

Here's the set as a list of titles:

1. Dogs in Heaven (Opener)
2. Scripture Loopholes
3. PB&J Sandwiches and Scripture on Bags
4. Golden Sepulcher
5. Beach Baptism and Faith's Immediate Rewards
6. Bad Roommate and Divorce
7. Evangelizing Boss (Closer)

Here's the full set with notes

1. Dogs in Heaven

You know, we've all heard that expression: "All dogs go to heaven." And people have strong opinions about it. Some believe it wholeheartedly; others say, "Heaven is only for people."

Honestly, I didn't know where I stood on it... until I lost my little dog Frankie. I was devastated. Anyone who's lost a beloved pet knows that feeling. And I thought to myself, Frankie's gotta be in heaven.

Because heaven is perfect, right?

(Pause.) And since heaven is perfect, then I just know he'll be there.

(Pause, slow delivery.) And really, if you think about it, that makes a lot of sense. Of course, dogs go to heaven because we love them and they love us.

(pause for suspense, lean forward and whisper)...But that means cats don't get in.

No offense to cat lovers. I know a lot of people truly love their cats!

(Pause for laughs)

(Contrite) Forgive me Jesus, I know all animals are part of your creation.

(Pause) But you get what I mean about cats, right?

2. Scripture Loopholes

You know scripture doesn't say anything about whether pets get into Heaven. And we *can* take scripture literally. And that's great, but let's face it—there's the *spirit* of the teaching, and then there's the *wording*.

(Pause.) And like anything with wording, there might be a few loopholes. Take this one: "When you give to the poor, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing." The *spirit* of that is clear: don't talk about, don't brag about your charity.

(Pause.) But technically—*technically*—if I put my left hand in my pocket, it doesn't know what's going on and I can brag all I want, right?

(Pause for laughs.)

So I'm thinking about this one day, and God gives me a vision of heaven. I'm standing before the throne, and there's God Almighty, and Jesus is sitting at His right hand. And God says to me, " Didn't you listen to my Son? 'When you give to the poor, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing!'"

(Pause, pretend to panic slightly.)

I thought, *Oh, no, I'm busted!* I mean, I could've told Him, "But I put my left hand in my pocket," but something told me "Now's not the time to be clever!"

(Pause.) Instead, I panicked and said, "Lord Almighty, (point towards an unseen person behind you) I'd like a moment to consult with my lawyer."

(pause for laughs)

(Look around the room) Which, let's be honest, is ridiculous. (Pause)Lawyers don't get into heaven!

(Pause for reaction.)

Oh, no offense to any lawyers here tonight—if you are a lawyer, I'm sorry. (Pause) Uh oh, I just realized I had better start preaching the Good News to a good defense lawyer.

(Slight Pause) I'm gonna need him up there!

(Pause for laughs)

Forgive me, Jesus... that was an unfair joke. But you get what I mean about lawyers, right?

3. PB&J Sandwiches and Scripture on Bags

Now that we've cleared that up, I *am* going to brag about some of the charity I used to do.

(Pause) Hang on (*put left hand in pocket*) Ok, I'm covered just in case.

(Pause for laughs)

I used to make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and give them to homeless people. It was simple, economical, and I figured, hey, better than giving money, right?

(Slight Pause) At the time, I had this physically demanding job, and sometimes my co-workers and I would be starving after a shift. Well, one day a coworker was so hungry she asked me for something to eat. I handed her one of those PB and J sandwiches (emphasize)and she loved it!

(Slight Pause.) Pretty soon, I was making them for more and more co-workers. And in my head, I'm thinking, *When you feed the hungry, you're feeding the King, right?* I felt great about it.

(Slight Pause) But then... I got a nickname: *The Snack Man.*

(Pause for laughter.) And let me tell you, that nickname went straight to my head. I started handing out sandwiches to **everyone**. Hungry or not, I'd be like, (act like you are handing out sandwiches)"Take a sandwich! Take a sandwich! Everybody take a sandwich!"

(Pause for laughs)

When I do good, I like to include everybody.

When I do bad, same thing—*everybody's included.*

(Pause for laughs)

Then one day, it hit me: *People don't know why I'm doing this!* They don't know I'm doing it for the love of Jesus. So I started writing scripture on the sandwich bags: things like "The truth shall set you free" or "For God so loved the world." You know, good stuff.

(Pause, slightly perturbed.) Then I overheard a co-worker complaining about the scripture I was writing on the sandwich bags.

So I decided to talk to her. I said, "Hey, I heard you don't like the scripture I write on the sandwich bags. I'm sorry if it bothers you, but here's the thing: Jesus died for my sins and rose again. So what He says is *pretty important*. That's why I write it on the sandwich bags.

(Pause for effect, crooked smile) Then I told her, "I'll make you a deal. If *you* go to the cross, die for my sins, and rise again three days later, I'll write *what* (emphasize)*you* say on the sandwich bags!"

(Pause for laughs)

She didn't take me up on the offer. But of course, I didn't say that to her—as a good Christian, I just thought it.

(Pause for laughs)

Forgive me Jesus, for even thinking it.

(Pause)But you get what I mean about someone complaining about a free sandwich, right?

4. Golden Sepulcher

That reminds me of the story of when I broke away from the Catholic Church. I was an altar boy—believe it or not. And when I was about 13, it was Easter, and the priest wanted something special to put on the altar—a sepulcher.

Now, if you don't know, a sepulcher is this ornate holder for the communion host. That's what Catholics call the bread of communion. And he wanted something *really* special. So he takes me back behind the altar into the rectory.

(Pause, lean forward.) Don't worry—nothing bad happened.

(Pause for laughs.)

The rectory is where the priests put on their robes and the altar boys get ready—and he opens up a safe. Out comes this golden sepulcher. And I mean *golden*.

(Pause for emphasis.) He hands it to me, and that thing weighed a solid 10 pounds. And yeah, I was a big 13-year-old, but still—it was like cradling a baby made out of gold.

(Lean slightly forward, lower your voice.) Then, just for a second, I glanced into the safe. And let me tell you... the priest—well, *the church*—had a (emphasize)*lot* of gold in there.

(Straighten up, mock-serious tone.) And I thought, "Oh yeah, I remember that scripture." So I went home that night and looked it up. It's part of the Sermon on the Mount. From the Catholic Bible, it says:

(Slowly, deliberate delivery, pretend to hold an open Bible.)

'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall be shown mercy. Blessed are the poor—'

(Drop the tone, deadpan delivery.) ...Oh wait...forget the poor. Bring me gold. I want gold! Lots and lots of gold!

(Pause for laughs)

Forgive me Jesus, I know that's not what you said.

(Pause) *But you get what I mean, right? That was a lot of gold, right?*

5. Beach Baptism and Faith's Immediate Rewards

But I will say, the Catholic Church was very important in developing my faith. I accepted God at a pretty early age. My family went to the Catholic church—Mom and all of us kids. No dad at the time.

They had Sunday school after church, and I remember learning early on that Jesus referred to God as the Father. And that *hooked* me, because I didn't really have a father. I didn't have a dad at that time.

(Pause) Well... okay, I did have a birth dad, but I was blessed, truly blessed—he abandoned us.

(Pause for laughs)

And let me tell you, when your birth dad leaves and someone says, "*God's your Father*," that's an *upgrade*.

(Pause for reaction.) I thought, *Yes, that's it—I'm in!*

(Pause) But here's the thing: I didn't accept Jesus Christ as my Savior for a long time. I prayed, I got close to God, but I just hadn't made that full commitment. I didn't see how someone could redeem me through *their* suffering. That's called *vicarious penance*, and I just didn't believe in it.

Well, one day, after I went to church with my friend Juliet—she's kind of my spiritual mentor—I went to the restroom. And right there in the men's room, they had a poster for a beach baptism.

(Pause, slightly amazed tone.) I thought, *Wow, baptism at the beach? That sounds perfect for me. Sign me up!* So I did. And I remember it so clearly—it was May 18th of this year.

Now, before the baptism, I was nervous. I had this hang-up with church: I don't like groups. *Groupthink is not my thing.* And I knew they were going to ask me some questions. I prayed, "God, what am I going to do if they ask me something I don't agree with?"

And clear as day, I felt the answer: *You say yes, and you believe.*

(Pause) So I went. And when it was my turn, I walked into the water, and the minister said, "Do you believe in Jesus Christ?" And I said, (bright smile) "Yes, I do."

Then he asked, "Do you accept that Jesus died for your sins?"

(Pause, look down, reluctant tone) And I said, "Yes, I do."

(Pause, then smile) And right then, I thought, (chuckle) "you got me Father! You got me good!"

(Pause for laughs)

But you know what? The rewards of faith come *immediately.*

At the time, I had this terrible roommate. He wasn't paying rent, and I told him, "End of the month, you either pay or you're out." And he was threatening to squat—just stay there, rent-free!

(Pause, shift tone to victorious.) Well, after the baptism, I walked back to my car, checked my phone, and there was a message from him: "I've moved out."

(*No pause this time*)

Thank you, Jesus! Thank you, Jesus! I do believe you died for my sins—absolutely! You got it!

(Pause for laughs)

6. Bad Roommate and Divorce

"Thank you, Jesus, for casting that demon out of my house!"

And you know, I really do believe Jesus casts out demons.

(Pause, look around the audience.) Speaking of casting out demons... anyone else here ever been divorced?

(Pause for laughs)

Yeah, yeah. I know—it's a touchy subject in church.

(Pause.) I'm not gonna go into it. But I will say three things about my divorce:

Number one, *The Father told me not to marry that woman.*

Number two, *I married her anyway.*

Number three, (pause) **BIG MISTAKE!**

(Pause for laughs)

7. Evangelizing Boss (Closer)

I guess I couldn't get much further from the Father than after I ignored His warning. But I think the reason He warned me, quite frankly, is because my mom was a praying woman. I know she was always praying for me because one after another people kept trying to evangelize me and get me back to church. I didn't get a moment's peace!

Well, when I was working as an engineer, my boss—who was Catholic—found out I'd been raised Catholic too. One day, he comes up to me and says, "Hey, I'd really love it if you came to my church this Sunday."

I politely said, "No thanks."

But he kept going: "You know, the Catholic Church hasn't always been evangelical. We weren't great at reaching out to people."

I looked him right in the face and said, "Oh, it's a shame they changed. That was the only thing I *liked* about the Catholic Church, they used to leave me alone!"

(Pause for laughs)

Now, this guy was responsible for my reviews and promotions. And wouldn't you know it, the next year I got a *terrible* review.

(Pause for reaction)

(Shift to reflective tone.) But you know, as Christians, we're called to evangelize, right? So, (emphasize) *technically*... I just evangelized this whole room!

(Pause for laughs)

(Look at the pastor, playful tone.) What do you think, Pastor Steve? Do I get credit for that? I'm putting it in my review, just in case.

This version includes notes for tone and pauses, ensuring that your delivery emphasizes the humor and emotional beats effectively.

Your plan is solid: starting with memorizing the **titles**, then the **set contents**, and finally transitioning to **practice with the index cards** will build your confidence and flow. Here are a few final tips before you dive in:

1. Transitions and Flow

- Focus on the transitions between jokes as you practice. Even if you forget a punchline during the performance, keeping a natural flow between jokes will make it seamless.
- Each joke should feel like a natural continuation of the previous one. Practice lines like:
 - After *PB&J Sandwiches*: “*You know, that reminds me of my journey to faith...*” (leading into *Beach Baptism*).

2. Pausing for Laughter

- During rehearsals, add pauses where you anticipate audience laughter. If the audience laughs longer than expected, don’t rush—ride the wave and pick up naturally when it fades.

3. Experiment with Delivery

- While practicing with index cards, try delivering jokes with different tones to find what feels most natural. For example:
 - Should *Golden Sepulcher* be incredulous or mock-serious?
 - Should the punchline of *Bad Roommate & Divorce* lean self-deprecating or cheeky?

4. Handling Unexpected Moments

- If a joke doesn’t land, keep your energy up and transition smoothly to the next one. Audiences rarely notice a missed laugh if the performer keeps their rhythm.

5. Audience Connection

- Especially in a church setting, a warm and approachable demeanor will enhance your connection with the audience. Smile, make eye contact, and keep the mood upbeat.

If you feel ready to start memorizing, go for it! I’ll be here if you want feedback during the process or need help refining any jokes further. How are you feeling about your set so far? Confident? Nervous? Both?