a few weeks when they would hold some sort of forum to tell everyone what is going on.

The high priest Caiaphas' face is white as he stands up to regain control of the discussion. But even in his fear, Caiaphas is a manipulating politician. He begins to dictate to the priests what they should do.

"We can't go--at least not openly--they might see us--HE might see us and expose us to the people. We have to be careful!" He sits down heavily.

The priest responds, "Careful! You want us to be careful! We crucified this man! He's up and walking around and has brought a whole bunch of other dead people with him! He could appear right here in this very room--there is no hiding from Him!"

Caiaphas snaps at the priest who seems to be usurping his authority, "We will go! We must protect the integrity of our
laws! We will defend our holy God from these blasphemers! He pounds his fist on the table for emphasis. The priests stand staring at him for a long minute. Caiaphas looks around at them until Annas, the old, ex-high priest voice breaks the silence,

"Caiaphas, we are not concerned about protecting God. God can take care of Himself. We are concerned about protecting our very lives!"

This scene fades out into the early morning on the sea of Galilee. All of the disciples are on Peter and Andrew's boat. They are tired and discouraged. They had fished all night, hoping to get enough money to buy clothes and food, but they had caught nothing. They talk a little as they are bringing the boat in. They still do not understand why Jesus is not going to overthrow the Romans. They are worried about his talk of going away again. They are frightened about their futures—what do they do now? Go back to their fishing boats? They talk about the priests. Phillip had sneaked into the market the day before to get some flour while the rest of them had hid out in the upper room. A priest's servant had stopped and accused Phillip and the others of stealing Jesus' body and had told him that the priests would "take care of the likes of them!" Simon talks about the problems he is having with the inner circle zealots he used to be friends with. They are disgusted with him and now exclude him from their meetings since Judas—Simon's friend—had turned out to be a traitor. The atmosphere on the boat is very glum indeed.

As they near the shore, Simon looks up and sees a lone
figure standing on the beach and points him out to the other disciples. As they get nearer, the stranger calls out to them and asks if they've caught anything. Andrew yells back that they hadn't caught a thing all night! The stranger tells them to cast their nets on the other side of the boat. Almost as soon as they throw the net in, it is teeming with fish—they can't even pull the net in as it is so heavy. As he is trying to help with the net, John glances up at the stranger on the beach, and then does a double take. He drops the net in surprise and grabs Peter's shoulder. Peter, gruffly tells him to stop bugging him, and to start helping with the net. John shakes him again and tells him to look where he is pointing. Thoroughly annoyed, Peter stands up and is on the verge of yelling at John, when John instead yells, "Look, it's Jesus!" Peter looks closely and his gruff face turns into a huge grin, "It is Jesus!" Peter drops his end of the net and jumps into the water and half swimming, half running in the shallow water, races for the shore to embrace His friend.

As the boat comes in, Jesus tells Peter and the others to bring in their fish. As they are dragging in the net, Jesus turns and tends to a fire upon which he is cooking fish and bread. Andrew looks up in surprise and starts to ask Jesus where he got it but stops before the question gets out. Jesus looks up at him, arches an eyebrow and smiles, "Come on over and eat." The fish in, the disciples sit around the fire in the chilly morning air with Jesus and eat the fish and bread. Jesus asks
them how their night out on the water had been. Phillip tells Jesus how he was accosted in the market and he and the rest of the disciples express their fear of what the priests might do to them. They tell him the story of how two of them had almost been captured by the Roman guard when they had been out watching his tomb in the woods. Jesus replies by reassuring them that they do not have to be afraid of these men—all they need to mind is God and He will take care of them.

Jesus looks over at Peter, who has suddenly grown quiet. Jesus asks Peter if he loves Him, his Messiah, more than the others did. Peter swallows hard, looks up at Jesus "Yes, You know I love You." Jesus replies "Feed my lambs." Jesus asks this question three times, and three times Peter answers it in the affirmative three times.

As they are talking, the scene shifts down the beach to a patch of thick brush about a stone's throw from where the disciples and Jesus are talking. There, two priests have been hiding most of the night on assignment from Caiaphas to watch the disciples. They had fallen asleep watching the boat during the night and now are just waking up. One sleepy priest peers up through the bushes. His eyes grow wide and he shakes his companion awake to look—there's the man they crucified! It's Jesus and he is getting up and walking towards them with one of his disciples. They are terrified, as they whisper back and forth, telling each other to be quiet, to stop rustling, etc. They overhear Jesus talking to Peter, but they only hear the last
part when Jesus is telling Peter that it wouldn't matter (to Peter) if John lived until He came again. The priests are totally confused—where is Jesus going? And what does it have to do with John? They watch Jesus and Peter go into Peter's house and then they scuttle out of the bushes to go and report what they have seen and heard to Caiaphas.

This scene fades into the meeting of the five hundred on the mountain. It is early in the morning. Caiaphas and two other priests are present in disguise. They conveniently are seated where bushes can hide them if need be. The disciples stand up together and begin to talk to a group nearest them about Jesus, His death, resurrection, everything they can think of to tell the people. The disguised priests listen in uncomfortably as the disciples are moving group to group and getting closer to the group where they are sitting. Caiaphas glances over his shoulder and gasps in fright. His hand digs into his friend's shoulder. The other priest quickly turns to see what has frightened Caiaphas, and all the color drains from his face—it's Jesus, and he's looking right at them. His face is shining. The penetrating gaze rests on them a moment and then Jesus turns his attention to the people who are already bowing down and worshiping Him. The terrified priests get up and slip away back to the temple. Jesus talks to the people for a little while about his mission, His sacrifice, and his power that has been given Him. He tells the people that he is on His way to the throne of God to be honored and to begin his work as an
intercessor for them. 

This scene fades out to the Mount of Olives where Jesus is reminding the disciples of what he has recently told them (this will be expanded on in script, will concern the spreading of the gospel, starting in Jerusalem, etc.). He finally tells them, emphasizes to them, that they are to wait and pray in Jerusalem—they are not to leave the city until the gift he is sending them arrives: The Holy Spirit. At this point Jesus ascends into heaven. As they stare up, trying to get a last glimpse of Jesus, a voice asks them why they are gazing at the sky. Startled, the disciples see two angels (shining men) standing beside them (these are the same ones who were at the tomb). They tell them that Jesus will come again in the same manner that he went.

Back in the upper room the disciples and the women wait together restlessly. Peter is pacing the floor impatiently. Phillip is sitting, leaning on a wooden table, his head in his hands. James the less is fighting. No one is speaking. The room is tense.

James the less finally breaks the silence "Is this all we're going to do!? Sit here and wait! I'm telling you we're wasting time--where IS He!"

At this, Phillip looks up at James and chimers in, "Yes, where IS Jesus? He said that He'd be back--why didn't He tell us when?!"

The disciples do not understand why Jesus is taking "so long" to return. Initially, they still think that Jesus is somehow
going to come back and help them finish the work. It has already been a month since Jesus left. The disciples and the women know that Jesus is standing as an intercessor between them and the Father. They still find it incredible that they do not have to go through the priests anymore--no more sacrifices! They talk together about this, and argue over what parts of the Jewish ceremonial law are still valid and what parts are not. They are still afraid of the Jewish leaders and they know that they soon will be questioned as to why they no longer sacrifice. Some of them wonder if they should do it just to please the priests, but the women immediately seize on this point. There can be no compromise--Jesus didn't die as the ultimate lamb just for them to put on a show. They tell the disciples that to sacrifice would be an outright insult to Jesus. Mary, Jesus' mother is especially indignant that anyone would insult her son like that. Ironically, James, Jesus' brother also fiercely defends Mary's point about his brother, Jesus. The disciples give in to the women's argument. They discuss how they are supposed to evangelize the world like Jesus told them too with only 12--no 11 disciples. How are they supposed to reach the Jews that Caesar has scattered across the Empire to colonize his conquered lands? This mention of numbers brings up the question of Judas Iscariot and his fate.

The disciples wonder if Judas really killed himself--or did the priests frame him and kill him. They wonder if he really meant to betray Jesus like they witnessed. They discuss his
motives. John and Peter share what they know, that is, what Jesus told them at the table and what John heard at the trial. Simon the Zealot is adamant—he is certain that Judas meant to do it. He tells the other disciples about the meeting they had had with the other zealots. Simon also reveals that the zealots will have nothing further to do with him because he was friends with Judas. Even THEY consider him to be a traitor. For Simon, this is proof enough. After a moment, it occurs to Peter that there really should be 12, not 11 disciples—12 standing for the twelve tribes of Israel. Elizabeth, knowing what Peter is thinking, comments that Jesus called every one of them—but he didn't call Judas. Judas volunteered. She suggests that they wait for Jesus Himself to fill the vacant spot. But Peter has already made up his mind and he shows Elizabeth his "proof text" (Psalms 109:8). Elizabeth and Jesus' mother still think that they should wait, but the rest of the women and the other disciples agree with Peter. They figure that if they pray over the lots, it will be the same thing as Jesus calling the man himself! Peter declares that the called one should be someone who was with Jesus for as long as the rest of the disciples were. After some thought they come up with two names: Matthias and Joseph Barsabbas. This scene fades out as they are preparing to contact the other believers for a meeting.

Back in the temple courts the priests are gathered together for a meeting. Caiaphas is highly agitated "Where IS He?!" They do not know what to think—where is Jesus? Their spies have
heard the disciples telling people that Jesus had risen into heaven and was sending something called the HOLY SPIRIT in his place. The priests are scared. What is this thing? Will it come after them? They have seen the disciples in the temple, but not one of them has offered a sacrifice. Caiaphas is not looking well. His eyes are bloodshot and have dark circles under them. He has also developed a nasty twitch on one side of his face. He mentions that he has not had a night's sleep since Jesus' rose from the dead—and now something new is coming to torment him!

Someone asks if they should arrest the disciples. The only problem with that is there is no charge they can lay against them. The disciples have been very quiet for the last month. Too quiet. Caiaphas scoffs at the idea, what are they going to do? Kill the disciples and have THEM raise up from the dead as well?? This scene fades out into the next day.

It is early morning and the disciples and some other believer are gathering together in the upper room. Peter gets up in the midst of the people and announces that they have come to the consenses that another disciple must be selected. He gives them a short speech on the "criteria" necessary to be chosen as a disciple. Peter then calls the two possible candidates forward and the disciples pray over the lots. Matthias is chosen to replace Judas Iscariot. Everyone is happy with the exception of Mary, Jesus' mother and Elizabeth. They still think that the disciples are treading where they shouldn't be. But they keep their thoughts to themselves since the deed has already been
done. James the brother of Jesus calls out to everyone that it is time for them to have their daily session of prayer—perhaps today Jesus will send this Holy Spirit gift to them. This scene fades out.

The city is filled with people from all over the country for the Pentecostal holiday. Many of them have brought sick family members and are asking for Jesus to heal them. A group of the priest's "flunkies" are standing by the city wall talking together about their orders from Caiaphas. They are to tell the people that Jesus was a criminal and has been crucified on the demand of the people. They have also been told to put down the resurrection "rumor" by blaming the disciples for stealing the body.

One of the "flunkies", Dan, overhears a wealthy looking foreigner ask an old shopkeeper about the whereabouts of The Teacher. Dan points this conversation out to his friends and nonchalantly walks over to the pair just as the old shopkeeper is telling the man that the priest's had "that good man" killed. Dan interrupts the conversation and corrects the shopkeeper: Jesus was a criminal and he was killed on demand of the people. The old shopkeeper glares up at Dan and glances over to the other man and sarcastically replies that the trial was held too late at night for any of the people to be there to demand anything! At this comment, the foreigner turns to Dan indignant that such a thing could happen—trials at night are illegal! The scene shifts from Dan trying to sputter out a reply to the foreigner to
another conversation close by.

One of Dan's comrades, Micah, is attempting to answer the questions of a group of people who have heard that Jesus WAS crucified but has risen from the dead. Micah is trying to assure the crowd that Jesus' disciples have stolen and hidden the body when James the less walks by behind the crowd and listens for a moment to Micah's pathetic excuses. Micah can not see James the less, as James is rather short and is hidden behind the crowd. James, realizing this, cups his hands and calls out "But wasn't a Roman guard stationed there at the tomb all night?" and walks away, leaving Micah to answer the crowd. As James the less walks back down the street, a crippled man sits, dejected, beside the wall as his two friends and a shop keeper talk:

"But we brought Ezekial all this way to be healed! ... How could Jesus be dead ... What do you mean? ... I don't believe this? ... What did He do?"

The crippled man fights back the tears as he hears that his last hope, Jesus, has been torn away.

This scene flips back to James the less who is now climbing the stairs to the upper room. He bangs on the door and Peter opens it for him. James takes off his sandals and Peter almost automatically picks up the basin and towel and kneels down and washes James' feet. As Peter stands he turns to the others and tells them that he thinks that he finally understands why Jesus washed their feet at the last supper. The disciples discuss the last supper. They wish that they had not been so preoccupied
with position in Jesus' kingdom. They wish that they had paid more attention to what Jesus had told them before He left.

Thomas talks about his regrets about not believing the others about Jesus' resurrection. He is amused at his own stubbornness as he recollects his unbelief and how bullheaded he had been. Peter talks about his denial, his regrets, and his hopes for the future. There is a new warmth to the group as they prepare for another session of prayer to ask Jesus to send the promised Holy Spirit to them.

As they are praying, the house suddenly begins shaking. A sound like a violent wind fills the whole room and tongues of fire rest above the heads of each disciple. As they gaze at one another in astonishment, the scene immediately shifts to the temple.

Caiphas and two Pharisees, Saul of Tarsus and Nicolas of Armethia, are standing together commenting on the new curtain that has been put up in front of the Most Holy Place. Nicolas is distressed. He wonders if the tearing of the curtain means that God is no longer with them--that they are no longer the chosen people. Furious, Caiaphas turns to correct the Pharisee just as the Holy Spirit descends upon the disciples in the upper room. The whole temple shakes and they too hear the sound of a violent wind. At this point Caiaphas loses his cool. He is terrified that Jesus is coming to get him and he tears himself from the other priests and runs to his quarters and bolts himself in his room.
From a close up of Caiaphas' sweating face, pressed against the inside of his door, the scene flips back to the house where the disciples are staying. Jeremiah, the owner of the house, pounds up the stairs to the upper room. He bangs on the door and the disciples let him in. He demands to know what on earth is going on--there are all kinds of people gathering outside the house wanting to know what all the noise means!

As the old man is talking, Peter excitedly grabs him and hugs him "It means that Jesus has finally sent it--don't you see it's the gift, the Holy Spirit that we told you about!" At this, Peter rushes past the old man who is still grumbling about the noise. Peter and the rest of the disciples run downstairs to address the people. As they are talking, telling of Jesus life, death, and resurrection, people in the crowd who know the backgrounds of Jesus' disciples are shocked to hear these uneducated men speaking in different languages. Flawlessly.

Two of Simon the Zeolet's former friends (they were present at the secret meeting) run up to join the crowd. One of them is fluent in Hebrew and is shocked to hear Simon speaking the language perfectly--he knows that Simon speaks only Aramaic.

As the disciples are talking to the crowd, Saul and Nicolas run up to see what's going on. Saul recognizes Peter and snorts in disgust--it's just those trouble making disciples of that dead man Jesus. As Saul turns to leave, disgusted, his friend grabs his arm:

"Hey, isn't that man over there Simon the fisherman?"
Saul peers over the crowd and confirms that it is. As he is looking, Saul's eyes narrow as he hears Simon Peter speaking perfect Hebrew. Saul gasps, "He's an uneducated fisherman!" He turns to look at Nicolas who has also recognized the language. Saul then determinedly pushes his way through the crowd so that he can hear what the other disciples are saying. As he passes by we see Dan and Micah spreading the rumor that the disciples are drunken babblers.

At this point, Saul can hear both Matthew and Bartholomew—both of them are speaking foreign languages that Saul KNOWS these men cannot know. Nicolas wonders if this event is a work of God. Saul fiercely denies it. When Nicolas counters with a "Well how else could they know these languages?", Saul tells him that the devil is fluent in every tongue.

Saul, having heard enough, grabs his friend's arm, saying that they've got to go and see Caiaphas. Nicolas, however, jerks away. He is listening intently to what the apostle John is saying. He tells Saul to wait a moment.

Saul grabs Nicolas shoulder, "What's wrong with you! Don't just stand here listening to these blaspheming pigs! Come on!"

Nicolas stares at Saul, "You go on, I want to listen for a little longer. Saul it's frightening, but what they're saying makes sense, it all fits, don't you see? The prophecies, everything! Saul, what if they're right?"

Saul drops Nicolas' arm as though it were some filthy rag, "How could you! You filthy traitor! You're like a Samaratin
swine!" Saul turns around, "Now you've made me unclean before God!" He turns and strides away.

Nicolas turns back and hears John answer the people, telling them that they must repent and be baptized. The scene focuses on John as he is re-explaining a point to a man. Someone pulls at his sleeve and John turns around to see Nicolas the Pharisee. A repentant Nicolas confesses that he believes and wants to be baptized.

From this scene we go back to the temple where Saul is pounding on Caiaphas' door. Caiaphas at first won't let him in, but finally does. Caiaphas is a mess. He is holding a cup in his hand and it is shaking as he motions for Saul to sit down. He asks where Nicolas is and is shocked when Saul tells him what had happened. Saul feverently tries to encourage Caiaphas, tries to raise his spirits. Saul is convinced that the disciples are of the devil but Caiaphas knows better. Even so, Saul's anger at the disciples "open blaspheme" visibly calms Caiaphas. Together they agree that somehow the disciples must be stopped.

Several days later (In this case, James' (the brother of Jesus) voice would be helpful in the transition. He could explain that the believers are sharing everything in common, etc.). The women and are busy making up food baskets in Mary Magdalene's home. They are talking about Jeremiah, the man who owns the "hotel", where the disciples have made their headquarters in the upper room. Jeremiah has been baptized and now uses the income from renting out other rooms to help with the finances of
his fellow believers (the women talk about this and other examples of the believers generosity).

As the women are talking, Jeremiah and James the less bang on the door and let themselves in, each carrying several sacks of food. Excitedly James the less announces to the women that Barnabas, a fellow believer has sold a field and has just given the disciples all of the money. The women are delighted as James shows her some of the money that he had been given to buy more food for the baskets. The women then give Jeremiah and James the less several food baskets to deliver.

As they are gathering up the baskets, Peter and John knock on the still-open door and let themselves in. They are on their way to the temple for prayer and want to know if the women have anything for them to deliver in that part of town. The women don't have anything ready yet so Peter and John leave. As they walk together they discuss the rumors that the priests have been spreading. John finds some of them funny—especially the one about them stealing the body. They wonder how much the Roman soldiers had been paid to keep quiet about the angel that rolled away the tomb stone. Jesus had told them that when he had come out, the soldiers were scattered all over the ground like dead men. As the two walk past the temple gate Beautiful, a crippled man cries out to them for money—this is the same man focused on earlier whose friends had brought him in vain to Jerusalem for Jesus' healing touch.

Peter and John stop and Peter tells the man to look at them.
The man gives them all of his attention, visibly anticipating a large sum of money from the two. Peter looks at the man kindly and tells him "I have no money, but what I DO have, I'll gladly give you." Peter then reaches out his hand to grasp the cripples outstretched one and in Jesus' name commands the man to walk. With that Peter helps the man up and lets go of his hand. The man is standing on his own. The man's face is shocked. His face becomes a huge grin as he tries out his new legs, walking, dancing, jumping, and running about in the market place. Gleefully he hugs and thanks the disciples and praises God. He pauses in his excitement and looks around at the astonished spectators. He looks back at the bemused Peter and John, introduces himself as Daniel of Phillipi, and asks how he can help them. John asks him if he would like to come with them into the temple to pray. The man eagerly joins them in the short walk into the temple. As they enter, the people in the temple recognize Daniel as the crippled beggar who used to sit by the gate. As the people gather around to find out what has happened, Peter launches into the speech about Jesus recorded in Acts 3.

As Peter is talking to the people, priests who are standing by the temple alters are momentarily shocked into silence. Finally one of the priests speaks up "Hey, they can't do that in here! Where's the temple guard?" As the priest says this, the captain of the temple guard comes up behind him, taps him on the shoulder and asks what they want him to do.

The priest turns around, "Do? Arrest them! They have no
right to do that in here, come on!" With that the priests and
the captain of the temple gaurd go over to where Peter and John
are talking, grab them, and order the captain to take them off to
jail. As the captain and one of his men are taking John and
Peter away, the scene fades away into Caiaphas' council chambers.

Caiaphas is not happy that Peter and John have been
arrested. He is panic stricken. He doesn't know what to do with
them! How can you punish people who's leader returns from the
dead? As the priests come into the chamber to discuss what to
do about Peter and John, Annas (the former high priest) goes over
to where Caiaphas is standing, facing the wall. He touches
Caiaphas' shoulder and reminds him that this meeting is not about
wrong or right--it is about self-preservation. Caiaphas composes
himself and takes his place beside Annas at the council table.
As they discuss their problem, the question of Jesus' sudden
disappearance comes up. Where did he go? One of the priests
speaks up and gives his theory: the ressurection was some sort
of fraud. Perhaps the diciples had made some sort of deal with
the Roman gaurd--after all Matthew had been a tax collector.
Maybe the "Jesus" that had appeared to so many people had just
been a man in disguise--a man who got tired of playing the part,
thus the so-called "ascension." At this Caiaphas violently
disagrees. He knows that it could have been no one but Jesus.
He tells the company about how he and two other priests had went
to hear Jesus speak and how Jesus had looked at them. There is
no doubt in Caiaphas' mind that what he had seen was no other man
but Jesus.

Throughly annoyed, Annas raises his hands for silence. He forcefully declares that Jesus is no other than Beelzebub himself and that the disciples are possessed, casting out spirits in the name of the devil. Annas pauses and stares at the other priests as though challenging them to say something to the contrary. He leans back in his chair and crosses his arms "Now this is what we'll do ... remember our cowardly "friend," Peter ... question him first ... he'll be sure to buckle!"

Back in the upper room the disciples and women are somberly gathered. Peter's wife, baby, and family are there as well John's mother Salome. Salome is hysterical--what will the priests do to John? The disciples try to comfort her and tell her that Jesus will look after them, He won't let them down! They then decide to pray again for Peter and John's protection from the cruelty of the priests. James the brother of Jesus leads out in the prayer.

The scene opens in the early morning back at the priest's chambers. The sun is streaming innocent beams through the window and they play against the stone, up against a pair of sandaled feet; Peter's. Despite the angry voices in the background, Peter's face is calm--his demeanor is in marked contrast to what it was on the night of Jesus' trial. He looks at his two friends John and Dan who are standing beside him and sees them return his gaze. Peter looks away and the three stand to face their accusers. Annas' brow is knit as he leans forward in his chair.
Caiphas' face is pale and twitching as he gazes at the disciples. Saul righteously glares at the three accused from his position behind Caiphas.

Annas suddenly leans further forward in his chair and with his voice dripping with sarcasm directs a question to Peter: "By what power or name have you two lowly fishermen accomplished this incredible feat? Tell us the truth Peter—you know what we did with the last false teacher we invited to meet with us, don't you?" Annas smiles wickedly, temple his fingers, and leans back in his chair. Caiphas' face, however, is breaking out in a sweat and a wide-eyed Roman guard (one who witnessed Jesus' resurrection) swallows hard.

Annas raises his eyebrow, "Well... Peter? Why don't you answer the first question of the day?"

Peter does. As he makes his courageous defence recorded in chapter four in Acts, Annas' confident demeanor begins to slip away. All of a sudden there is a clattering sound of a chair being moved and Caiphas gets up and leaves. Annas watches for a moment and then his hand shoots up, "Stop!" Peter is silent. Annas announces a recess and orders the guard to take the men away. He and Saul and the rest of the Sanhedrin get up and go into the council chamber where Caiphas is sitting.

Annas angrily asks Caiphas why he had left the proceedings. Trembling, Caiphas looks up at him and replies:

"I saw Him Annas, Jesus, the one we crucified. I know He's alive." Caiphas stands up and begins to walk unsteadily around
the room. "Did you not see that cripple out there Annas? Jesus
healed him. His NAME healed him. How can we deny it Annas?"
Caiphas is hysterical now. "Jesus was and is the Messiah, you
and I both know it! We rejected him, we crucified him, and now
his followers are out to haunt us with his very name! What are
we going to do? They're going to destroy us!"

Annas sighs and sits down. He motions for everyone to do
likewise. His face softens in frustration, "We have to stop them
somehow." He sits down and motions for everyone to do likewise.
Annas presses his hands down hard on the table, leans back and
looks hard at Caiphas. "If he gains more followers, Caiphas do
you know, can you even imagine what we will be held accountable
for?"

Caiphas meets his gaze and with a quiet, almost trembling
voice replies, "We will be held guilty of the murder of the Son
of God."

This scene fades into a scene of the temple gate where
Peter, John, and Daniel are coming out. Daniel can't believe
that the priests let them go—even after Peter told them that
they were not going to stop preaching. He is amazed by the hate
of the priests. He talks about Annas. He wonders how anyone
could be that hateful and be a priest of God. As John comments
that Caiphas is looking "worse-for-wear," Peter brings up Saul.

"Did you see that young man standing behind standing beside
Caiphas ... looks like one to look out for ... he looked like
he really believed what Annas was saying."
At this John wonders allowed if that young man could possibly be Saul of Tarsus, the former friend and fellow-trainee of Nicolas (a new convert from Pentecost). As they discuss this possibility, they come to John Mark's mother's house and knock on the door. Jeremiah (John Mark's uncle) opens the door cautiously at first and then flings it open and throws his arms around the two disciples. The rest of the company gathers around the three, relieved that they are okay. John gives a quick overview of what had happened and they introduce Daniel.

As the excitement begins to settle down it begins to sink in that what had just happened to John and Peter was only the beginning—things were going to get much worse. James the less speaks up and says that he is afraid that he might not be able to stand and speak like Peter and John did. Peter quickly reassures him that it was not himself that spoke. He reminds him that Jesus told them not to worry about what they should say, that words would be supplied. Peter tells the group how his insides were trembling as he remembered his miserable failure during Jesus' trial. But as the priests began to ask him questions, Peter continues, the answers just seemed to form in his head—someone else was working through him.

John grins and shakes his head, "Believe ME that it was someone else talking—it sure wasn't Peter!" He smiles at his friend as some of the others laugh.

But James the less is still concerned. He protests, "But what if things get worse—."
Bartholomew interjects "and they certainly will."

James continues, "--how can we know we'll have the power to stand? How can we know that the strength will be enough?"

Mary (Jesus' mother) interjects, "Jesus certainly has been generous so far--why not ask for more assurance?"

Peter agrees with Mary and they unanimously agree to a season of prayer to thank God for keeping the disciples and Daniel safe and to ask for more of the Spirit, more of his strength. The place is shaken again and the Holy Spirit is given again to the praying believers.

The next day dawns in the quarters of Caiphas. He walks out of his quarters and down the hall to meet Annas and the Pharisees along with a group of angry Sadducees. The Sadducees are angry that the disciples are preaching about the resurrection while the priests are upset because the disciples are preaching against ceremonial laws--money is down for sacrifices as people are coming into the temple and leaving without sacrificing (source from page 78, AA). Someone speaks up and suggests just having the disciples killed, but someone else says that it can't be done because the people like the disciples too much--it's too dangerous. The meeting ends with nothing accomplished.

Meanwhile back at the house, the believers are holding a small meeting. They are praising God for the generosity of those who are giving of their belongings to help the cause. In particular, they refer to a man named Joseph who had sold a field and had given the entire sum of money to the disciples to do with
what they saw fit.

An attractive couple sitting in a corner of the room do not look as happy as the rest, however. The woman gets up and goes across the room to where Mary and Salome are talking and joins the conversation (quite loudly). The man, whose name is Ananias, leans over to Bartholomew who is sitting near them and begins to air his complaints "I don't understand how people can sponge off of another's good fortune--don't these people work for their food?" Before Bartholomew can answer, someone else who has overheard Ananias accuses him of not being sensitive to the needs of the poor. Has he ever in his life gone to bed hungry? Has he ever had to tell his children that there was no food?" Ananias, very offended gets up and without a word goes across the room and gets his wife, Sapphira and together they leave the house.

As Ananias rants about the embarrassing incident that had just happened to him, Sapphira attempts to smooth everything over. She reminds him about the field that he had just inherited and tells him that he could still save face if he sold it and gave the money to the disciples like Joseph did. And since the land is much larger and in a better part of town, THEIR gift would be much larger than Joseph's was. She smiles at him, "Didn't Joel from Bethany make you an offer the other day?"

Ananias begins to protest, "But I can't give them EVERYTHING--that land is worth too much!"

Sapphira frowns, "But if you just give them part of the money you'll look cheap compared to Joseph--but, why do you have
to tell them anything? Just say that it IS the entire amount-- who is ever going to find out? Joel lives in Bethany and HE surely wouldn't tell--he's not even involved in the group."

Ananias declares Sapphira brilliant and agrees to her suggestion whole-heartedly. He sells the land to Joel that evening.

At the next meeting Sapphira leaves with Mary Magdalene and Salome to go pick up some more bread before the meeting starts so they will have enough for the supper afterwards. However, the meeting starts before the women get back and Ananias conspicuously presents his gift (along with a speech of course about how this is the ENTIRE amount from his selling of his field). Peter denounces him as a liar before God and Ananias drops dead. The congregation is mortified. Even Peter is shocked as he stares at the dead man before him.

Meanwhile out at the market, Sapphira is literally dragging Mary and Salome around. She is a "prestige" person and is buying every expensive exotic thing she can afford--the things she can't afford she tells them she already owns. The other women want to know where she is getting all the money from, but all Sapphira will say is that Annanias and she ran into a little bit of "good fortune." They finally make their way back to the house and go inside chatting. They stop short at all the gloomy faces inside. Sapphira starts to ask what the matter is when Peter points to a bag of money on the floor that everyone is staring at. He quietly asks Sapphira if the money in that bag is the full price
for the field Annanias had sold. Sapphira snaps back, "Why of course it is!"

Peter's head drops and he tells her that the people who carried out her husband's body are waiting to carry out her's. At this, Sapphira drops dead. Salome puts her hand over her mouth as the others, shocked, look on at the body on the floor, Sapphira's hands still clinging to her possessions.

The next day, Peter, John, Bartholomew, and Thomas are healing people in the temple courtyards. The disciples are animated as they do their work. Peter and John are closer to the temple than the other two disciples (and they also have their backs to it). Bartholomew glances over at Peter and sees several priests and some temple guards coming up behind Peter and John. Thomas sees them too and starts yelling and waving his arms trying to warn his friends. He gets Peter's attention, but there is such a crowd that Peter can't figure out what Thomas is trying to do. Peter, after a second, shrugs his shoulders and throws out his arm to wave Thomas' message aside and turns back to his work only to look right into the face of Annas the High Priest.

"Uh . . ." Peter begins to greet Annas, but Annas, furious, cuts him off and demands to know what the disciples think they're doing. Meanwhile, the other two disciples (Thomas and Bartholomew) try to make it through the crowd to help their friends, but they can't get through. The people crowd around the men because just by touching them they are healed. The scene fades out as the guards and the priests are taking John and Peter
away.

The next scene opens in Peter and John's darkened cell.

"Well, here we go again--what do you say? I'm guessing that first they'll accuse us of murdering Annanias and Sapphira and then try to turn the crowd against us." John looks at Peter quizzically, waiting for a response.

Peter stares at the wall for a minute but then looks over at John and smiles, "And do you think this little plan will work?" John returns Peter's grin, "Only if Jesus is willing."

John cocks his head, "Did you hear something?"

Peter nods, "Yes--it sounds like they're coming for us--but it's so early--it's way too early!"

At this the door opens and the room is flooded with light. The disciples squint and try to look up at the source. It's an angel. The angel smiles and beckons to them, "Don't be afraid--get up." Peter and John look at each other and then quickly back at the angel as they scramble up and their chains fall off. The angel tells them to come with him and Peter and John follow him right past the guards--who are standing there beside the cell door as though it was unopened. Peter looks one guard right in the face as he passes by, but the guard gives no indication of having seen him. The guard merely yawns. The angel takes Peter and John out of the prison and tells them that God wants them to go back to the temple courts the next morning and continue with their work. John tells the angel that they most certainly will, and the angel disappears as John and Peter turn to go home.
The next scene fades into the later morning hours back at the jail. The two guards are still standing beside Peter and John's jail cell door yawning when two other guards come to relieve them. As they open the cell door for routine check there is an interesting scene as they discover that the prisoners are no longer there. This scene fades out on the arguing guards.

Back in the "court room" of the temple, the scene fades in as Annas is indignantly finishing a speech before his assembly. As he is finishing his last sentence, the head of the guard walks in and interrupts him, "They're gone."

Annas glares over at the man, "I beg your pardon."

"I said they're gone."

The room goes up in loud talking until Annas, shocked, raises his hand and shouts "Enough!" The room is quiet. "What do you mean they're gone?" Menacingly Annas walks around the table to face the head of the guard.

The guard visibly realizes that the priest is trying to look good by intimidating him and in response draws himself up with an equally menacing stare as he turns to face the priest, "I mean THEY'RE GONE. The doors were locked, the chains unopened, and the guards were standing by their post, awake—all night."

As Annas, prepared for a stand-off, gets ready to give the guard a response, someone bursts into the room, "Peter and John—and the rest of the disciples are in the courtyard preaching and healing!"

Annas' mouth drops for a fraction of a second and he
quickly looks at the guard, "Well you heard the man--go and retrieve your escaped prisoners--bring in the others while you're out there." Annas folds his arms and cocks his head condescendingly.

The guard opens his mouth to speak but changes his mind. With a glare he turns and leaves the room. The guards go out to the courtyard. The captain of the guard carefully makes his way through the people and asks the disciples to come with him. The disciples obey and go with the guard back to the Sanhedrin.

As they enter the room, Caiphas lifts his head off of his arms and Annas abruptly stops pacing behind the table and turns to face them. Saul is sitting near the table and he shifts in his chair to glare at the disciples.

"I thought I told you not to preach in the temple in Jesus' name," Annas begins his tirade. In a lapse of control, he suddenly pounds his fist on the table and everyone jumps. His voice raises "You have filled all Jerusalem with your teachings--you are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood!"

As Peter responds, "We must obey God, not men . . . (use Acts 5:29-31 revised)," the place goes up:

"Blaspheme! . . . Put them to death . . . Stone them! . . . ."

Peter looks over at John, raises an eyebrow and shrugs. The room is in an uproar. All the priests are yelling and talking. Annas is trying to say something but he is drowned out. Caiphas' head is back on his arms on the table. At this moment Gamaliel takes charge. He raises his hands in request for silence as he
takes the floor. The place quiets down as Gamaliel tells the captain of the guard to take the prisoners out. He then gives the room his counsel found in Acts 5:33-39. At the end of his speech he looks past Annas to Caiphas and asks "Caiphas?"

Caiphas says "Alright."

However, Annas quickly adds, "But the law requires a flogging." Gamaliel sighs and returns to his chair. Annas looks at him for a minute and then calls out "Bring the prisoners in." With this, the scene fades out.

The scene reopens as the beaten disciples exit the temple into the courtyard where the people are waiting. The people's faces are shocked at the disciples' appearance. One elderly lady comes up to Bartholomew and begins to wipe his sweaty brow with a cloth (this is the lady who lives next door to Bartholomew's father's shop whom was introduced earlier in the story), "O you poor thing!" she begins as all the people crowd around them.

But Peter raises his hands in protest and says, "The pain is nothing--"

Thomas interrupts, "It's not?"

Peter grins and looks at him, "--compared to the joy we feel at being counted worthy to suffer disgrace for the name of Jesus."

As the people cheer and crowd around hugging the disciples, Saul, Annas and Caiphas frown out at the scene from an upstairs temple window. Saul mutters under his breath, "You'll be counted worthy of suffering a lot more than that!"
Later (perhaps a week) the disciples and the women are sitting together in the upper room. They talk about what the past week was like for them. Thaddeus and Matthew tell about a leper that they had healed. They tell how ecstatic he had been when all his fingers had suddenly reappeared. The man had been a weaver and an artist prior to his disease. They talk about the light and joy they saw in his face at his conversion and baptism.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, speaks up and says that she hates to spoil the mood but she has had word of complaint that she has been asked to present to the disciples. She hands the letter to James the brother of Jesus and he looks at it silently for a minute, "I don't believe this!" James looks up at the other disciples and tells them what is in the letter: The Grecian Jews are upset because they think that their widows are being neglected. John's eyebrows shoot up and Phillip groans, "Oh no."

Mary Magdalene leans forward and says, "It's true--I don't mean the letter--let me tell you what has been going on--I just learned today. Arachne and Ovid told me that two women have been going around talking about how two of their neighbors got more flour than they did and they say it's because they are Jewish. BUT their neighbors both have three children and these two women don't have any. So they've been going around the city spreading rumors about how they've been cheated." Mary shrugs and sits back.

Salome adds, "By the way, someone forgot the Widow "Ruth"
today and she had to come over here to get her food basket. I felt really bad because she's old and lives on the other side of the city."

Peter shakes his head, "We don't have time for all this bickering--."

Elizabeth interrupts, "Peter, we're all doing our best to see that everything gets done properly--we just need more people. You 12 are run off of your feet! You go all day from early morning till night time and so do we. Peter, we can't take time from the gospel to wait on tables!"

Mary the mother of Jesus speaks up, "No we can't. Why don't we get the entire group of believers together and get them to choose some men to look after that part of the ministry?"

Everyone looks at her just as Matthew breaks in, "That's a good idea, but we're going to have to be awfully careful about who we choose. We need honest men--hard workers filled with the Holy Spirit because regardless of what they are doing--even if it's waiting tables--they will still be witnesses for the cause."

The women and the rest of the disciples nod in silent agreement. James the brother of Jesus speaks up, "I'm for choosing some honest men, how about the rest of you?"

This scene fades out to a scene of the spoken of meeting just when Peter is ending his "We need honest men" speech. As Peter sits down, Matthew leans over to him and asks him humorously where he had gotten that inspirational speech. Peter grins and elbows Matthew in the ribs.
A man stands up in the audience, "I would be willing." It is a man called Stephen. He is followed in rapid succession by six other volunteers. They are approved and consecrated. As the apostles pray over them, the scene fades into a view of Caiphas' inner chambers.

The scene is a chaotic one. Annas is ranting at Caiphas who is leaning back on a couch:

"... Now they've got seven more "apostles" ... What more do we need! ... I thought twelve was bad enough--but 19!"

Caiphas sighs deeply and murmurs, "Stephen?"

"Yes!" Annas throws his hands up in the air, "He's worse than that Nazarene scum, Peter! We lost another priest yesterday on account of him! Converted. Caiphas, Stephen's arguments are flawless--FLAWLESS. I have set the most intelligent and educated men in this part of the country on him--men that could twist both your mind and mine around into knots! But Stephen never trips up--they're like putty in his hands!"

Annas walks over to the window, his hands behind his head, "So what do we do, High Priest?" Receiving no answer, he turns around to look at Caiphas who is sitting at the table cracking his knuckles. After a short pause, Caiphas looks up, "I don't know. Look what has happened since we killed Jesus."

Annas snaps, "The ROMANS killed him--don't you forget that!"

"Don't lie to me." Caiphas' voice takes an edge to it, "We killed him and now we want to do the same thing to Stephen."

Annas quietly replies, "Yes. It has to be done. I think we
can bribe the Romans to not look too deeply into the situation. And I have witnesses that are more than willing to testify for a price. Stephen is too powerful a speaker—we MUST silence him. We can make his popularity work against him—we can make him an example to others so that they WON'T follow his teaching!"

Caiphas, staring at Annas, begins to laugh at him. "Don't you hear yourself?" he says to the mortified priest. Regaining himself, Caiphas smiles, "We'll silence this too-popular Greek-speaking Jew, just like we silenced the too-popular Jesus of Nazareth." Caiphas slams a fist down on the table between them and leaves Annas standing alone in the room.

The scene shifts to Stephen who is now sitting alone in a darkened cell, waiting for his trial. He prays for the cause and for the other apostles. He also prays for his wife and his son. He concludes his prayer by asking for strength and by telling God that he will die willingly if that is God's will. As he finishes, the cell door opens and he is taken away to the trial before the Sanhedrin.

Stephen begins to speak to the priests and as he is speaking, we see the transition in Stephen's face, as he realizes that the priests are out for blood. As he concludes his speech recorded in Acts 7, the priests start shouting at him and tearing their robes as Stephen looks up to heaven and saying "Look, I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

The people drag him out of the city to be stoned, but
Stephen dies before he is actually stoned enough to be dead. Everyone suddenly stops heaving rocks when a voice shouts out, "Look, he's already dead!"

The enraged crowd is silent for an odd moment. Someone gives Stephen's limp body a good kick in the side. One of the priests tries to egg the crowd on, "He's just faking it!" But someone answers back, "Why waste our time--he's already dead, let the animals clean him up!" The priests don't know what to do. The body needs to be covered but the crowd won't do it--and for them to do it would make them ceremonially unclean. The confused scene fades out.

The disciples are aghast when they find out that Stephen has been stoned. While some of them go to find and bury Stephen's body, some of the disciples stay behind to help the women comfort Stephen's wife. Later, The disciples discuss what will happen to them all now that persecution has escalated into death. James the Less wonders aloud if the Romans will investigate, but Matthew declares that the temple treasury is still full of bribe money.

The next day back at the temple, Saul is elected to the Sanhedrin. He makes vows to cut short the work of the Apostles very soon--and the persecution is off to a "grand" start. That very afternoon, Saul arrests some believers who were teaching in the market place and puts them in prison. The Apostles and the other believers are horrified. They pray for the believers but they, like Stephen, are condemned and stoned.
That evening a notice goes out that Saul is routing out all followers of the WAY to have them brought to trial for heresy. That night over 30 believers are imprisoned. The persecution is terrible and the Apostles do not know what to do. Gathered together they discuss their options: scatter? stay there? Bartholomew tells them that his extended family has already, for the most part, left Jerusalem for Damascus. Thomas says that his family has done the same. James the Less says that he has talked to over 50 families today and 45 of them already had made plans to leave the city.

"What about you? What about us? Are we going to leave too?" Peter asks.

John quietly replies that he believes that their work is still in Jerusalem. Perhaps God is using this persecution to spread the gospel outside of the city—to all the world as he told us to do. You do realize that Phillip has already sent word from Damascus asking for more help to teach the new converts there?"

Meanwhile back at the temple, Annas and Caiphas are congratulating Saul on his fine work. Caiphas is looking much better health-wise, and he commends Saul on his energetic efforts.

Annas nods to Caiphas, "Have you noticed that not one of those we've had put to death have come back from the dead—it's been more than three days since Stephen was put out of the picture."
Caiphas smiles weakly, "Yes, I've noticed."

Saul presents the two with a concern, "It seems that all the "criminals" are abandoning the city and spreading the blaspheme—or the "plague," as I like to call it—to other cities.

Annas smiles approvingly. He thinks that "plague" is a good word for it. He agrees that the heresy must be uprooted at all costs and he gives Saul permission to pursue his concern. At Annas' promise to write letters for him [Saul] today, Saul eagerly leaves the room to make plans to go to Damascus.

"You know," Annas smiles, "I almost feel guilty."

Caiphas, surprised, looks up at him, "Why?"

Annas explains, "That young man was in here the night after we stoned Stephen demanding from me and two other priests every theological argument we could come up with as to why Jesus was not the Son of God. It seemed to me that Stephen's death was beginning to have—how shall I say—the negative effects you had previously mentioned. Well, you can imagine how I felt after your comments before we had Stephen killed, but as you can see we thoroughly convinced the boy." Annas crosses his arms and smiles, contented.

"I see." Caiphas flatly replies.

Annas glances at him, "What do you mean by that?"

"Nothing. How soon is Saul leaving?"

"As soon as I furnish the letters."

A few days later, Saul and two companions, Jacob and Aaron are on their way to Damascus. Saul is in a jovial mood and is
talking loudly to his friends about how surprised and happy he is that the high priest has placed such confidence in him to carry out this mission. They discusses what they should do when they first enter Damascus. Saul wants to get right to work, but Jacob and Aaron want to rest for awhile. Saul starts to point out that they have to get right to work before the followers of The Way find out that they are there, but his friends groan and protest so that Saul concedes that they can rest for a few hours. When they finally reach the outskirts of the city of Damascus, Saul relaxes a bit and begins to joke with his companions that maybe they can stop and eat before going to work. But as he is speaking, a bright light suddenly shines all around him—he is so stunned that he falls off of his donkey.

His shocked companions quickly get down off of their donkeys to help Saul up—they don't see the light, but they stop dead in their tracks when they hear a voice:

"Saul why are you persecuting me . . . ?"

In a few minutes, Saul's vision ends and he sits up—and abruptly collides with the leg of his donkey. He carefully feels out with his hands, and shakily stands up. He places his hands on his face and rubs his eyes, "I'm blind?" he says hesitantly. He reaches out to touch his two friends who have crowded around him, "Oh, I AM BLIND!" he realizes and throws himself back onto the ground.

Aaron and Jacob scramble about him asking him about the voice—what on earth was it? Saul gasps, "Jesus—He IS the Son
of God! I just SAW him, I just HEARD Him. Oh, and now God has blinded me because I was so closed minded that I wouldn't believe until I saw for myself!"

Jacob disbelievingly asks him, "You're really blind?"

As he says this, he passes a hand back and forth in front of Saul's face. Saul's eyes do not follow the hand motion.

"He's really blind," declares Aaron as he moves a finger so that it almost touches Saul's eye--the eye does not blink.

Saul stares straight ahead and with tears streaming down his face he cries out, "I murdered Stephen--and the others, oh the others! I've killed so many of God's servants--I deserve much more than blindness!"

Confused, Saul's companions decide to say no more. They silently help Saul up onto his donkey and Aaron leads it on the way into the city. When they get into Damascus, they check into a boarding house.

Three days later in the back yard of a small run down house, an older, but still robust man is working in his garden. Suddenly voice speaks his name, "Ananias?"

The man looks around, but he sees nothing.

"Ananias?"

The old man realizes and looks up, "Yes, Lord?" and he is suddenly in vision. In his vision, God tells him to go to Judas' house on Straight Street and to ask for Saul of Tarsus . . . Acts 9:11-16 NIV.

Ananias sighs in perplexity as he comes out of vision. But
he sets his tools down and goes out into the street. He walks around the corner and takes "Straight Street." He stops at Judas' house and tentatively knocks on the door. A man answers and Ananias asks, "Is there a Saul of Tarsus here?"

The man sighs in relief, "Thank goodness you're here--Saul has been asking for you--come in, come in!" The man brings Ananias inside and shows him to a room where Saul is praying.

Saul looks towards the sound, "Is it the man from God yet?" he asks.

The host looks at Ananias who answers, "Yes." Ananias walks over to Saul and places his hands on his face, "Brother Saul, the Lord--Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here--has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." (Acts 9:17, NIV). Something like scales suddenly fall from Saul's eyes and he stands up and embraces Ananias and asks him for baptism.

Later that evening, Ananias goes to attend a meeting of the believers. He sits quietly amidst all the preliminary talking, but as the meeting starts, he raises his hand, requesting to speak to the group. His request is eagerly granted by the leaders of the meeting for when Ananias speaks, he always says something worth hearing.

Ananias stands up, "I met Saul of Tarsus."

At this statement there is a very audible gasp, but Ananias continues, "The Lord blinded him and showed him the error of his ways as he was on his way to Damascus. I later received a vision
telling me to go and heal him which I did this morning. Saul's converted and baptized and wants to meet all of you." With that Ananias sits down and folds his arms across his chest and leans back.

There is a moment of shocked silence. Ananias shrugs, "Of course, if you want to meet him right now, he's standing out in the synagogue courtyard preaching the message of Jesus to the people who commissioned him to come and kill us."

"He's what? ... It must be some kind of trick! ... No! ... He's a murderer!"

One of the meeting's leaders, Alexander, takes the floor and holds up his arms to get everyone's attention. Alexander says that he knows Ananias to be an honest, God-fearing man—he certainly isn't lying. Alexander also suggests that he—and whoever else was willing—accompany Ananias down to the courtyard to see just what was going on. Two others, Ezra and Jude, volunteered to go with them, and after prayer they start out for the synagogue.

The scene astonishes the little group: Paul is standing up in front of a mixed group of scribes, elders, and lawyers proclaiming the happenings of the past three days. Several of his audience are actively arguing with him—the rest are too astonished—as their champion whom they've heard so much about turns on them with withering sarcasm. The audience is completely bewildered. Some think that it is an elaborate plot to flush out all the followers of The Way. Some think that Saul has lost his
mind. Nobody knows what to make of it.

Saul happens to glance in the direction of the little group of the believers, and does a double take when he sees Ananias. Saul abruptly stops talking, grins, and deserts his audience to go and see his new friend. Hungry for acceptance and friendship, Saul treats Ananias as a long lost companion and demands introduction to Ananias' three friends. Ananias introduces the astonished three in his typical short, clipped manner. Alexander hesitantly greets Saul as a fellow believer and in response Saul heartily greets Alexander as "his new brother in Christ, etc." The three men do not know at first how to take Saul. They do however, end up inviting him back to Ananias' house to eat some supper.

As they begin the walk to Ananias' house, there are some uncomfortable minutes of silence. Jude tries to begin a conversation, "So, uh, how are the believers in Jerusa--," but then realizes that he has just put his foot in his mouth and is going to be hard pressed to get it out again.

Ezra closes his eyes and shakes his head to himself as the continue walking, but Saul does not take offense:

"Some are in prison--regretfully through my doings. Hopefully, some will be released automatically when their trial comes up with no one to accuse them. The rest, I'm certain will be released when I get back to Jerusalem and tell Annas and Caiphas the good news. And some--well, some are dead. Again my doing--I have repented to our Lord--but I also ask forgiveness of
Ananias looks at Saul incredulously, "Saul, if our Lord forgives you, I certainly forgive you, but do you honestly think that Annas and Caiphas will listen to YOU?"

Saul is surprised, "Of course--I know Caiphas and Annas personally--they really believe that they are doing God's work by persecuting your--our group. They are sincere men, just misguided like I was. Don't worry, I'll talk to them after I finish convincing my friends here in Damascus."

With that, the four reach Ananias' house and go inside to eat.

Meanwhile, Jacob and Aaron (the two men who had accompanied Saul into Damascus) are talking with the group that Saul had left behind. The men pump the two for information about the voice and the vision. Jacob and Aaron tell them that they indeed heard a voice but saw no vision. They tell how Saul fell off of his horse, how they had to pick him up, about Ananias, about the healing . . . " There is one scribe who wonders if Saul could be right, but he is quickly hushed up. The group then plans together to get a some messengers to take the news back to Jerusalem to let Caiphas and Annas know what is going on.

After eating with Saul, Ananias and his friends decide that they should take him back to the meeting place. Once there, Saul takes the floor and tells everyone his story. He talks about his experience at Pentecost and how his friend Nicolas converted and how he is looking forward to meeting him when he got back to
Jerusalem. He talks about how he is going to talk to Annas and Caiphas about releasing prisoners. He especially expresses regret at having been the cause of the deaths of so many people in Jerusalem and tells how glad he was that God did not allow him to continue on his rampage.

Ananias speaks up that he doesn't know how warm a welcome he'll receive in Jerusalem, but that he is welcome to stay at his house if he needs a place to stay. At that comment the room somehow seems warmer and more accepting. Alexander and Ezra begin to caution Saul about his dealings with the priests, lawyers, etc.--they don't feel that they are very trustworthy. Saul, however, disagrees and tells them how solidly convinced the retired high priest Annas is that he is doing the right thing by persecuting. Saul tells them about the night of Stephen's death, how when he was in doubt about Jesus, Annas carefully showed him every argument he had why Jesus WASN'T the Messiah. Saul is thoroughly convinced that once Annas hears his story, he, too, will convert. Meanwhile, back in Jerusalem Annas and Caiphas are being told the news.

"Saul did WHAT?" Annas cannot believe his ears.

One of the messengers repeats his last sentence, "Saul converted to The Way."

"You're lying!" Annas accuses--he is livid. "This is some sort of trick--do you realize what you're saying!"

A messenger taken back replies, "You'll see for yourself--Saul is convinced that once he tells you his personal testimony
YOU'LL convert too--look at these letters I've given you--he's even now trying to convert the Damascans priests. They've sent us here to get your permission to have Saul killed before he causes more damage!"

Annas and Caiaphas sit down and pour over the letters again. Caiphas sits back, "That's what the letters say--I can't believe it, but that's what they say!"

Annas growls, "I'll believe it when I see it--you're dismissed for now." The messengers leave. "Saul's our best and brightest--we couldn't have lost him so soon!"

"But you yourself said that after the stoning of Stephen, Saul was in doubt--remember?" Caiphas asks.

"I remember, but I thought he was over it--look at all the people he's put in prison--all the people he's helped put to death! How can he desert us now? The other followers will never accept him!" Disgusted, Annas sits down heavily. "We won't do anything until there is further confirmation--this could just be a trick devised by the followers of The Way."

Back in Damascus, despite the believers counsel, Saul is determined to convert his colleagues and friends. He is staying at Ananias' house and every morning he gets up and goes over to the Synagogue to reason with the scribes, lawyers, rabbis and elders. As the days pass and there is no further threat of persecution the believers in Damascus begin to move about more freely. Word comes from Jerusalem that many--but not all--of the people who were imprisoned have been set free as there is no one
to lay charges--Saul still has not returned. Accordingly, Alexander sends word back to Jerusalem that Saul is now converted and preaching the resurrection of Jesus in the synagogue.

"Saul is doing what?!" Peter exclaims into the shocked silence.

The three messengers stand in front of the group of disciples and women. Ezra (the same character mentioned before) speaks up, "Just what I said. I know it's hard--impossible--to believe, but by the grace of God, Saul is now on our side!" The disciples are not ready to believe to believe them, "He's killed so many ... He's trying to fool us ... It's really a trap ... ." Suddenly there is loud knocking on the door--then the secret knock. The room is suddenly silent.

There is a pause and then a voice calls out, "Let me in, it's James!!" It's James the Less, and he is very excited. Mary Magdalene lets him in. James goes straight over to the group, "You'll never guess in a thousand years what I just heard in the market place!!"

Bartholomew rolls his eyes, "Let me guess, uh, Saul of Tarsus converted and is preaching the resurrection."

James the Less's mouth drops open in shock, "How did you find out?"

Thomas begins, "You're kidding--"

James the Less breaks in "No, I'm not--I heard--"

Thomas interrupts, "You heard Saul preach?"

"No, I heard Annas and Caiphas have a huge fight with a
group of scribes and rabbis from Damascus about Saul. The scribes and rabbis were furious because Saul has been preaching The Way ever since he got to Damascus!" says James the Less.

The disciples are speechless.

Elizabeth speaks up for all of them, "I don't know what to believe--but I certainly hope the story is true."

Meanwhile, back at the temple Caiphas and Annas are talking together.

"He's converted, there's no doubt about it," Annas sits back in his chair and folds his arms.

"Annas, what are we going to do?" Caiphas shakes his head. "You know Saul is absolutely brilliant--what if he's right?"

There is a long silence.

"They did say that Saul says that he is certain that he can convert us too," Caiphas continues and then trails off.

Annas looks at him and shakes his head, "If he's right, then I'm wrong. You're wrong. All of this is wrong. And if that's so, I'd rather not know, and I'd really rather that the masses didn't know. I'm going to stay and fight the battle--what about you?"

Caiphas swallows hard and nods his head and the scene fades out.

THE END