

Canturbury tales: situational irony in the pardoner's story assignment

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Situational Irony in The Pardoner's Story In The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer the Pardoner's actions of dishonesty and greed are prime examples of situational irony. Situational irony is when something or someone does the opposite of what is expected. ' In church he was a noble ecclesiast' (Chaucer 141) The Pardoner is supposedly a man of God, yet he does not act like it. He is disrespectful and even dishonest.

However, he comes off as righteous by telling biblical stories and preaching. By being hypocritical and greedy the Pardoner is the perfect example of situational irony. To begin, the Pardoner shows situational irony by being dishonest. He steals from the church constantly. '...with others I have power to win them from it, I can bring them to repent...' (Chaucer 151) Basically, he acts as a salesman by talking people into buying more pardons, and then keeps the money for himself.

He uses his talent of thinking on his feet and coming up with great biblical stories to earn money, ' A yokel mind loves stories of old, being the kind it can repeat and hold...' (Chaucer 152) He convinces people the things they have done are worse than they are, therefore they are conned into giving him more money, which he keeps all for himself. As ironic as it is to see the Pardoner be dishonest, it is even more ironic how greedy is. Like mentioned before he makes his living off of selling pardons, even pardons against avarice, yet he is very greedy himself.

He admits he'll go after anyone for money. ' I mean to have money...though it were given to me by the poorest lad...' (Chaucer 152) He admits to preaching only because he wants money saying, ' A livelihood. I do not

preach in vain...I mean to have money...' (Chaucer 152) It is also very apparent that the Pardoner is greedy enough to steal from the collection baskets in church, ' But best of all he sang an Offertory...' (Chaucer 141) This implies he takes the money from there as well. In conclusion, the Pardoner in The Canterbury Tales by Geoffrey Chaucer is a living example of situational irony.

He is dishonest and greedy. Instead of doing his duties to the church and helping others with sins, he takes advantage of peoples' guilt and pockets the money. He does not care about the church and even admits to not liking work, '...Let me preach and beg from kirk to kirk and never do an honest job of work...' (Chaucer 152) This just sums up the situational irony of the Pardoner. He appears to be a man of God helping people absolve there sins, but ironically he is dishonest and greedy.