

THE PRICE OF FAILURE

By Rod

This sketch was written to illustrate what God's forgiveness is not like. Originally it accompanied a talk on Jesus 'reinstating' Peter (e.g. John 21 vv 15-25) but could be used more generally.

CAST

Simon *A boy*

Dad *His father. But this is not immediately obvious.*

One person, rapidly switching roles, could play both parts. This would add a lightness of touch to an otherwise harsh drama. The boy could quickly don a school cap, while the father could start with his head in a newspaper (e.g. doing the crossword) and pick this up each time he gets into character.

Simon Hello, you wanted to see me?

Dad Did I?

Simon Yes, I think so.

Dad What's your name, boy?

Simon Simon.

Dad *[Thinking]* Simon, Simon,

Simon Yes, Dad, I'm your son.

Dad Ah yes, Simon. Now er ...

Simon Simon.

Dad Simon. Your mother informs me that you have been telling lies.

Simon Yes, I'm afraid it's true. I'm deeply ashamed.

Dad And so you should be my boy. I had high hopes of you, Simon, but now you've let yourself down and you've let me down.

Simon I'm very sorry, Dad.

Dad It's too late for being sorry, Simon.

Simon I know. I shouldn't have done it and I've let the family down. It won't happen again.

Dad No, Simon, it most certainly will not. I'll make sure you never let this family down ever again. I have no alternative but to expel you from this household at once.

Simon But, Dad, you can't be serious.

Dad Never more so. Pack your bags and leave.

Simon *[On knees]* But I beg of you: give me another chance.

Dad Another chance to fail? Not on your life.

Simon *[Desperate, crying]* But, please, please, forgive me

Dad Stop snivelling, boy.

Simon *[Last desperate plea]* But, Dad, I appeal to you.

Dad I am afraid you do not appeal to me in any way whatsoever. Get out and don't come back.

Simon gets up and trudges reluctantly, tearfully off.