

Church Office Space: Jesus and Starbucks

By Jack Hall

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CHARACTERS

Pastor Lumburgh

Roy, Don, Doug – Elders

LUMBURGH: Uh, okay. If there's no more discussion, all those in favor say I.

VOICES: !!!

LUMBURGH: Those opposed?

ONE VOICE: Nay.

LUMBURGH: Yeah, the motion is passed. Instead of burning firewood in the fireside room this winter, we will burn the old hymnals we never use any more.

DON: Excellent. Now on to the next part of our budget meeting, the subject of giving.

LUMBURGH: Yeah, as you all know, giving has been down the last three quarters even though attendance is going up. We had hoped this might just be a temporary problem that would correct itself, but, ah, it looks

like it's a real trend that needs to be addressed.

ROY: Well, what can we do?

LUMBURGH: Yeah, obviously, we have to find more ways to cut costs, or better yet, increase giving.

DOUG: How about this? We put a coupon in the bulletin. Clip this coupon and get ten percent off your tithe.

ROY: Hmm. You think more people will tithe if we do that?

LUMBURGH: Ooh, yeah, I don't know it that'll work. I mean all of us in here are smart people, and we know that 10% of 10% is--

DON: Eleven?

LUMBURGH: Yeah, I don't think Johnny Pewsitter's gonna have any easier time doing that kind of math.

ROY: And the last thing we wanna do is scare people away.

DON: What if we give them a gift?

DOUG: A gift? For giving?

DON: Sure, I heard this one ministry doing it on the radio. Give \$60 to some kids - homeless, orphans, I can't remember - and you get a \$30 gift card to some jewelry store.

DOUG: Hmm, that's interesting.

DON: So we cut them a deal. If you give \$100, you get a \$20 gift card to Wal-Mart.

ROY: Or Best Buy!

DOUG: I would prefer Home Depot.

ROY: Pastor Lumburgh, what do you think?

LUMBURGH: Ooh, yeah, I think the gift card should only be \$10 per hundred, and when it comes to gift cards, nothing says thank you like McDonalds.

DON: All in favor?

ROY: I'm still not sure about this. Shouldn't we appeal to people on a spiritual level? Shouldn't we expect them to give out of their love and appreciation for all the blessings God gives.

Pause, then laughter.

LUMBURGH: Yeah, I think that's pretty stupid.

DOUG: Hey, I was just thinking. We could apply this gift thing to other aspects of our ministry.

LUMBURGH: Such as?

DOUG: How about the altar call? Maybe it goes like this. "Folks, if you accept Jesus today, you not only get salvation, you get a \$20 gift card to Starbucks." What a deal, huh?

DON: Yeah. And they can use that \$20 gift card to take a non-believer for coffee and tell them how they can get eternal life.

ROY: And their own gift card!

DOUG: What do you think pastor?

LUMBURGH: Oooh, yeah, uh, I'm going to have to sort of disagree with you there?

DON: Really? Why?

DOUG: Is it because adding a materialistic gift to the invitation would cheapen the beautiful gift of salvation that Jesus gave us?

LUMBURGH: No, it's just that if we give gift cards to salvation, we've opened up another cost in the budget, whereas when we give gift cards to tithers, we're not really losing anything.

DON: Still, we're adding names to the church roster. It's an investment.

DOUG: And we can cut back in other cost areas.

LUMBURGH: Like what?

ROY: How about the food pantry?

DON: I like it. Save money on food, and the cleaning bill when those homeless bums track dirt on the carpet. All in favor?

ALL: I!!

DON: Opposed?

No opposition this time.

DON: Motion carries. We will now invite people to come to Jesus and Starbucks.

LUMBURGH: Yeah.