



The Bank Sketch

(By Jonathan Hyde)

Music: None

Content and Purpose: Looks at how we need Jesus for salvation, as we in ourselves cannot save ourselves. Set in a bank, where a person is trying to open a 'salvation account'. Finds that they don't have the opening balance, and are about to give up when Jesus enters and offers to pay the balance, if only the person will accept.

Cast: 3 people (1 male, 2 either) – Jesus (*in white*), Cashier, John (*or female name*)

Props: Piece of red paper

Starting positions: The Cashier at their window in the bank. There are no customers about, so they are keeping busy shuffling papers etc. Enter John, who goes over to talk with the Cashier

J: Good afternoon

C: (*Looks up*) Good afternoon, Sir, and, indeed, welcome to our bank. What can I do you for?

J: Well, I'd like to open an account, please

C: A fine choice, Sir. What type of account would you like? We offer a comprehensive range of services for our clients on all of our accounts, including eternal life, 24-hour service and £2 off at Pizza Hut vouchers.

J: Wow, sounds pretty cool.

C: Oh, it is, Sir. "Cool" is quite the operative word. So which account were you wanting?

J: Well, I'm not entirely sure...nothing too fancy; I'm not really a fancy person. I mean, I have dress sense and all that, and I bring home a fair cheque every week, but I don't own a BMW or anything. Got a Ford Escort, actually.

C: I heard you arriving, Sir.

J: Yes, well, you get the idea. Just a normal Salvation account, please.

C: Certainly, Sir, and may I congratulate you on your choice; you won't be disappointed. None of our select clientele have expressed and dissatisfaction yet.

J: Select? Is it difficult to open an account or something?

C: Not at all, Sir; you simply need the opening balance to start you off. Anyway, we'll just sort out a little paperwork first. (*Cashier pulls out a form*) Now then...personal details. Name?

J: John Adam Smith.

C: (*Writing*) That's a bit unoriginal, isn't it?

J: Just an average name, but the "Adam" bit's quite cunning, I thought, trying to represent humanity and all.

C: That's a bit deep for a sketch, isn't it? I thought we were here to entertain people.

J: That's what they think. (*He nods knowingly*)

C: Hmm. Right, you address?

J: 666a High Street

C: 666? Hmm.

J: Is that a problem?

C: Well it's not a very nice area, that's all. You could still recover, though. Any family?

J: There's my wife, Anne, son Dave and daughter Katie.

C: Very good, Sir.

J: Keeping ordinary names with the family as well, you see. Try to appeal to everyone, show that we could really be anyone.

C: Of course, Sir. Whatever you say (*rolls eyes*). Do you have the opening balance with you?

J: I believe so...(he pulls out his cheque book). How much is it?

C: (*Laughs politely*) Very droll, Sir. (*John looks blank*) I'm sorry, I think Sir misunderstands: we do things slightly differently to open a Salvation account.

J: Oh, I'm sorry. What would you like?

C: It's really quite simple, Sir: we just need righteousness from you.



J: You mean the new “Best of the Righteous Brothers” CD? Well, I’ve got the tape in the car...

C: Once again, that’s very droll, Sir. (*A beat*) “Righteousness” is living right.

J: That doesn’t sound so bad: I haven’t killed anyone, have only slept with my wife since we got married, my kids are pretty well behaved, and...

C: That may be, Sir, but have you ever wounded anyone with your words? Have you ever fancied anyone other than your wife? Basically, have you ever disobeyed the law?

J: Hey, I have a squeaky record with the Law.

C: That’s quite commendable, Sir, but I’m talking about the Laws of the Universe: God’s Laws.

J: You mean, love your neighbour, no cow-tipping and all that?

C: I think you mean “coveting”, Sir. And yes, that’s right.

J: Hmm...well, I’ve done loads of good things; I help old ladies across the traffic, I’m an active part of our Neighbourhood Watch, I often tidy my tray away when I finish eating, hold doors open for people, nearly always support my wife...doesn’t that mean anything?

C: I’m sorry, Sir?

J: Isn’t it enough to open my account and get me my eternal life?

C: With all due respect, Sir, it wouldn’t buy the neat holographic sticker on your bankcard.

J: Oh.

C: Is there anything else which you could tell me, Sir? Almost anything at all would be helpful.

J: I’m not doing that well, huh?

C: On a scale of one-to-ten, Sir, you’re at –2. Approximately.

J: Oh, man. Look, I’m not a *bad* person. I’m a good bloke; all my friends think so; as does my wife, most of the time, and my kids, at weekends. It’s not like I’ve done something seriously wrong or anything; not like those guys you see on *Watchdog*.

C: Perhaps not in your eyes, Sir, but true righteousness is a fair bit higher than your standards.

J: So there’s nothing I can do? That’s it – no eternal life? No salvation? I’m just not good enough for it?

C: I believe that you’ve already chosen your actions, Sir, and they haven’t supplied a very good credit rating (*enter Jesus*).

J: That’s OK, I get it! Oh I understand perfectly. You can keep your high-and-mighty ideals for your high-and-mighty clientele! If I’m not good enough for you, I’m sorry! (*John turns to go and walks into Jesus*) Hey, pal, watch where you’re going!

Jesus: Excuse me. (*John storms past, and Jesus goes up to the Cashier*) Good afternoon, George. How are you?

C: Very well, thank you, Sir. Will it be the usual?

Jesus: Yes, please: I’d like to open this gentleman’s account. (*At this John turns round at the door, just before he leaves. Jesus passes a piece of red paper to the Cashier, who examines it*)

C: Everything seems to be in order, Sir. Mr Smith, would you care to finalise the account details? (*John comes back to the window*).

J: I’m sorry? I thought I couldn’t open an account here...

C: Indeed you couldn’t, Sir, but this gentleman has paid the balance for you. (*John looks at Jesus, weighing Him up for a moment, then back to the Cashier*)

J: OK...so what do I have to do? Sign some forms?

C: Actually no, Sir. We need this gentleman to sign the forms for you.

J: Now I’m confused: why did you ask me back?

C: We wanted your permission to do this; once the forms are signed, He will be the only one with access to the account and control of the transactions, including maintaining the account balance. You will have to respect His authority, Sir, in order to use our services.

J: So I don’t have any say?

C: It will still be your account, Sir, with your personalised cheques, card and so forth, but this gentleman’s signature will be required to access our services. When you leave, we will give you your own credit card to take with you and use, on His account.

J: So, let me get this straight: you want me to give control over to Him?

Jesus: No. (*John starts to protest*) YOU have to want to give the control over to Me; it’s up to you to accept or reject My offer.

C: What will it be, Sir?