

The image shows a stage set with a wooden plank backdrop and red curtains. The title 'The Greatest Act' is written in a large, black, stylized font across the center of the stage.

The Greatest Act

INTRODUCTION

The stage is set. The backdrop is ready. The plot has been decided. The Main Character takes His place and the curtain slowly opens. And we, the captivated audience, find ourselves in one of the most dramatic and spectacular parts of the storyline.

All of these are real. The story happened almost 2,000 years ago, but its power continues until today. In the next four days, journey with us as we unpack the final scenes of the Greatest Story mankind has ever known. Orchestrated by justice and mercy. Directed with love and grace.

ACT 1 - PROLOGUE

The Garden of Surrender

READ: Isaiah 53 • Matthew 26:36-46

MATTHEW 26:36-42 ³⁶Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, "Sit here, while I go over there and pray." ³⁷And taking with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, he began to be sorrowful and troubled. ³⁸Then he said to them, "My soul is very sorrowful, even to death; remain here, and watch ^awith me." ³⁹And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will." ⁴⁰And he came to the disciples and found them sleeping. And he said to Peter, "So, could you not watch with me one hour? ⁴¹Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." ⁴²Again, for the second time, he went away and prayed, "My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done."

ISAIAH 53:1-3 (MSG) The servant grew up before God—a scrawny seedling, a scrubby plant in a parched field. There was nothing attractive about him, nothing to cause us to take a second look. He was looked down on and passed over, a man who suffered, who knew pain firsthand.

SYNOPSIS

The first act opens in a garden. Here we find our Main Character, Jesus, in one of the most critical settings prior to His death. While many of us know the rest of the story, and our culture has tried so much to relive it, here is a snippet of the poignant struggle that is critical to our understanding of who He is.

DIRECTOR'S CUT

At this moment in history, we find the Saviour of the world, fully God and fully human. Time was running out and He was sent to die on the cross. It was about to happen, and He knew it all from the start. Yet, in that moment, we find Jesus vulnerable, facing fear and in great pain. With the sorrow and misery so real, He was fully human to feel every bit of agony with the garden as his backdrop. And here He uttered a powerful statement of surrender, "Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." (Luke 22:42)

You see, He had a choice . . . and He chose us by willingly sacrificing Himself—even without the assurance of us choosing Him back. He could have turned His back and none of this would have happened. Yet, He decided and submitted. In prayer and tears, He saw you and me. And at that moment He knew that our eternity with Him far outweighed the sacrifice He was about to make. Here in this garden, He surrendered everything—His mind, His will, His heart. Long before He surrendered His body on the cross, He surrendered His will before the Lord. The physical act of laying His life on the cross is but an ultimate act of that surrender.

Today, the common expression "Tao lang" ("I'm only human") has become a convenient excuse to continue living in compromise. Jesus was fully human, but He surrendered Himself willingly and lovingly to the will of His Father. The Bible describes Jesus as someone who is familiar with suffering, a man of sorrows. Jesus knows the battles that rage within our soul. He has experienced them and He showed us that the way to victory is through surrender. Are you in pain? Are you facing a struggle so real you want to quit and turn your back on God? Are you in need of hope for victory in areas of your life? Come to Jesus and surrender your heart to Him. Allow Him to carry your burdens today and embrace His comfort and love.

PRAY & REFLECT

- What does the scene in the garden mean to you in this season of your life? Take this time to thank Jesus as you reflect on His great love.
- Are there areas in your life that you need to surrender to God?
- Have you fully trusted His plan and will for your life? Do you believe it's time to commit your life to Jesus? Are you willing to allow Him to work in you to will and act according His purpose?

ACT 2 - MAIN ACT

The Mountain of Sacrifice

READ: Matthew 27 • John 19:1-30 • Hebrews 9:27,28

JOHN
19:16-18

¹⁶... So they took Jesus, ¹⁷and he went out, bearing his own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. ¹⁸There they crucified him, and with him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them.

JOHN
19:28-30

²⁸After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." ²⁹A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. ³⁰When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

HEBREWS
9:27,28
(NLT)

²⁷And just as each person is destined to die once and after that comes judgment, ²⁸so also Christ was offered once for all time as a sacrifice to take away the sins

SYNOPSIS

The climax of the story appears as a tragedy. A tragedy is characterized by the death of its main character. Here we find Jesus, who died on the cross. The most crucial and inhuman means of death was given to those who were called criminals. But Jesus was no criminal. He was guiltless, faultless, and sinless. Yet He was humiliated, bruised, and rejected. Everyone shouted and rooted for His crucifixion.

DIRECTOR'S CUT

Picture Jesus in that moment-carrying a heavy cross, wearing a crown of thorns so thick that blood gushed from His head, walking to His death row. Every step was marked with unbearable physical pain. Every man in the crowd stood to watch, not realizing the extent of such sacrifice. As Jesus was nailed to the cross, His body hung in great pain until He could breathe no more. The place Golgotha, also known as the Place of the Skull, was a mountain of execution. But it wasn't where Jesus deserved to be. That was the place we all deserve. Because of our sins, we deserve such a death, such a punishment. In that mountain of execution, Jesus carried sin and death so we can be free from punishment and receive eternal life. In that mountain of execution, He sacrificed for our freedom. Jesus' death on the cross was one act that took care of it all, once for all.

As we remember Jesus' death, many people are hoping to identify with His suffering on the cross. While many try acts of repentance and commit to penitence (the practice of paying for sins), Jesus' death on the cross is a message that He is the only One who can take away the sins of the world. His sacrifice could not be equaled and is already enough for you and me. All we need to do is believe in His finished work: something we will never deserve, we will never earn, but is already ours forever.

PRAY & REFLECT

- Do you still tend to think you can earn your salvation? How does the truth of the cross set you free from trying to earn your salvation through good works? Believe that our salvation is Christ's finished work and rejoice that salvation is a free gift.
- Try this: on a piece of paper, try to write down all the things you have done that deserve death and punishment. Then cross it all out to remind yourself that God has already forgiven you and given His life in exchange for your sins. Worship Him today with deep gratitude and love.

ACT 3 - CURTAIN CALL

The Tomb of Victory

*READ: Isaiah 25:8 • Matthew 28:1-10 • John 11:25,26
1 Corinthians 15:14-17 • 1 Peter 1:3,4*

MATTHEW 28:5-7 ⁵The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. ⁶He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. ⁷Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you."

1 PETER 1:3,4 ³All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is by his great mercy that we have been born again, because God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Now we live with great expectation, ⁴and we have a priceless inheritance—an inheritance that is kept in heaven for you, pure and undefiled, beyond the reach of change and decay.

SYNOPSIS

When Jesus died, everything was dark and gloomy. But just when it seemed the story had ended and a curtain call was prepared, a plot twist took place. Jesus bore our sin and death and gave us life. But that gift of eternal life would not be complete without Him being raised to life. Thankfully, the greatest story ever written was not a tragedy, but a victory—death on a cross and an empty tomb.

DIRECTOR'S CUT

People rarely talk about the tomb because they are afraid to face the reality of death. It is something inevitable that marks the end of life. As we all face death, the memories of the people who loved us will be the only evidence of our lives here on earth. The tomb is the only reminder that one lived to tell a short story from beginning to end. That was not the case for Jesus.

After His death on the cross, the people who cared for Him prepared His body to be buried in the tomb. For the religious leaders, it represented their victory against a man they hated, now forever forgotten. For the devil, the tomb represented Christ's defeat. For the disciples, the tomb represented hopelessness. They lost Jesus for good. But it wasn't: it was the unexpected setting of a new beginning.

Three days later, Jesus' body was missing. There was no way it could have been lost or stolen because the stone was only rolled open when the women came. As the angel appeared and broke the news, the disciples were given a new hope. What was lost in death and defeat was gained in victory as Jesus rose from the grave. The resurrection was the day death died and victory was sealed for all. Now that gives us reason to celebrate!

PRAY & REFLECT

- In what areas of your life are you believing for victory? Write them down and claim them because Jesus has guaranteed all these for you.
- Is there an area in your life where you are losing hope? The Bible says that Jesus is our living hope. As you pray, ask God to give you faith to overcome and believe His promise without wavering.

ACT 4 - EPILOGUE

The Upper Room of Power

READ: Joel 2:28,29 • Matthew 28:16-20 • John 14:15-17 • Acts 2:1-12

ACTS 2:1-4

¹When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. ²Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. ⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues^(a) as the Spirit enabled them. Acts 2:1-4

JOHN 14:15-17

¹⁵"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you." John 14:15-17

SYNOPSIS

The story continues as Jesus gathers one last time with His disciples. As they sit together in one room for a final farewell, He lays out a mission and a promise. This is another chapter unfolding, this time, to be continued by His disciples. This epilogue serves as a prelude to the future.

DIRECTOR'S CUT

As He sits with His disciples, a thought probably re-enters Jesus' mind, one that may have troubled Him since He came to terms with knowing His stay on Earth would soon be over. I will be leaving my disciples. It's a thought not without merit; after all, who were they? Nobody but fishermen, perfectly ordinary, unremarkable, and unrecognized. What could they do? We who have followed their journey to this point see they have accomplished nothing much, and they seem far less capable of doing the things Jesus did, including preaching to all men, healing the sick, raising the dead.

So He speaks life to them. "I will not leave you as orphans," He says, as He looks affectionately at each man, each disciple who chose Him above their own families. He gives them a promise: a "Helper," someone who could turn their weakness into strength and use them to go beyond the ordinary.

At this moment, Jesus introduces them to the Holy Spirit. And as the Holy Spirit begins His work in them, we see a remarkable, almost unbelievable, change.

If we fast-forward into the book of Acts, we see the disciples again, but they are different men. They speak with confidence and maturity, and in a language seemingly not their own, surprising all who see and hear them. These same disciples who earlier had huddled together in an upper room because they did not know what else to do, are now preaching to thousands, healing the sick, and doing what Jesus called all of us to do—tell the world about Him and be a witness, so that others might believe.

As we end the Holy Week, we must remember that Jesus' story did not end with one last goodbye. It continues because He did not leave us alone. The Holy Spirit is here to help every believer with every weakness and struggle. We have the grace to say no to sin and the power to live right for God. Hesitate no longer to do what God tells you do. Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will be with you, and give you words to speak that could cause people to believe. In Christ, you are not ordinary—you have been given the power to be all He has called you to be!

PRAY & REFLECT

- In Joel 2:28, we read the promise that God will pour out His Spirit on all people. As you reflect on this promise, what do you think God is empowering you to do?
- Knowing that we are never left alone, in what area do you need the help of the Holy Spirit? Take this time to talk to someone who can pray with you and walk you through this season as you pursue God.

- THE END -

DIRECTOR'S NOTES:

This image shows a single sheet of cream-colored paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.



VICTORY

Honor God. Make Disciples.