

# The morality play everyman theology religion essay

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



The autonomous author portrays several human conditions in the morality play, *Everyman*. The human characteristics are rendered by the character, *Everyman*, who is a representative of mankind. *Everyman* soon learns of God's plan when he meets the messenger *Death*, who has come to claim his soul in order to bring him for final judgment. *Everyman's* portrayal of ignorance is evident when *Death* says, " Full little he thinketh on my coming; His mind is on fleshy lusts and his treasure, And great pain it shall cause him to endure Before the Lord, Heaven-King" (lines 81-84). *Death's* adherence to his tasking from God is evident in " For before God thou shalt answer and shew, Thy many bad deeds and good but a few - How thou hast spent thy life in what wise Before the Chief Lord of Paradise" (lines 107-10).

Society as a whole often divulges in a life of sin whereas at that time the sin is being committed, it seems innocently enough and not as bad. Humans try to rationalize sins as being ok but do not realize that it leads them to damnation in the end on judgment day and in the eyes of God. The messenger *Death* best captures this by what he had said, " Ye think sin in the beginning full sweet, Which in the end causeth the soul to weep (lines 12-14).

Humanity is called upon to come forth once his journey from birth to death commences in order to see God and stand for judgment. In the beginning of the play, God instructs his messenger, *Death*, to find *Everyman* and take him on his pilgrimage to judgment. No man can escape God's judgment and accountability. God says, " Go thou to *Everyman*, And show him, in my name, A pilgrimage he must on him take, Which he in no wise may escape;

And that he bring with him a sure reckoning Without delay or any tarrying  
(lines 66-71).

In capturing society's penitence and repentance, we see Knowledge assisting Everyman in the cleansing of his soul while he undergoes a physical and mental change by playing out the enduring contrast of the earthly and divine worlds. His body suffers for the sins of the flesh and lust while his soul is redeemed while undergoing a worldly pain which leads him to a spiritual salvation. " In the name of the Holy Trinity My body sore punished shall be; Take this, body, for the sin of the flesh (lines 611-13)! " Therefore suffer now strokes of punishing! Now penance I will wade the water clear, To save me from purgatory, that sharp fire (lines 616-18).

In recent events and aggressive reporting by the social media, our society has become aware of the impending misbehaviors of certain church officials around the world that suggests that the Church has swept these reports of misconduct under the table. As seen with the newly appointed Pope, he inherited a church facing serious challenges and allegations. In this story, there is a debate between Knowledge and Five Wits concerning priests. Five Wits praises the priests while Knowledge denigrates certain priests as being too concerned with earthly pleasures and forgetting the pilgrimage of spiritual growth. Here we see another example of the constant battle between the " earthly" and " divine" worlds. Knowledge says, " Sinful priests giveth the sinners example bad; Their children sitteth by other men's fires, I have heard, And some haunteth women's company, With unclean life, as lusts of lechery (lines 759-63). Five Wits fires back with, " I trust to God no

such may we find. Therefore let us priesthood honor, And follow their doctrine for our souls' succor. We be their sheep and they shepherds be, By whom we all be kept in surety (lines 764-86).

The morality play, *Everyman*, depicts mankind and anthropomorphizes their constant plight of relationships, devotion, and responsibility until their pending death. *Everyman* is represented by almost every character except for God, Death, the Angel and the Doctor. I think that most societies of today can relate with this play in some way. *Everyman* was written when people's lives centered on the ideals of the traditional medieval church. Upon a Christian's death their lifelong activities, achievements, sufferings, and problems are reviewed in front of God on judgment day. The characters in this story represent the many elements of a society's existence and personified discernments. During the Medieval Age, it was common for people to try to survive life's obstacles and hindrances while maintaining an ethical or divine growth as a Christian disciple. This piece captures and humanizes a society's fight in achieving true salvation and preparation of one's soul for impending death. Upon facing death, most people usually find themselves authenticating their lives and trying to ensure that their life meant something good. Most people do not tend face death with open arms. *Everyman* represents mankind in their cleansing of one's sins before he can transcend into their afterlife. The medieval Christian believed that the only way to achieve salvation was through the Seven Holy Sacraments, priests, and the medieval church.