

**SCENE 2:**

**Back in a School Hallway**

*(JOE and JOHN enter as before, each approaching from opposite directions. JOE again intentionally bumps JOHN. JOHN looks startled.)*

**JOE:** Look where you are going, you geek! You are such a nerd! Take a hike!

**JOHN:** Leave me alone! Don't you ever hit me like that again, you jerk!  
*(As before, a fight begins, and TEACHER breaks it up; the two students move off in opposite directions: JOE exits stage while JOHN encounters a third student, TONY who enters from the wings nearest JOHN and moves towards JOHN once TEACHER breaks up the fight. JOHN meets TONY downstage from where the fight took place.)*

**JOHN:** *(Looking really angry.)* Tony, you idiot! How could you be so stupid! I told you to bring my X-Box back today, and you forgot it! You're useless...

**TONY:** Well, I'm sorry! I forgot it! ... Some friend you are! Get lost! *(JOHN turns & exits to the wings behind him; TONY continues watching JOHN as JOHN leaves, getting an angrier and angrier look on his face; TONY's little sister KAREN enters from the wings away from which TONY is facing and comes up right behind TONY, tapping him lightly on the shoulder; TONY turns around quickly to find the newly arrived KAREN unexpectedly right behind him; he looks surprised and upset.)*

**KAREN:** *(Very brightly.)* Hi Tony!

**TONY:** *(Loudly and abruptly.)* Get out of my face, Karen! You're a sad excuse for a sister! All you ever do is hover around me. Go hang out with your own friends, if you have any, and leave me alone!  
*(KAREN looks very hurt and upset; TONY turns around and exits angrily right away; KAREN exits slowly in the opposite direction quietly sobbing with her head down and looking completely dejected.)*





**NARRATOR 2:** Do you notice any pattern here?

**NARRATOR 1:** Yeah. It looks like everyone's in a really rotten mood.

**NARRATOR 2:** Right! And that rotten mood passes around like a virus. More quickly than the flu in February flies right through school. Soon the whole place will be angry and upset. Paul had something very specific to say about this in his letter to the Galatians:

**READER 4:** "Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For what the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. Idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions. By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, and self-control. *(Pause.)* Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." (Galatians 5:16-17, 20, 22, 6:2)

**SCENE 3: In the Kitchen at Joe's Home**

*(As READER 4 concludes, DAD enters and sits on the chair facing the table (the kitchen table) squarely and looking out on the congregation; DAD's head is on the table and he looks really bad and groggy; MOM enters after READER 4 finishes. JOE is hiding at the other end of the stage behind some object on the stage so that he is not readily visible to DAD & MOM but able to see them interact. He watches intently.)*

**NARRATOR 1:** So how's all that supposed to work anyway? For example, in what we just saw: The first kid isn't going to listen to the second kid if he tries to be kind. He'll just walk all over him!

**NARRATOR 2:** Maybe so. But there's something more you should know about the situation here. Let's go back to that first kid. His name is Joe.

**NARRATOR 1:** *(Pointing to JOE who, though hiding from the sight of his parents, is clearly visible to the congregation.)* Yeah that's him, right there.



**NARRATOR 2:** So let's do a flashback and see how Joe's day began before he and the other student had their run-in. (*Pointing.*) This is Joe's home. It's morning of this same day, just before Joe is supposed to be leaving for school. He hasn't gone into the kitchen yet. That's his last stop before heading out the door to school. In case you didn't already guess, that's (*Pointing.*) Joe's Mom and Joe's Dad. Once again this time, we will not be showing the Yetsers, but you can imagine them here. (*JOE watches even more intently.*)

**MOM:** (*To DAD.*) You've been drunk every night this week. You don't even make it to bed anymore. We never talk. I can't take it any longer!

**DAD:** (*Groggily but becoming more alert.*) Well, I've had it, too. I can't stand living with you any more. All I get is criticism, criticism, criticism. You don't know the pressure I'm under at work. They did more lay-offs last week... (*Stands up aggressively and pushing his chair back, while staggering to his feet.*) You've criticized me for the last time! You don't like me drunk? Well I don't like you sober! I can't take living with you any more. All you do is criticize me and stick up for the kid. He needs straightening out and you do too! (*DAD grabs MOM; the two lock together for a moment; then MOM pushes DAD off vigorously; DAD staggers back; JOE watches in horror.*)

**MOM:** That's it! I'm leaving and taking Joe, Jr. with me!

**DAD:** So go, and take the kid. But don't try cleaning out our bank account. You take one penny, and I'll have my lawyer all over you! ...Where is that kid anyway? Hasn't he left for school yet? If he's late again, it's time I knocked some sense into him! (*JOE exits to nearest wings, shaken and upset. MOM and DAD exit in the other direction from JOE with as much distance as possible from each other. DAD stays nearby in the wings for the next scene.*)

**NARRATOR 1:** So that's the way Joe left for school? That's heavy stuff!





**NARRATOR 2:** Didn't realize that, did you? Kids who experience things like this are much more likely to do poorly in school and to act violently towards others. They are really hurting inside, but they don't know what to do about it. What do you suppose we'd see if we did a flashback on Joe's Dad's days at work?

**NARRATOR 1:** I guess it might look the same way we saw things go at school ... everybody jumping on everyone else.

**NARRATOR 1:** Probably so. Let's take a look.

**SCENE 4: At Joe's Dad's Office**

*(BOSS enters, bringing a desk telephone with him/her and sits at the same table in the same seat that DAD had occupied in the previous scene, placing the telephone on the table. The table and two chairs are positioned exactly the same as they were for the previous scene. BOSS picks up on the receiver and is talking very imperiously on it as DAD enters from where he went into the wings at the end of the last scene. DAD knocks on any wooden object on the stage nearby. BOSS looks up from his phone conversation, motions for DAD to enter, and points to the other seat while continuing to talk forcefully on the telephone for another minute or so. Then BOSS ends the call and turns to look harshly at JOE.)*

**BOSS:** It's just one screw-up after another with you, isn't it? You're a sad excuse for an employee. Don't waste my time with any more explanations or excuses. Just get outta my sight!

**DAD:** But, but ... *(BOSS picks up phone again, raises hand and points to the office exit, the same way DAD entered the office. DAD exits as before. BOSS stays, mouthing words inaudibly on the phone, and exits during the Reading.)*

**NARRATOR 2:** Pretty predictable by now, isn't it? Jesus made a strong point about this as he is quoted in the Gospel of Luke:



**READER 5:** “Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.” (Luke 6:37-38)

**NARRATOR 1:** So, how do we stop all of this rage virus?

**NARRATOR 2:** As one person, we can't stop it all. But we can try not to be a carrier ourselves. And there may be something more we can do.

**NARRATOR 1:** What's that?

**NARRATOR 2:** Let me show you, but first, remember what St. Paul had to say about this in his first letter to the Corinthians:

**READER 6:** “I will show you a still more excellent way. Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth.”

**SCENE 5:** **At School, in a hallway**

**NARRATOR 4:** So we're going back to the same school where we began. We're going to see that first scene all over again with Joe, same as before, but with a different student being run into. Remember how it went down before?

**NARRATOR 3:** Yeah, Joe and John wound up screaming at each other and fighting, and then John was mean to Tony, and so on and on.  
*(SPIRIT enters, standing to the side of the stage.)*

**NARRATOR 4:** Right. So let's watch again and see what happens. Maybe things will be different, maybe not. Oh, by the way, that's God's Spirit over there. *(Pointing to SPIRIT.)*  
*(SPIRIT nods and smiles at NARRATOR 4 and waves modestly to the congregation.)*





*(As NARRATOR 4 is speaking, BIRD HANDLER appears, entering from the lobby or narthex and moving down the center aisle of the Sanctuary, goes up on the stage and proceeds across it carrying the pole bearing the bird, as described in the Production Notes. BIRD HANDLER keeps moving around the stage timing his exit off the stage to when READER 7 finishes.)*

**NARRATOR 4:** The Spirit that both Jesus and St. Paul were talking about. Of course, we can't really see God's Spirit, anymore than we can see the wind that blows through our beautiful trees outside (Pointing to a window) or see the wind currents that bird is soaring on; but like the work of invisible wind, we can see the effect of the Spirit working in our lives.

**NARRATOR 3:** *(Watching BIRD HANDLER.)* Wow—look!

**NARRATOR 4:** Paul describes it this way in Romans:

**READER 7:** Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. (Romans 8:26,28)

**NARRATOR 4:** So now let's see what happens when God's Spirit works through us! This time once again, you'll have to imagine the Yetser impulses—no actors will be playing them. And remember: these impulses are within all of us. See if you can guess what they would be doing if they were on stage. *(JOE enters stage from one side and approaches another student, BILLY, who enters from the other side, just as JOE did with JOHN in the earlier scene. JOE bumps hard into BILLY.)*

**JOE:** Look where you're going, you geek! You are such a nerd!  
Take a hike!

**BILLY:** *(Looking briefly at SPIRIT who is now positioned back of the collision point and in the line of sight of BILLY.)* Lord, please help me to control my anger and to handle this difficult situation Your Way. *(SPIRIT nods at BILLY and comes over and rests his hand on BILLY's shoulder.)*

