

KILL OR CURE

By Rod

Based on Mark 1:14 – 34 this sketch looks light heartedly at the effect that Jesus' healings might have had on the medical profession if they had occurred in a more modern setting. His miracles would do them out of their business – but it introduces the darker side of the response of the religious authorities and what they eventually planned to do.

CAST

John A doctor

Bill A pharmacist

Vicar A vicar! Starts as a gentle character to contrast with his irate state at the end of the sketch

[The vicar is on stage, perhaps taking tea (a caricature) and John and Bill enter.]

Vicar Ah, hello John, hello Bill.

John Good afternoon vicar.

Bill Yes, afternoon vicar.

Vicar Can I offer you a cup of tea?

John That would be lovely.

Bill I wouldn't say no.

Vicar So how are things in the medical world?

John Not too good actually. That is why we came to see you.

Vicar Ah, so this **is** a medical deputation. I thought as much; a doctor and a pharmacist both at the same time. What is the reason for your agitation?

Bill Not what but who?

John Yes, it's this Jesus of Nazareth.

Vicar Ah, I thought it might be. He caused quite a stir in church last week here in Capernaum.

John He is going to do us out of our livelihood if he carries on.

Vicar You mean all those healings I've been hearing about?

John Yes, I had a completely empty surgery this morning. Not a single patient. It's normally packed out on the first day of the week.

- Bill They were all chasing after Jesus hoping he would cure them with a touch of his hands..
- Vicar Oh dear.
- John Bill and I have a good system working. The patients come to me for a consultation..
- Vicar For which you charge.
- John Well, I've got my overheads with the surgery to maintain: rates, lighting, receptionist...
- Bill And then John gives them a prescription, which they bring round to me at my Pharmacy.
- John I diagnose bleeding...
- Bill And so I sell them some bandages.
- John I diagnose leprosy..
- Bill And I sell them a bell
- John I diagnose lameness..
- Bill And I sell them a crutch.
- John I diagnose blindness
- Bill And I sell them a white stick. And, of course I give Doctor John here 10 per cent each time for his trouble.
- John Well that is how the health system works - until now that is thanks to this perishing Jesus of Nazareth.
- Vicar I see, it must be very disturbing. Can't you get him struck off or something by the Galilee General Medical Council?
- John He's freelance. He doesn't come under their jurisdiction.
- Vicar Oh, I see, but I am not sure how I can help you.
- Bill Tell him about Peter's mother-in-law, John.
- Vicar Did he make her better? I heard she was unwell. We prayed for her in church.
- John Yes, he cured her of a fever ... and in her own home of all places.

- Vicar Does that matter?
- John Of course it matters. Don't you see; people will be expecting us doctors to make home visits from now on? My life will be a nightmare - I'll never have time to get to the golf course.
- Vicar Except at weekends.
- John You must be joking. It was on a weekend that he healed her. As well as expecting us to do house calls we will have to lay on an out of hours service. The Galilee Health Service will never cope. We'll have to bring in foreign doctors who don't speak the language. It'll be a shambles.
- Bill *[Quietly, gently probing]* Actually, vicar, he healed Peter's mother-in-law on the sabbath.
- Vicar *[Exploding]* He did what?
- Bill It was just after church; he went straight there.
- Vicar Oh. He did cause a bit of a fracas at church. He got into an argument with one of our more disturbed brethren, but I wouldn't really describe it as a healing.
- Bill Well this very definitely was – *[Conspiratorally, seeking to stir the vicar into action]* in direct contradiction of the sabbath trading laws. And I wouldn't put it past him to do the work of healing on other sabbaths, wherever he happens to be.
- John Even in church.
- Vicar Just let him try.
- Bill I reckon he will. He's brazen he is.
- Vicar Well I'll be ready for him. John, Bill, you were right to come to me. I think I've got just the remedy to deal with your Jesus problem.
- John Oh, really, what's that.
- Bill Let's just say it will be a case of kill or cure.

[THE END]