

SKIT 1 - TO BE OR NOT TO BE (A MONK)

Characters:

BaBa Waters - female; hostess of the news program

Commercial Voice - female; lively, animated

Dr. Luther - male; distinguished; dressed in black robe

Marty - male; young Luther dressed in shorts and T-shirt

Hans Luther - male; dressed in work clothes

Margaret Luther - female; dressed in long dress and apron

Props Needed:

Card table, 2 chairs, 2 mics on left in front of altar for Baba and Dr. Luther

Card table, 3 chairs, 3 mics, dishes, plates, etc. on right side for Luther family

Commercial Voice will speak from lectern; needs a bottle labeled "Bible

Vitamins"

(as scene opens BaBa is seated at card table in front of altar)

BaBa: Good Evening, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome to the premiere edition of the God Network's newest program "6 Minutes or Thereabouts." I'm BaBa Waters and I'm delighted to be hosting this exciting new program for the God Network. Each week we hope to bring you a meaningful and relevant story from history in 6 minutes or thereabouts which will inform your mind and touch your heart during this season of Lent. This year we're going to focus our attention on one of the most famous men in all of history, Dr. Martin Luther. And we are privileged to have Dr. Luther here with us in our studio tonight and we'll be talking with him right after this word from our sponsor.

(while BaBa is talking, Commercial Voice moves to lectern)

Commercial Voice: Hello, friends! Are you tired, bored, listless? Has your "get up and go" gotten up and went? Do you need a jump start in the morning to get yourself up and running? Has your attitude become a platitude? Well, if that's your trouble, my friend, let me take just a minute to introduce you to the newest offering from the fine folks at Amazing Church Products, Bible Vitamins! Yes, my friends, this little bottle contains 500 Bible Vitamin capsules each of which will give you renewed vigor and health as you go about your day. Just take one capsule the first thing in the morning and all day long you'll be shouting, "Hallelujah!" "Praise the Lord!" and "Amen, Brother!" with such enthusiasm and a sparkle in your smile that your friends, family and coworkers will be amazed at your transformation! All kinds of wonderful things will begin to happen in your life! And all you need is one bottle of these amazing Bible Vitamins and your life will be transformed! So, the next time you're at the supermarket be sure to pick

up a bottle for yourself and your loved ones! And remember, “The B-I-B-L-E, yes, that’s the pill for me!” Bible Vitamins! Get yours today!

BaBa: Welcome back, ladies and gentlemen. As I mentioned at the beginning of our program, our special guest tonight and for the next four weeks is Dr. Martin Luther. *(Dr. Luther enters to applause and sits next to BaBa)* Dr. Luther, welcome to “6 Minutes or Thereabouts.” It’s a thrill to have you with us.

Dr. Luther: Thank you, BaBa, and it’s quite a thrill for me to be here, too. You know, when I died back in 1546 in my hometown of Eisleben, Germany I never dreamed that the day would come when the miracles of modern media would be able to bring me back to life. But here I am! And let me just add that things have really changed during the time I’ve been gone. Bible Vitamins? We couldn’t have imagined such a thing as that in my day. Of course, we did have that old fool, John Tetzal, running around the country selling the forgiveness of sins for money which amounts to about the same thing I guess.

BaBa: Yes, well, Dr. Luther, we’re going to get to that subject in a couple of weeks but for tonight’s interview I thought it would be best to introduce you to our viewers and let them get to know something about your background. Now, you mentioned that you died in Eisleben, Germany in 1546 but I understand that you were also born there. Is that right?

Dr. Luther: Yes, BaBa, it is. I was born there on November 10th, 1483 and I died there on February 18th, 1546 when I was 63 years old. Some people say I died from pneumonia and others say I died from a gall stone attack but I don’t really know what was reported by your colleagues on the evening news since I was, of course, already dead.

BaBa: Yes, well, uh, that was certainly unfortunate but let’s get back to what life was like for you growing up in Eisleben. Let’s see here, if my math is correct and you were born in 1483, you would have been about 9 years old when Columbus came to America.

Dr. Luther: That’s right, BaBa, I was 9 years old when that happened and I remember it very well. It was in all the newspapers for days. But we weren’t living in Eisleben at that time. When I was only 6 months old, my Dad moved our family to Mansfeld which was just another small mining town. And, you know in those days we usually didn’t get too excited about things like Columbus sailing to America. I mean, what did that have to do with us? My Dad was a copper miner and he worked many long and hard hours in the mines and that’s really all that mattered to us. We were desperately poor and it was my father’s dream that I should grow up and get an education and become a lawyer. He and my mother

sent me to the best school they could afford and I was perfectly happy about becoming a lawyer until lightning struck.

BaBa: Lightning struck?

Dr. Luther: Yes, and I mean literally, too! I was walking in the woods one day when a terrific storm came up without warning. Somehow, the meteorologists had missed it in their forecast the night before. Anyway, I was walking along minding my own business and thinking about the day when I would be a big shot lawyer and would be able to sue a multinational corporation for one thing or another, make myself a couple of billion dollars and then retire to a little place of my own in Tahiti when all of a sudden and out of the blue this bolt of lightning struck the ground right next to me! It knocked me right off my feet and scared the bejeebers out of me! So, I said a quick prayer to St. Anne, who was the patron saint of miners and was my Dad's favorite saint, and I promised her that if she would save me I would become a monk. And that's exactly what I did.

BaBa: Wow! That's quite a story, Dr. Luther! And how did your parents take the news when you told them about your change in careers?

Dr. Luther: *(staring off into space)* Ah, yes, BaBa, I remember the events of that day very well.

(Margaret moves to the table and fiddles with dishes; Hans stands in Library door ready to enter; Marty is in Library until Hans calls him)

Margaret: Hans! Hans! Dinner is ready. Wash your hands and come to the table.

Hans: Yes, dear, I'll be there in just a minute.

Margaret: You wash them good now, Hans! You've been in that filthy mine all day and half the night. I swear, some nights you come home looking like a lump of copper yourself. And call Marty in when you come, too.

Hans: Yes, dear. Marty! Marty! It's time for dinner!

(Marty enters and all sit at table and start to pass food around)

Margaret: Where have you been all day, Marty?

Marty: Out in the woods.

Margaret: And just what were you doing out there for so long?

Marty: Well, I was nearly struck by lightning in that storm that came over.

Margaret: Yes, wasn't that something! Now, I listened to the weather report just this morning and they didn't say a word about any storms coming today. Maybe someday someone will invent Doppler Radar and the weatherman will never be wrong. Now, that's something you could do, Marty!

Hans: No, mother, Marty is going to law school. He's going to become a big shot lawyer and make millions of dollars. You're going to make us proud, aren't you, son?

Marty: Well, ummm, now that you bring it up, Dad, I kinda ... sorta ... made a promise to St. Anne today during that storm that I would go to the monastery and become a monk.

Hans: You what?!! Have you lost your mind?

Marty: No, Dad, I haven't. But I have been thinking about this for some time and today when that lightning nearly killed me it suddenly became clear. I think that's what I'm meant to do. I will go to the monastery and take vows of poverty, celibacy and obedience to the church.

Hans: Poverty? In case you hadn't noticed, son, we already have plenty of that around here! You don't have to go off to some fancy monastery to learn about that. What can you be thinking?

Margaret: Celibacy? No grandchildren? Oh, Marty, how could you break your mother's heart? I have been looking forward to grandchildren since the day you were born! *(starts to weep)*

Hans: And obedience? You don't have to go to no monastery to learn about that either. You can learn that right here by doing what I tell you to do and going back to law school!

Marty: No, my mind is made up. *(stands and looks wistfully into space)* I will go to the monastery and take vows of poverty, celibacy and obedience. Then I will become a teacher and a very famous teacher at that. I will become such a famous teacher that eventually the whole world will know my name. Books will be written about me. Movies will be made about me. Famous civil rights leaders will be named after me. I will write pamphlets and books. I will compose hymns and preach a thousand sermons that will drive future Seminary students like Intern Linda here crazy. And those who follow me will do all kinds of wonderful things. They will preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth! They will heal the sick, feed the hungry, clothe the naked - and invent the potluck dinner! Oh, it's going to be a wonderful life! And I can see it all now!

Margaret: Marty, sit down here and finish your dinner. *(Marty sits back down)* It's going to get cold and the microwave has been on the fritz ever since that storm came through so we can't heat it up again. Besides, you're talking nonsense now.

Hans: I don't know, mother, maybe that lightning struck a little closer to home than he thought. *(making the "looney" sign with his finger)*

(scene moves back to BaBa Waters and Dr. Luther - other characters remain seated at their table with their heads bowed)

Dr. Luther: Yes, BaBa, my parents weren't too thrilled to hear about my change in careers but they eventually came around. They even visited me at the monastery on Parent's Day and Mom was forever sending me care packages filled with cookies and clean socks and phone cards.

BaBa: Well, that, too, is quite a story, Dr. Luther. And what do you think our viewers can learn from your experience?

Dr. Luther: *(gives it a moment's thought)* Hmmmm. Let's see. Stay out of the rain! Don't listen to weathermen! Do listen to the Word of God. And follow your conscience. Always follow your conscience!

BaBa: Yes, yes, well, thank you, Dr. Luther, for taking time out from being dead to come here to our studio tonight. It's been our privilege to have you with us and you are going to be with us now for each of the next 4 weeks, as well, is that correct?

Dr. Luther: Yes, it is, BaBa, I have some other wonderful stories to share with your viewers and I'm anxious to do so. Besides my room up there in the Heavenly Hotel is getting a little crowded.

BaBa: What do you mean by that, Dr. Luther?

Dr. Luther: Well, we've got almost 500 years of Lutherans up there now and all of them are in my room wondering if lutefisk was my idea!

BaBa: Oh, I see. *(turns to audience)* Well, ladies and gentlemen, that's our program for tonight. We hope you enjoyed it and will join us again next Wednesday for the next edition of "6 Minutes or Thereabouts." In the meantime, I'm BaBa Waters saying, "Good night and God bless!"