

David Brainerd

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*(Sound effects of Indian drums can be heard in the background. The NARRATOR enters from one side of the stage, the CHILD from the other; they meet in the **house scene**.)*

Child: *(to NARRATOR)* How!

Narrator: How what?

Child: How do you do? *(laughs)*

Narrator: *(speaking the child’s name)*, why are you dressed like an Indian?

Child: Because we’re going to be talking about David Brainerd, and I’ve been told he was a missionary to the Native Americans in our country.

Narrator: He certainly was; he was a missionary back in the seventeen hundreds, more than two hundred years ago!

Child: How—time flies! *(looks around)* But this doesn’t look like an Indian teepee!

Narrator: It’s not. It’s the home of Jonathan Edwards.

Child: Was he a missionary to the Indians?

Narrator: No, but he had a great influence on David Brainerd.

Child: There’s David now! *(YOUNG DAVID walks into the scene.)* Uh-oh, we’d better move somewhere else. We’re going to be right in the middle of the scene!

(The NARRATOR and CHILD move off to the side. DAVID sits down.)

Child: Say, David looks awfully sad. I wonder why. . .

(lights down on NARRATOR and CHILD, up on Scene 1)

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Scene 1: Interior of the Brainerd's Home

David: *(looking up)* How can I find out more about You, God? I'm so shy I find it hard to talk to anyone about all the questions I have. I don't understand why my father had to die when I was just nine years old. And now *(choking up)* mother is dead, too. *(pauses, then stands quickly)* I want to know You, God. I want to understand what You are doing in my life. I know a lot about You, but I feel like I don't really know You like I should—deep in my heart. There's something missing in my life, but I'm not sure what it is.

(lights down on scene, up on NARRATOR and CHILD)

Child: How old was David when his mother died?

Narrator: He was just fourteen years old. David had four sisters and four brothers, but now they had no mom or dad.

Child: That's terrible.

Narrator: It might seem that way, but God used that difficult time for David's good, just like He can use hard times in our lives. You see, David desperately wanted to have peace and joy in his heart. He started going to church regularly and spent a great deal of time reading the Bible and praying, yet it wasn't until he was twenty-one years old that he realized he needed to be saved.

Child: Saved? Can you explain what that means?

Narrator: Sure. *(explains salvation in his own words)*

It was July 12 of 1739 when David Brainerd asked Jesus into his heart. From that time on, all he wanted to do was give his life in service to the Lord. He went to Yale college to train for the ministry and was one of their best students. He was also a very good Christian example. However, something happened one day that got him into big trouble. David was talking to a few friends about one of the

teachers at the school...

(lights down on NARRATOR and CHILD, up on Scene 2)

Scene 2 - College (Outdoors) *(David and his three friends are standing together in a semi-circle conversing. There should be an old-fashioned out-door chair by David.)* 2

Friend 1: I can't believe professor Johnson doesn't like us to hold prayer meetings together.

Friend 2: You'd think he'd be glad the students want to pray.

David: *(angrily)* That professor has no more grace than this chair! *(kicks chair)*

(ALL walk off in a huff. The lights go down on scene, up on NARRATOR and CHILD)

Narrator: David didn't know it, but another student had heard what he said and reported him. David was called in to see the head of the school.

(lights down on NARRATOR and CHILD, up on Scene 3)

Scene 3 - School Office

School Administrator: David, you have been a model student here at Yale, but what you did today was absolutely wrong! We won't have our students talking about the teachers in such a way!

David: But, sir, he...

School Ad.: I know he disagrees with your prayer meetings, but that gives you no excuse to be disrespectful! The other students all look up to you. You have set a terrible example. You must apologize for your behavior.

David: I can't say I'm sorry in front of the whole school, sir.

School Ad: Then you are expelled! Please leave immediately!

(lights down on scene, up on NARRATOR and CHILD)

Child: Wow! He really did get in trouble. I guess we can learn a lesson from that, can't we?

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Narrator: Yes, we can. God wants us to be very careful about what we say. We never know who might be listening. We may say something that will hurt someone else or ruin our testimony for Christ.

Child: David should have said he was sorry.

Narrator: Yes, and he did finally come back four years later and apologize.

Child: I'm glad he made things right. That's what we should always do, even though it may sometimes be very hard.

Narrator: You're right, *(speaks child's name)*. After that incident, David went to live with a pastor.

Child: Let me guess—Jonathan Edwards!

Narrator: I told you we'd get to him. He was a very good preacher. David knew he could learn much from Jonathan Edwards.

(lights down on NARRATOR and CHILD, up on Scene 4)

Scene 4 - Interior of Jonathan Edward's Home

David: *(entering the room where Jonathan Edwards is studying at a desk)* Rev. Edwards, may I speak to you for a moment, sir?

Edwards: Of course, David. Come in. Sit down. *(motions towards a chair)*

David: I've been thinking lately about what God may want me to do with my life. I want to serve Him more than anything.

Edwards: I thought you had decided to be a minister.

David: Yes, sir, I'd like that. But I think God may have something else for me. I

believe He wants me to be a missionary.

Edward: Hmm. Why don't you speak to someone from the Scottish Missionary

There is more dialogue included in the Director's Notebook.