

Character Plays

This character play has a valuable message. The play depicts a dialog between Dr. Goodword, a faithful counselor, and Mr. Samuel Q. Fence-Sitter, who comes to his Spiritual Clinic with a chronic human disorder: worldly distraction. The help that the doctor gives Sam comes from the Bible as he guides him toward a more Christlike way of life.¹

The script is short and easy to learn, and with a few simple props and costumes you will be ready to put on a memorable production. Encourage your actors to put feeling into their parts and be sure to have someone behind a camera. Your cast and crew will enjoy watching the play afterward, and so will the rest of the ecclesia. The message never grows old.

The Case of Samuel Q. Fence-Sitter

Characters

Announcer, Doctor Goodword, Samuel Q. Fence-Sitter, and one or more Bible readers.

Props

The setting is the doctor's office. A desk and two chairs will do. The doctor has a pencil, pad, and Bible on his desk. Doctor Goodword wears a white coat, spectacles, and a moustache. Sam looks like an ordinary young man.



The good doctor is sitting behind his desk and Sam is sitting across from him. Poor Sam has a terrible case of Worldly Distraction. It's time for the camera(s) to roll.

Script²

Announcer: Patients come and patients go at the Spiritual Clinic of Dr. Goodword, but none more frequently than Samuel Q. Fence-Sitter. Hardly a day goes by but what he puts in an appearance at the clinic to register a chronic complaint. And, sure enough, today is no exception, for we find Sam in the office of the saintly old specialist for another consultation – the third time this week! Listen, the Doctor is speaking.

Doctor: Now, Mr. Fence-Sitter, what can I do for you?

¹ The original Dr. Goodword character plays go back many years. The source is unknown. Anyone with information about the origin of these plays is asked to contact sundayschool@tidings.com.

² The play script has been edited and familiar Christadelphian terms like ecclesia, CYC, and daily Bible readings have been introduced where appropriate.

Sam: It's my eyes again, Doctor.

Doctor: Same trouble?

Sam: Yes, sir, only worse. Much worse!

Doctor: What is it this time?

Sam: I'm beginning to see double, sir.

Doctor: I was afraid of that.

Sam: You were?

Doctor: Yes. I've been expecting it sooner or later. You see, it runs in your family. Fence-Sitters have been afflicted with it for ages.

Sam: It's very annoying, Doctor.

Doctor: Of course, I understand. But please tell me how it is affecting you.

Sam: Well, my biggest trouble is this. I just can't tell the difference between God's values and the world's values anymore. It's all a big jumble to me.

Doctor: In other words, your focus is bad?

Sam: That's what it amounts to, I guess. There was a time when I felt close to Christ.

Doctor: But now?

Sam: I still see the Lord Jesus, but most of the time he's pretty faint. I see so many other things these days.

Doctor: For instance?

Sam: Well, to be honest with you, Doctor, a lot of worldly pleasures. Other things that are so much fun.

Doctor: I suspected as much.

Sam: And they're not just in the margin of my vision, sir. They're crowding Christ out and taking over the central place.

Doctor: Worldly pleasures will do that, if you're not careful.

Sam: I still see Christ, you understand, but not the way I did before my eyes started going bad.

Doctor: That's usually the way it works with these double-vision problems.

Sam: And worst of all, Christ just doesn't look as good to me as he used to.

Doctor: Worldly pleasures are pretty dazzling, aren't they?

Sam: I'll say they are! Sometimes I feel like they're all I want. I don't need the Lord Jesus Christ any more. I hate to say it, Doctor, but I think if worldly pleasures crowd him out of my vision completely, I won't even miss him!

Doctor: You're in a bad state, lad, *a very bad state!*

Sam: I know, Doc. That's why I'm here. I can't go on like this any longer.

Sam: *(Working himself into frenzy)* Do you hear me? This double vision is killing me! It's killing me, I tell you.

Doctor: Now, now, take it easy, son. I think I can help you.

Sam: Either Christ goes or other things go! I can't keep looking at them all.

Doctor: Well, let's make sure that it isn't Christ who goes, my boy. That's the way you want it, isn't it?

Sam: Yes, sir. That's the way I really want it.

Doctor: Fine. That's half the cure!

Sam: But seeing all those other things is so confusing. Sometimes they are so attractive that I wonder what I ever saw in Christ.

Doctor: That's the way it is with this problem. Worldly compromise is a dangerous thing, Mr. Fence-Sitter. But there's one thing that will straighten you out.

Sam: Do you mean it, Doc? I was afraid there wasn't any hope for me.

Doctor: There is, but you will have to do what I tell you. I'm going to prescribe some exercises that will bring your eyes back into focus.

Sam: You mean Christ will be in the center of my vision again?

Doctor: That's right. You remember the old song: "Fix your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face, and the things of earth grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace."

Sam: That's what I need, Doctor, more than anything else – to get my eyes focused on him again. But how can I do it?

Doctor: These exercises will help.

Sam: Tell me, Doc! I want to give them a try.

Doctor: All right. Here they are. First of all, you're going to get down off the fence.

Sam: But, Doctor ...

Doctor: No objections! I must be very firm about this. You have to get down off the fence. You have to give up all compromise with the world. As long as

you try to straddle the fence and belong half to the world and half to Christ you're going to see double. Now, are you willing to do that?

Sam: Isn't there any other way?

Doctor: No other way, son. *No other way!*

Sam: All right, then. I'll do it. I'll get down off the fence. I'll get down on the Lord's side.

Doctor: Good. You'll be amazed at the difference this will make.

Sam: Why, I'm beginning to feel better already. I think my eyes are clearing up, Doctor! My eyes are clearing up!

Doctor: Fine. I knew that would help your focus. But there is more!

Doctor: Here's the rest of the prescription. Go home and start doing your daily Bible readings again. Get back into your prayer closet, too. And start serving Christ's brothers and sisters, not just yourself! Keep this up and you won't be troubled with double vision any more. Christ will fill your vision so completely that there won't be room for the other things.

Sam: Thank you. Doctor. I am going to do everything you've told me to do. And on top of that, I'm going to change my name, too. No more fence sitting for me.

Reader: "How long will you go limping between two different opinions?" – 1 Kings 18:21.

Reader: "No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other" – Matthew 6:24.

Reader: "A double-minded man (is) unstable in all his ways" – James 1:8.

Reader: "But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" – Philippians 3:13-14.

Curtain.