

BISHOP JAMES GREENLEAF

INT. BISHOP GREENLEAF'S OFFICE - GMWC - DAY

CLOSE ON **BISHOP JAMES GREENLEAF (60's, wiry, charismatic)** -- wearing a gorgeous **BESPOKE SUIT** and wearing impressive **RINGS**.

Scene 1
Start →

BISHOP

Clara. Horace. Here's the deal.
I'm gonna be straight with you.

REVEAL

The Bishop is sitting behind his desk and addressing **CLARA AND HORACE JACKSON (60's, good simple folks)**, who are sitting in chairs across from him. To their right sits **BARRY STORCH (80's, to be played by Austin Pendleton)**, their lawyer.

BISHOP (CONT'D)

Jesus said, "It's easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to get into heaven." Now Clara, when was the last time you saw a camel?

STORCH

Excuse me, Reverend Greenleaf --

Sitting to the Bishop's right is **ROBERT "MAC" McCREADY (60's, substantial, judicious, Hardy to the Bishop's Laurel)**, chief counsel for Greenleaf Ministries and Lady Mae's brother.

MAC

-- it's BISHOP Greenleaf --

CONTINUED:

BISHOP

It's okay, Mac, Mr. Storch can call me what he wants, he's a lawyer.

(after a beat, sweetly)

Yes, Mr. Storch, you were saying?

STORCH

You're not about to sit there behind that mahogany desk, in this twenty million dollar mansion --

BISHOP

-- and suggest to these fine people, whose SOULS are in my care, that the Devil has set a snare before them with this seventy million dollar Powerball prize they just won...? You bet your little white hiney I am, full stop.

STORCH

But YOU'VE been asking THEM for this ten percent, this "tithe" --

BISHOP

-- I'd be remiss if I didn't --

STORCH

-- but then YOU'D have this money that's such a spiritual "snare" --

BISHOP

-- it's not about WHO has the money, Mr. Storch. It is about our RELATIONSHIP to that money, that's what I'm trying to manage here. I'm trying to give a gospel INFLECTION to their RELATIONSHIP to it, see?

(to the Jacksons)

Why is this man in my office?

CLARA JACKSON

Horace thought we should hire him to, you know, to protect ourselves.

BISHOP

From who? Me?

CONTINUED: (2)

STORCH

You've brought YOUR lawyer.

BISHOP

Mr. Storch, he's my brother-in-law.
I've been trying to shake him loose
for 40 years, it can't be done!

Clara smiles. She LOVES her some Bishop James Greenleaf.

STORCH

Sir, let me explain --

BISHOP

-- I'm ready to learn.

STORCH

My clients are aware they've agreed
to "tithe" this ten percent; but
they don't want to go to court --

BISHOP

You think I'd take them to court to
enforce a Vow of Faith? Mr. Storch,
I baptized their grandbabies!

STORCH

I'm -- I'm aware of that --

BISHOP

(to Clara)

How IS little J-J, by the way?

CLARA JACKSON

She's walking.

BISHOP

Ten months and walking? NO!

CLARA JACKSON

Yes, she's walking up a storm! She
knocked over the TV yesterday!

BISHOP

Praise God!

(to Mac)

I remember those legs, Mac. I
remember saying the Lord had put
some power in those chunky legs.

(to Clara, with a sigh)

Ah, praise God, that's good news.

(MORE)

CONTINUED: (3)

BISHOP (CONT'D)

Especially when you consider how that angel was born with all those challenges. But we prayed our way through it, didn't we, Clara --

CLARA JACKSON

-- yes we did, yes we did --

BISHOP

And who paid for her home care, when the insurance ran out?

CLARA JACKSON

The church did, I TOLD Horace --

BISHOP

-- I'm sure you did, Clara, because you are a mighty woman of God --
(to Storch)

-- you were saying, Mr. Storch?

Storch clumsily pulls a MEMO from his BRIEFCASE --

STORCH

We just want you to assure us there will be no further legal efforts on the church's part to extract this ten percent from their winnings.

CONTINUED: (4)

BISHOP

I tell you what, Mr. Storch. I'm gonna make a way in the wilderness. That's a biblical reference.

The Bishop rises. Mac rises, as well, with some effort.

BISHOP (CONT'D)

Because MY eldest daughter is coming home tonight for the first time in ten years, praise God, and she's bringing home MY grandbaby --

CLARA JACKSON

-- hallelujah --

BISHOP

(to Horace, firmly)

-- PRAY ABOUT IT.

CLARA JACKSON

We'll do that, Bishop, we will.

She takes Horace by the hand. Horace endures being cornered.

BISHOP

The Bible says in Luke, Chapter 12, "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him much shall be REQUIRED." That's what the Bible says, Horace. Not "REQUESTED"... "REQUIRED."

STORCH

(brandishing the memo)

If you could just sign this --

BISHOP

-- get behind me, Satan.

Storch lets the MEMO sink to his lap as the Bishop continues.

BISHOP (CONT'D)

You put those millions in the bank, Horace, and they will give you INTEREST. Give it to God and He will give you INFINITY. Amen?

CLARA JACKSON

Amen.

BISHOP

(to Storch, dismissive)

"Court." Why would I go to court?

CONTINUED: (5)

The Bishop and Mac head for the door where all of a sudden
ALEXA CAMPBELL (30, petite, white, ambitious) is standing.

BISHOP (CONT'D)

Alexa, show these fine people out --

ALEXA

-- right away --

BISHOP

(looking at his Rolex)

-- my wife is gonna crucify me.

End →

The Bishop and Mac exit. Storch stuffs his MEMO into his
briefcase. OFF HORACE: FRUSTRATED, as Clara pats his hand.

BISHOP JAMES GREENLEAF

INT. GREENLEAF MANSION - LIVING ROOM - DAY

ON THE BISHOP, ENTERING, WITH MAC BESIDE HIM, A STEP BEHIND

As the Bishop speaks first to Lady Mae --

Scene 2
Start →

BISHOP

I'm sorry we're late, dear --

-- and then opens his arms and expansively beams --

BISHOP (CONT'D)

-- the Prodigal Daughter returns!

ON THE HUGE GORGEOUS ROOM, IN A WIDE SHOT

CONTINUED:

As the Bishop walks over to Grace. Sophia and Noah and Lady Mae are there. MELISSE and TWO DOMESTICS stand near another doorway. Mac settles by Lady Mae as the Bishop arrives at Grace and wraps his arms around her and pulls her close.

BISHOP (CONT'D)

Oh, sweet Jesus, I've prayed for
this moment for so long.

ON LADY MAE AND MAC

Watching this reunion with similarly suspicious smiles.

BACK ON GRACE AND THE BISHOP, CLOSER IN

As Grace moves to pull away, but the Bishop holds her close.

BISHOP (CONT'D)

No, you stay right here, child. My
little girl has come home and I'm
gonna enjoy it. Oh, praise God.

ON NOAH

Watching Grace. Yeah, he's totally still got a thing for her.

BACK IN THE BISHOP'S AND GRACE'S OVERS

The Bishop pulls away and looks at Grace.

BISHOP (CONT'D)

Now you know what Isaiah said...

GRACE

...Isaiah said a lot, Daddy.

BISHOP

"Remember not the former things,
nor consider the things of old."

GRACE

I know, Daddy, I know.

LADY MAE

Greet your Uncle Mac, girl.

Grace looks past the Bishop and gives Mac a polite smile.

GRACE

Hi, Uncle Mac.

Mac just nods at Grace. There's obviously some tension there.

CONTINUED: (2)

BISHOP

-- I'm just saying, I don't care what happened in the past, that's all over. This right now, this is a time for this family to heal. I hope you feel the same way.

GRACE

Of course I do, Daddy...

ON LADY MAE

Watching Grace like a hawk.

OFF GRACE

As she beams back at her Dad, LYING THROUGH HER TEETH --

End →

GRACE (CONT'D)

...that's why I'm back.

BISHOP JAMES GREENLEAF

The Bishop is welcoming DOZENS OF PEOPLE as they kneel,
leaning down to some, praying for them, whispering --

Scene 3
Start →

BISHOP
That's right. Just come home.

SONG
Take me to your river. I wanna go.

BISHOP
(to a Worshipper)
Welcome home, child. Welcome home.

SONG
Take me to your river. I wanna know.

ON GRACE

She can't take anymore. She steps into the aisle, but then --

BISHOP (O.C.)
Excuse me, child, God bless you.

AT THE ALTAR, GRACE'S POV

The Bishop rushes from a WORSHIPPER to meet THE JACKSONS, who
are crying and have just made it down to the altar.

BISHOP (CONT'D)
(breathless, desperate)
That's right. Just come home.

The Bishop reaches the Jacksons and they stand there talking.

ON GRACE

Stopped in the aisle, wondering what the hell's going on --

BISHOP (O.C.) (CONT'D)
Beloved, praise God --

GRACE'S POV

As the Bishop steps away and raises a hand in the air --

BISHOP (CONT'D)
Beloved, these saints of the church
just made a Vow of Faith of SEVEN
MILLION DOLLARS -- PRAISE GOD!

THE CROWD GOES WILD and the CHOIR reaches ethereal heights --

CONTINUED: (5)

BISHOP (CONT'D)

Seven million dollars dropping like
an atom bomb, BOOM, right into the
coffers of the Lord, HALLELUJAH!

CHOIR

Take me to your river. I wanna go.

BISHOP

NOT TODAY, SATAN! NOT TODAY!
PRAISE GOD! PRAISE GOD!

End →

