

CHANGE OF HEART

By

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1. NEIGHBORHOOD EXTERIOR – older model car driving down street - Early Evening. Two youth, **Trish & Pete** are out walking with headphones, etc. They are dressed in non-conformist styles, **Trish** has spikes in her hair. Dark makeup. Main Titles.

2. BOB’S CAR INTERIOR & EXTERIOR – car driven by **Bob Majors** - Same Time. He is listening to 60s music on the radio. He looks serious. The car approaches an intersection as the youth turn to cross the street. Bob slams on the brakes and honks the horn.

BOB:
Stupid kids!

Youth are startled by the car. Bob sneers and shakes his fist at them. Trish gives him a dark look and turns away.

BOB:
I like you, too, Missy!

3. CHURCH PARKING LOT EXTERIOR – Same Time – car driven by Bob Majors approaches church. Sign on parking lot reads “NO SKATEBOARDING.” Bob parks and enters church. Scene is shot from the POV of a young person watching from the sidelines.

4. BOB’S CHURCH HALL INTERIOR – Same Time – four or five older adults are standing around. There is a big silver coffee pot on a folding table. All eyes turn to the door as Bob enters. Scene is shot from the POV of a young person watching from the sidelines.

MARY:
Hi Bob!

REV. JACKSON:
Hey, Robert.

Others murmur hellos as Bob heads for the coffee pot, pours coffee.

GEORGE:

You hear about Addy's kid? Got arrested for drugs.

BOB:

Drugs and rock music. Wasn't that way when I was a kid.

MARY:

There weren't any kids back then, Bob!

(Bob makes a face as he sips his coffee.)

SHARON:

Let's get started.

Group moves over to a couple of folding tables surrounded by metal chairs and sits down. Bob sits next to Sharon, the chairperson. Across from Bob is the only empty chair at the table. Scene is shot from the POV of a young person watching from the sidelines.

SHARON:

As you know, we're not meeting our budget. A lot of us are very concerned. We've been asked to come up with some ideas.

GEORGE:

We've got to look at our expenses. The heating bill killed us last winter. And I've noticed lights left on at night.

MARY:

We can't put on any more dinners. There's just a few of us and we're not getting any younger.

(as Bob speaks, everyone turns to look at him)

BOB:

That's the problem! We need more people. If we are going to save the church, we need fill those pews.

(He looks at Rev. Jackson, then at everyone else)

BOB:

More people in the door – more money in the offering plate.

GEORGE:

Attendance has been down, lately.

MARY:

There aren't any kids. How do we get more young people to come to church?

SHARON:

We don't have that many young families around here, do we?

GEORGE:

Yes we do! Just look at the school busses. The kids are there. They just aren't coming here.

BOB:

Kids are a lot different than when I was a boy. They're disrespectful. The way they dress. And the loud music. Is that what we want?

MARY:

Look at our church, Bob. It's the same as it was forty years ago. Maybe we need to change a few things to make young people more welcome.

BOB:

Over my dead body. I like things the way they are. Maggie and I were married in this church. I like the choir and the old hymns. I like the way people come out in their Sunday best. You go changing all that and it won't be church anymore!

(everyone is silent for a beat in the face of Bob's outburst)

REV. JACKSON:

Maybe we could do some research and talk to some kids about church.

BOB:

Hmmmp!

SHARON:

Good idea. We could each talk to two or three young people and find out why they don't come to church.

GEORGE:

The snack shack's a good place. I could talk to a couple of the kids down there.

MARY:

Bob, doesn't that Forrester girl live next to you?

BOB:

We don't talk much.

MARY:

Couldn't you ask her about church?

BOB:

Maybe. But I'm not going to let that kid tell me what my church should be like!

MARY:

Fair enough.

SHARON:

There're lots of kids at the mall. I could ask some of them.

MARY:

I'll talk to a couple of kids in my neighborhood.

SHARON:

Great! Let's see what we can find out and meet again next week. Rev. Jackson, will you close us with prayer?

REV. JACKSON:

Certainly. Let us pray: Dear Lord, help us to listen and learn from the young people in our community...

5. MUSICAL MONTAGE, no natural sound or dialogue. We see three settings where the committee is talking with young people. A mixture of shots showing reactions, friendliness, discomfort, etc.

NEIGHBORHOOD EXTERIOR – We see **Mary** approach a couple of young people with a smile. They seem apprehensive, but talk with her.

SNACK SHOP EXTERIOR – **George** sitting at a table, talking with a young person.

MALL INTERIOR – **Sharon** is standing with 2 or 3 young people visiting.

6. BOB AND MAGGIE'S HOME EXTERIOR – a modest home in a neighborhood with close spaced homes. Bob is washing his car while Maggie is working in the yard. Scene is shot from the POV of a young person watching from the sidelines. The front door of the neighbor's house opens and a girl steps out, looking up the street for someone. **TRISH FORRESTER** is the girl Bob almost hit with his car a few days earlier. Her hair is still spiked, non-conformist clothes, headphones around her neck.

She sits on the front steps. Bob notices, but reacts only to the camera. He keeps scrubbing his car. Finally, he drops his sponge in his bucket and walks over to her.

BOB:

Ah, hello Trish.

TRISH:

Hi Mr. Majors.

(She turns her head away to look up the street, not wanting to talk)

BOB:

I almost ran you over the other day. You ought to be more careful crossing the street.

(Trish puts on her headphones.)

BOB:

You put on those headphones and you can't hear the cars.

(Trish turns up the volume)

BOB:

Look, that's not why I came over here.

(Trish is still turned away)

BOB:

I, ah, want to ask you something.

(She turns toward him)

TRISH:

What?

BOB:

I have a question for you.

TRISH:

Okay.

BOB:

Why don't you young people go to church?

(Trish doesn't answer at first. She is taken off guard. Then she avoids the question.)

TRISH:

I don't know.

(Bob sits on the steps next to her)

BOB:

I really want to know.

(Trish lets the headphones drop to her neck.)

TRISH:

It makes me uncomfortable.

BOB:

But it's God's house.

TRISH:

I don't like it.

BOB:

Why?

TRISH:

It's the people. They make me feel bad.

BOB:

How?

TRISH:

Why can't they let me be me? They stare at me, cause I'm not one of them. They don't like my hair or my clothes.

BOB:

Well, you should wear your Sunday best to church.

TRISH:

You see! That's what I mean. To me, this is my Sunday best!

BOB:

I mean dresses. Women should wear dresses.

TRISH:

(dismissively)

Whatever!

(beat)

BOB:

The church has some great music.

TRISH:

It's old people's music. It, just sounds bad. I don't mean to be disrespectful or anything, but I can't stand that old stuff. There's no beat to it. It's kind of like being at a funeral.

BOB:

It's great music.

(Trish begins to put her headphones back on. Bob speaks before she has a chance to tune him out.)

BOB:

What about the sermons?

TRISH:

They're boring. I don't understand them. They never have anything to do with what I have to deal with.

BOB:

That's not true.

TRISH:

When was the last time somebody talked about date rape or suicide?

(As Bob reacts, we hear a car approach. Trish rises and starts toward the street.)

TRISH:

I gotta go! Nice talking with you, Mr. Majors!

(Bob watches as Pete pulls up in his car. Trish gets in and says something to him. They turn and look at Bob and laugh as they drive off. Bob returns to his car and Maggie leaves her yard work to speak to him.)

MAGGIE:

You talk to her about church?

BOB:

Yeah.

MAGGIE:

How did it go?

BOB:

What do you think? She hates church. Says it's boring. Wears those crazy clothes and then wonders why people stare at her.

MAGGIE:

I don't know what's come into young people today.

BOB:

You got that right.

7. BOB'S CHURCH EXTERIOR – the church on Sunday morning. Bell rings. In the distance we see **Trish Forrester** walking down the sidewalk toward the church.

8. BOB'S CHURCH INTERIOR – the church sanctuary, same time. Rev. Jackson is preaching. There are mostly gray haired folks in the pews. A sanctuary is only half full (or less). Bob and Maggie are there along with the rest of the committee. Scene is shot from the POV of a young person watching from the sidelines.

9. BOB'S CHURCH EXTERIOR – the same time. Trish Forrester walks by the church listening to her music on her headphones. She pays no attention to the church.

10. CHURCH HALL INTERIOR – coffee hour after church. **GEORGE, MARY, SHARON and BOB** are visiting over coffee. Scene is shot from the POV of a young person watching from the sidelines.

SHARON:

The kids I talked to said they didn't like getting up early on Sunday mornings.

(group responds with amusement)

GEORGE:

They told me that we're just a club that doesn't do anything. I explained our mission giving, but they said we should be doing something ourselves – first hand.

MARY:

Boring. That's what my kids said. They don't like the music and they think our services are boring.

(Bob doesn't say anything.)

SHARON:

What about you, BOB? Did you talk with the Forrester girl?

BOB:

Yeah. Yesterday.

(beat)

BOB:

She said we weren't friendly. Can you imagine that?

(Group shakes their heads)

11. BOB'S CAR INTERIOR AND EXTERIOR – on the way home from church.
Establishing shot is POV of someone watching from the sidewalk.

BOB:

I don't like the way this is going. We are taking these young people too seriously.

MAGGIE:

What are they saying?

BOB:

They want to change the worship time. They want modern music. They want to turn the worship service into a sideshow!

MAGGIE:

I like our church the way it is.

BOB:

You better believe it! These changes will ruin years of tradition.

MAGGIE:

What are you going to do?

BOB:

We have another meeting this week. I'll try to put a stop to it.

MAGGIE:

What if they go ahead?

BOB:

We give a lot of money to this church. If we threaten to leave, that'll make them think twice about changing everything.

MAGGIE:

It would break my heart to leave our church.

(Bob nods in agreement with a serious look on his face)

12. BOB'S CHURCH EXTERIOR – early evening later that week. A car parks in the parking lot. Same POV of unseen youth watching.

13. CHURCH HALL INTERIOR – same time. Committee is gathered around the table. everyone is in the same seats as before. The empty chair is still empty across from BOB. An easel with newsprint has a list of all the negative things the young people have said. Same POV of unseen youth watching.

SHARON:

We've heard a lot of negative things since our last meeting. What should we do next?

BOB:

I think we should drop the whole thing. So kids don't like church. That's their problem, not ours! I don't agree with them. I like our church the way it is!

(pounds hand on table)

MARY:

Are there any kids who actually like going to church?

REV. JACKSON:

The church on the edge of town is bringing in a lot of kids.

MARY:

Why don't we visit them as find out what kids like about church?

GEORGE:

You know, Bob has a point. Maybe we're taking this a little too far.

SHARON:

We haven't decided ANYTHING yet. We are just gathering information.

(We see the empty chair in the shot)

SHARON:

Maybe we'll decide to do nothing. There's no harm in asking some questions.

MARY:

When are the services?

REV. JACKSON:

11 o'clock on Sunday. They call it the "Praise Jesus" service. I understand there are lots of kids there.

MARY:

Then let's go.

BOB:

I don't know...

MARY:

Com'on Bob. It won't be that bad. Bring some ear plugs.

14. BOB'S CHURCH EXTERIOR – church parking lot, following Sunday. **BOB, MARY, GEORGE** and **SHARON** are getting into Sharon's minivan. Same POV of unseen youth watching.

15. SHARON'S MINIVAN EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR – Sharon's minivan on way to other church. Shot showing van under way from POV of person on sidewalk.

BOB:

Do we have to do this?

SHARON:

Too late now.

GEORGE:

When we get there, should be tell them what we're doing?

SHARON:

I don't think so. Let's just say we're visiting and see what happens.

BOB:

This is a bad idea.

MARY:

Humor us, Bob. It'll be over before you know it.

- 16.** OTHER CHURCH EXTERIOR – other church parking lot, a few minutes later.
They park and get out of the minivan.

- 17.** OTHER CHURCH GATHERING AREA – church gathering area near the welcome booth. There is the sound of a band playing in the sanctuary. There are a lot of young adults and young people. A greeter speaks to them.

GREETER:

Welcome to Christ Community. I'm _____.

(George takes particular interest in Welcome Center.)

- 18.** OTHER CHURCH SANCTUARY – the same time. The band is playing. There's a lot of energy in the room. George looks for ushers and bulletins but sees none.

GEORGE:

Where's the bulletin?

(Group shrugs, not knowing)

(The group sits together in padded chairs. They look uncomfortable. Bob reaches into his pocket, takes out a set of ear plugs and puts them in.)

(We see a sampling of the worship service: the band, Power Point, testimony, sermon delivered without notes, pastor without a tie, etc. Various reaction shots of the group and the people in the congregation from their POV, including people who have brought cups of coffee into the sanctuary.)

19. OTHER CHURCH GATHERING AREA – church gathering area following the worship service.

(the group goes over to the coffee where a variety of flavored coffees are being offered. They all get some coffee.)

*(The group fans out into the visiting crowd. Bob takes his coffee and goes back into the sanctuary to be alone. He is staring at his cup when **JOSH**, a high school aged youth wanders in and takes a seat near him.)*

JOSH:
Hi there!

BOB:
Hi.

JOSH:
I'm Josh.

(He offers Bob a handshake. Bob takes it.)

BOB:
I'm Bob Majors.

JOSH:
Cool! Welcome to our church!

BOB:
Ah, thanks.

JOSH:
What did you think of our service?

BOB:
(uncomfortably)
I, ah, Well, it was different.

JOSH:
You didn't like it.

(he smiles disarmingly)

JOSH:
That's okay. It's not for everybody. But I tell you, this service and these people saved my life.

BOB:

What do you mean?

JOSH:

Couple of years ago I was in a bad way. On the outs with my parents. Running with the wrong crowd. Drinking. Drugs. You can figure it out.

(beat)

(Bob is totally interested, now)

JOSH:

I wasn't interested in church or anything like that. I went a few times, but wasn't for me, you know? It was okay for old people – don't take offense – but it wasn't for me. I figured God didn't want anything to do with me.

BOB:

But you're here.

JOSH:

Yeah. I'm here! A friend of mine asked me to come here to church with him. Only once, he said. I was scared cause I didn't think I could handle all those church people staring at me. Church people can have such an attitude, you know?

(Bob nods in agreement)

JOSH:

Well, I came. Walked through those doors over there. People smiled and accepted me. The music was great – just like the music I used to listen to, 'cept the words are clean and about love and life. And when Pastor Rick spoke, he talked about my problems. It was like he was talking right to me. Everything about this place reminded me I was still worth something to God. That Jesus hadn't given up on me.

(Bob is touched by what Josh has said. He is speechless.)

(beat)

JOSH:

I'm here because these people cared enough to speak my language and pull me out when I was in really deep.

BOB:

Why are you telling me this?

JOSH:

I tell everybody 'cause I don't know how deep they're in. There's hope if you can hear the Word in your own language and be surrounded by people who'll be there for you.

BOB:

And that service is in your language?

JOSH:

Yes, sir.

BOB:

Thanks, Josh. Good to meet you.

JOSH:

You too, Mr. Majors.

(Josh leaves and Bob sits quietly, lost in thought)

20. SHARON'S MINIVAN INTERIOR & EXTERIOR – Sharon's Minivan, a few minutes later

(Bob is lost in thought, looking out the window. As they near their church, Bob sees TRISH out walking. He starts to wave, but hesitates. She isn't paying attention. We see the van from Trish's POV as it goes by.)

21. BOB & MAGGIE'S HOME INTERIOR – dining room, later that same day.

MAGGIE:

What's the committee going to recommend?

BOB:

I don't know. We're going to meet tomorrow night.

MAGGIE:

Are they going to change things?

BOB:

I think so.

MAGGIE:

What are we going to do?

BOB:

I don't really know, honey.

22. BOB'S CHURCH HALL INTERIOR – the next evening. The committee is gathered around the same tables. The empty chair is still unoccupied. Scene is shot from the same POV as before.

MARY:

I think we should try some of those things here.

GEORGE:

I liked the welcome center idea, but I'm not sure about that music.

SHARON:

There was a lot of energy in that worship service!

MARY:

It was kind of exciting!

REV. JACKSON:

How are we going to help the rest of the congregation go along with this?

SHARON:

We'll have to explain why the changes are important.

GEORGE:

It's not going to be easy. People are creatures of habit. We don't like trying something new.

MARY:

But we have to make some changes if we want young people to be a part of the church.

REV. JACKSON:

And it's going to take some time....

(everyone's voices have been trailing deeper into reverberance as the camera zooms slowly in on Bob, who is lost in his own thoughts)

MARY:

Bob, what do you think?

(he doesn't hear at first)

SHARON:

Bob!

BOB:

Huh? What? I'm sorry.

MARY:

I was asking you what you thought about making some changes so more young people will feel at home here.

BOB:

I think it's time for us to let some new things happen in our church.

(the group is surprised at this and looks at each other in bewilderment. POV suggests unseen youth is moving closer to the table.)

BOB:

I don't like the changes. I'll never like modern music. I'll always wear a suit and tie to church. And I like my Sunday bulletin.

(group nods in understanding)

BOB:

(as camera slowly pulls back)

But I think there comes a time when people like me need to get out of the way. I could raise a stink and stop this whole thing dead in its tracks. But I learned yesterday that there's a lot more at stake than my personal satisfaction.

*(the camera has pulled back to reveal **TRISH** sitting in what was the empty seat across from Bob. From over her shoulder we see Bob giving her a nod. Cutting to the reverse shot over Bob's shoulder, we see **TRISH** offer a smile.)*

BOB:

I'm not interested in these changes, but I won't withdraw my support. I won't speak against the changes. It's time we offered young people like Trish here, a place at the table.

(Trish smiles broadly as the others accept her)

(We see Bob break into a little smile. Fade to black)

23. NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS EXTERIOR – older model car driving down neighborhood streets - Early Evening. **Trish & Pete** are out walking with headphones, etc. They are dressed in non-conformist styles, **Trish** has spikes in her hair. Dark makeup. Closing Titles are spaced out during these final scenes.

24. BOB’S CAR INTERIOR & EXTERIOR – Driven by **Bob** - Same Time. The car approaches an intersection as the youth turn to cross the street. Bob rolls down his window as he slows for the young people.

BOB:

Going to church?

TRISH:

Oh, Hi Mr. Majors! Yeah!

BOB:

That’s where I’m headed. Want a lift?

(Trish looks at Pete who nods)

TRISH:

Sure!

(They come around and get in Bob’s car. The rest of the dialogue is wild sound under images of the car driving off.)

PETE:

Can I drive?

BOB:

Not on your life. This car is a classic.

TRISH:

This car is ready for the old folks home.

25. BOB'S CHURCH SANCTUARY INTERIOR – a few minutes later. A band is getting ready to play as Trish and Pete take their seats near the front.

*(From OTS of one of the musicians, we see **BOB** standing in the back of the sanctuary. The band begins to play and the young people begin to clap.)*

(As the credits conclude, we see Bob, with a smile on his face, look at the young people and the band. He then reaches into his pocket and pulls out a pair of ear plugs which he puts in his ears, and then smiles with satisfaction as the scene fades to black.)