

Jazz Man

By Jack Hall

www.sundayschooldropouts.com

CHARACTERS

Mr. Matthews – A Christian accountant

Martha – Mr. Matthews' secretary

Eli – Mr. Matthews' son

The setting is a reception area in a Christian accounting office. A sign for MATTHEWS ACCOUNTING SERVICE complete with an Ichthus fish is on the wall. Martha sits at a receptionist's desk. The phone rings, and she answers. Eli enters the office as Martha talks.

MARTHA- Matthews Accounting Service, count on the Lord for your blessings, count on us to manage them... I'm sorry, Mr. Fisher is in a prayer meeting with a client facing an audit. May I take a message?... *(writes down info)* And your number? *(writes it down)* Okay. Soon as he is available, I will have him contact you. God bless!

ELI- Hello, Martha.

MARTHA- Well, if it isn't the high school grad? I hear congratulations are in order.

ELI- Yeah, I suppose.

MARTHA- Aw, God bless ya, kid! Your daddy is so proud of you. Let me get him. *(picks up the phone)* Mr. Matthews? Your favorite client is here. *(hangs up)* He's on his way.

ELI- Thanks, Martha.

Mr. Matthews enters.

MATTHEWS- There's my boy! How does it feel to be graduating?

ELI- Well, not that different, really. I was home schooled after all.

MATTHEWS- Aww, still feeling left out by not having a flashy, God-less graduation ceremony? You know they're not allowed to pray any more.

ELI- I know, Dad.

MATTHEWS- Don't worry. We'll pick up Grandma and Pastor Ryan after I get off work, and have us a nice ceremony at the Christian Cafeteria downtown.

ELI- Sounds terrific.

MATTHEWS- You better believe it's terrific! And the news gets better. I spoke with Dr. Paulson this morning.

ELI- At the Bible College?

MATTHEWS- You've been accepted with honors. Full scholarship, room and board, and immediate acceptance into the Christian Business Program!

ELI- That's great, Dad. I really appreciate all you've done.

MATTHEWS- Eli, are you okay?

ELI- Well, Dad, there's something I need to tell you. Something... you're not going to like!

MARTHA- Oh my goodness! Lord forgive him! Eli's coming out of the closet!!

ELI- What?

MATTHEWS- Is this true, son? You're gay?

ELI- No!! Of course not! I'm not gay!

MARTHA- You're not?

ELI- Yes!

MARTHA- You're certain?

ELI- Yes.

MARTHA- Hmm... well, guess I better let the quilting group know that prayer need was answered.

MATTHEWS- Son, what could be so wrong that I would be upset with you?

ELI- Dad... I don't know how to put this nicely, so I'll just say it. I'm not going to Bible College.

MATTHEWS- *(pause, then laughs)* Eli, you old jokester. You almost had me on that one.

ELI- It's not a joke, Dad.

MATTHEWS- It's not?

ELI- I don't want to go to Bible college!

MATTHEWS- How can you say that? After we raised you to serve the Lord, gave you the finest Christian education we could! Don't you want to follow in your old man's footsteps?

ELI- No.

MATTHEWS- Why not? I've run a Christian accounting firm for thirty years and made a very blessed life for you, Mom, and your brothers and sisters. Don't you want that for your family?

ELI- I don't know. I guess so, but I don't want to be a Christian accountant.

MATTHEWS- Really?

ELI- You know how I am with math. It's not me.

MATTHEWS- Of course. I should have guessed. Well, it's not too late to get into the pastoral program. I could call Dr. Paulson before lunch.

ELI- No, Dad, I don't want to be a pastor either.

MATTHEWS- Why not?

ELI- I just don't!

MATTHEWS- Then what Christian endeavor do you want to pursue?

ELI- Well, that's the thing, Dad. I don't really wanna be Christian anything.

MATTHEWS- What?!?

MARTHA- Lord, protect us! He's a Satanist!

ELI- I'm not a Satanist.

MARTHA- You mean you're into Scientology? You know that's all about aliens???

ELI- I'm not a Scientologist either. If I'm anything I'm a saxophonist.

MARTHA- What do they believe?

ELI- Nothing. I mean, whatever they want.

MARTHA- Relativism!

ELI- No! It's not a faith, it's music. I am a musician, and I want to study music.

MATTHEWS- Then why didn't you say so? We'll call Dr. Paulson, get you into the music ministry track. No problem! You know your Uncle David did music there.

ELI- I know, Dad... but I'm not doing music there.

MATTHEWS- Why not?

ELI- I don't want to be a music minister!

MATTHEWS- Yes you do!

ELI- Dad, I wanna be a jazz musician.

MATTHEWS- A Christian jazz musician?

ELI- No, Dad, a jazz musician in a jazz band!

MATTHEWS- A Christian jazz band?

ELI- Dad, let it go! I'm gonna be a sax player in a jazz band at State. I've already auditioned, been accepted, and got a scholarship.

MATTHEWS- When did this happen?

ELI- When their jazz ensemble came to town in March.

MATTHEWS- I don't remember this.

ELI- I was on that group date you all arranged with your Christian attorney friend and his daughter.

MARTHA- I told you not to set up that date! There's no such thing as a Christian lawyer!

MATTHEWS- Son, I don't know what to say. We raised you to love Jesus. We educated you in His ways. Where did we go wrong?

ELI- I wouldn't say you did anything wrong. You raised me to love Jesus and serve him always. But Jesus made me a jazz man. So I'm going to go play jazz, and be a Christian out there in the jazz world.

MATTHEWS- But why would you do that when you could be a Christian jazz man?

ELI- Martha, how many clients would you say you have that are not Christians?

MARTHA- Well, let me see. There's... Well, there is Mrs. Connors.

ELI- She's a Catholic.

MARTHA- Exactly. Other than that... I can't really think of any.

MATTHEWS- What's your point?

ELI- Jesus said go and make disciples. How can I do that if I don't go where the sinners are?

MATTHEWS- So you're going to a Catholic church?

ELI- Let's just go to lunch, Dad.

MATTHEWS- Yeah, lunch. I know a great place for fish.

Eli and Matthews start to exit.

ELI- You want seafood?

MATTHEWS- Don't you? That's what Catholics eat, isn't it?