

# What is the moral message that priestly wants us to learn

[Experience](#), [Human Nature](#)



In this essay I will be exploring several characters in the play of An Inspector Calls. After exploring these characters I will analyse them again to see what developments may happen to them after they are interrogated by the inspector. I will also explain my views on what morals I think come to mind with each character I analyse. I will conclude with what I think the moral message is that Priestly is trying to put across in the play of an inspector calls.

The play is about a family which to begin with are celebrating the engagement of Shelia (Mr. Birling's daughter) and Gerald. As you get in to more depth of the play the Birling family are interrogated by mysterious inspector Goole and the family starts to reveal it's true colours as it's relationship deteriorates between family members, as we find out every member has something to do with the death of young working - class woman Eva Smith.

John Boynton Priestly the author of this interesting play was born in Bradford, Yorkshire on 13th September 1894. Sadly his mother and father died on the same year.

To begin with I will analyse Arthur Birling. He is very family orientated and dominating to his family " Yes, my dear, I know - I'm talking too much. But you youngsters just remember what I said". Here we can see that Mr. Birling is taking charge over his family, he likes to have the last word so in a way he is very manipulative in the beginning of the play before we come across Inspector Goole.

As Mr. Birling is inspected by Inspector Goole his mood changes entirely “(angrily) Look here, Inspector I consider this uncalled – for and officious. I’ve half a mind to report you. I’ve told you all I know – and it doesn’t seem to me very important...” So from this quote you can see that whilst under interrogation Mr. Birling becomes aggressive, after going from his original perception of a family orientated man who was dominating. But now I see him as aggressive and defensive.

Towards the end of the play Mr. Birling again becomes a different person. Gerald says “... (he puts down the telephone and looks at them) No girl has died in there today. Nobody’s been brought in after drinking disinfectant. They haven’t had a suicide for months”. Then Mr. Birling says “(triumphantly) there you are! Proof positive. The whole story’s just a lot of moonshine. Nothing but an elaborate sell!...” “ Gerald, have a drink” So from analysing this we can see that again Mr. Birling is a changed person; he is relieved that no-one died from suicide and to suggest he is relieved he tells Gerald to have a drink.

My moral for Mr. Birling is possibly the same for each character: Never judge a book by its cover. To begin with Mr. Birling is a relaxed family man, and a bit dominating. Then he is put under inspection and becomes very defensive and aggressive. And towards the end Mr. Birling is another changed man he’s happy again and celebrating the fact everyone has revealed their true colours (including) himself, and that perhaps everyone has learnt a new lesson in life.

I will now analyse Shelia: To begin with she comes across as very sweet and innocent "(quiet and serious now) All right then I drink to you Gerald". As you can see she seems very sweet toasting to Gerald who is getting engaged to Shelia. As Shelia is put under inspection by Inspector Goole Shelia's personality changes from sweet and innocent to fake and paranoid " Was that her name? Eva Smith?...Never heard it before" then later another extract " who looks as if she's being crying) You knew it was me the whole time didn't you?" From these quotes you can see she is not as innocent as she first seems. She is a liar (Eva Smith?...Never heard it before) and paranoid because she is definite the inspector already knew that she knew Eva Smith.

As we get to the end of the play Shelia becomes a very open person, I think this is because she has nothing else to hide. Also I think Shelia is not sweet and innocent anymore but an open person, but she is still opinionated. "(passionately) You're pretending everything's just as it were before" This quote is showing Shelia's opinionated personality you can see this from where it puts in brackets: passionately. " So nothing really happened. So there's nothing to be sorry for, nothing to learn.

We can all go on behaving as we did"... Then after this Mrs. Birling says : " Well, why shouldn't we" These two quotes from Shelia and Mrs. Birling show again firstly that Shelia is opinionated by the fact she is being sarcastic about acting before the inspector came. We can tell Shelia is being sarcastic because Mrs. Birling says straight after Shelia : " Well, why shouldn't we?". My second point about Shelia is that she is an open person now she doesn't

want to lie or keep things to herself she must say her view. And one can see she is all open where she is exclaiming that she thinks they can't go back to before the inspector came he has taught us a lesson.

A moral for Shelia is: always be yourself and don't let things get out of hand.

I'm now going to move on to my next character, Gerald. At first he is quite quiet compared to other characters, later on he gets louder. Anyway to begin with he is also very polite. "(politely) Thank you. And I drink to you - and hope I can make you as happy as you deserve to be" So this quote shows from his expression and his gratitude that Gerald to begin with is very quiet and I think holding back on something, maybe this is why he is quite quiet to begin with.

When Gerald is inspected his personality changes slightly. Gerald becomes a liar " Alright I knew her lets leave it at that" This makes me think he's hiding more information, also he's changing the subject what exactly is he trying to hide? Gerald is now also quite affectionate for people, easily taken over and I think this is why he cheated on Shelia " I want you to understand that I didn't install her there so I could make love to her. I made her go to Morgan Terrace because I was sorry for her, and didn't like the idea of her going back to the Palace Bar" This quote shows that Gerald firstly has at least some feelings for Daisy Renton (Eva Smith) and that also he is easily over taken by something. For example, earlier in the play, he said he first saw her in the Palace Bar with the look of cry for help, so he gives her a place to live, he then realises she has feelings for him and gets pulled in.

At the end of the play Gerald is pretty much the same as he was when he was under inspection truthful, and not afraid to talk. But throughout the play I have noticed he has a quiet nature. Anyway towards the end he is just quiet but truthful I suppose he is genuine also in his personality and what he says. "...He swore there wasn't any Inspector Goole or anybody like him on the force here" This just basically shows Gerald's honesty and the fact he is genuine as you would find out when Mr. Birling straight after this conversation enquires about the inspector and finds that indeed he is a fake. My moral for Gerald is: You can show affection no problem but being loyal to others and still maintaining self - respect and dignity for yourself is another thing.

Next character I will analyse is Sybil (better known as Mrs. Birling). To begin with we hear a very minute amount from Mrs. Birling. Anyway just before her inspection from the inspector we hear some more "...you may have to conduct some sort of inquiry, but I must say that so far you seem to be conducting in a rather peculiar and offensive manner." So I would say to begin with Mrs. Birling is quite defensive over Sheila mainly, and herself from being inspected by the inspector. I would say she is quite defensive and opinionated and what you see is what you get.

When Mrs. Birling is put under inspection she starts becoming reluctant to answer questions, but when she gets round to answering them we find out that she also has something funny enough like everyone else to do with Eva Smith's (Daisy Renton's) death. " Was it or was it not your influence? Then

Mrs. Birling says: (stung) Yes, it was. I didn't like her manner. She'd impertinently made use of our name, though she pretended afterwards it just happened to be the first she thought of". So Mrs. Birling had a lot of influence over Eva Smith's (Daisy Renton's) Chance for another job, quite unpredictable is how I would describe Mrs. Birling.

Towards the end of the play Mrs. Birling is pretty much the same as she was to begin with, at the beginning of the play apart from the fact she has got Eva Smith (Daisy Renton) off her chest. I also think Mrs. Birling is quite clever. " He certainly didn't make me confess - as you call it. I told him quite plainly that I thought I had done no more than duty" So this shows Mrs. Birling knows what she had been talking about. She answered some of the inspector's questions but only briefly. I think Mrs. Birling is quite a genuine character what you see is what you get.

My moral for Mrs. Birling is: It is ok even good to look over other's backs, but remember treat people how you would like to be treated, also a secret will reveal itself like a pair of curtains eventually.

The last character I am going to analyse is Eric (Mr. Birling's son). You never really hear much from him apart from when he's under inspection. Anyway I think he has a bit of attitude but apart from that I can't think of any other ways to describe him "(still uneasy) Well, I don't think it's very funny" this quote shows in a way Eric talks with attitude.

When Eric is put under inspection we find out he also like everyone else has some relevance to Eva Smith's (Daisy Renton's)

Death. Anyway, we find that Eric is not as innocent as he seems I suppose he is a bit misleading. "Yes I wasn't in love with her or anything but she was a good sport" And check out this quote, this is what Mr. Birling says: "...Where did you get fifty pounds from?" then Eric shortly replies: "(miserably) I got it - from the office". So Eric stole £50 which was a lot back when this play was written, anyway so Eric steals £50 and makes love to Eva Smith (Daisy Renton), you wouldn't expect that from the son of a family with a really good, wealthy background!!!!!!

Towards the end of the play Eric is pretty much the same as he was to begin with: partly misleading, and having attitude. He is not misleading at all in the end but he becomes quite opinionated. "I don't see much nonsense about it when a girl goes and kills herself. You lot may be letting yourselves out nicely, but I can't nor can mother we all did her in alright". So as we can see from this quote Eric is opinionated with a bit of attitude but nothing else. He is defiantly not an innocent, sweet son though!

My moral for Eric is: When you go to help someone be very sure they need help!

I will now analyse my final character, the Inspector.

The inspector has quite a few rows with the Birling family which is not part of his job, apart from this though a lot of people say the Inspector is indeed an impostor but I think he might be from the future. I say this because just at the end of the play Mr. Birling gets a phone call saying a girl has just committed suicide in the infirmary by drinking disinfectant. "(Cutting in



smoothly) Just a minute, Mr. Birling. There'll be plenty of time, when I've gone, for you all to adjust your family relationships.

But now I must hear what your son has to tell me (sternly, to the three of them) and I'll be obliged if you let us get on without any interruptions". This quote shows one of the inspector's many rows with the Birling family, anyway I suppose he rows with the family so he can get on with his job, but I must say if you row with suspects too much then why should the suspects help an inspector out? That is what would happen in real life!

Anyway the inspector had a massive effect on the family getting them to reveal all their secrets into making Eva Smith's (Daisy Renton's) life worse. This made the entire Birling family feel very bad until they realised an Eva Smith was not really dead. But I'm sure it all taught them a lesson, a moral:

In conclusion to this essay I find that most characters changed in personality after their inspection. Anyway my moral is: Firstly you can never judge a book by its cover, and even if you think you are being helpful or feel strongly against something doesn't necessarily mean you should make the world of it, Stop ; listen may be your way to avoid sorrow!