

**THE VANISHING TIME**

by

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**Summary:** A short video script which we used as part of our small group programme based on the book the Screwtape Letters by C. S. Lewis, published by Harper Collins and available at all good book shops. It demonstrates why we

**Bible Reference:** Ephesians 5:16, 1 Peter 5:8

**Characters:** Screwtape, Wormwood, two devils; Husband and Wife, an ordinary couple

**Props:** TV, Remote Control, Clock, Dishwasher, Bag of Golf Clubs

**Setting:** Two sets are needed – we used actor's houses.

**SCENE 1. INT. – NIGHT: WORMWOOD'S STUDY**

**A COMFORTABLE STUDY. WORMWOOD WELCOMES HIS UNCLE SCREWTAPE WHO HAS JUST ARRIVED. BOTH DEVILS ARE DRESSED SMARTLY IN DINNER JACKETS AND HAVE LIGHT UP HORNS. THE STUDY CONTAINS A LARGE WIDE FLATSCREEN TELEVISION OF THE LATEST DESIGN.**

**WORMWOOD**

So glad you could come Uncle Screwtape.

**SCREWTAPE**

This had better be worth it.

**WORMWOOD**

I'm sure you'll be impressed, uncle. I've been working hard on this project for ages. It's the latest directive from the high command, and it's just marvellous!

**SCREWTAPE**

Excellent. Show me what you've got.

**WORMWOOD OPERATES THE TV REMOTE AND THE WIDESCREEN SPRINGS INTO LIFE.**

## **SCENE 2. INT. – NIGHT: THE KITCHEN**

A SUBURBAN KITCHEN. THE CLOCK ON THE WALL SHOWS 8:00. THE CALENDAR SHOWS A FRIDAY IN SEPTEMBER. A HUSBAND AND WIFE ARE EMPTYING THE DISHWASHER.

### **HUSBAND**

What do we need from Tesco's? I thought I'd go this evening and get it over with.

### **WIFE**

Do you have to go now? It's a poor way to spend a Friday evening shopping. What about that DVD of Casablanca you bought me for my birthday. I've been looking forward to watching it with you. We can go shopping tomorrow, when we'll have more time.

## **SCENE 3. INT. – DAY: KITCHEN**

THE CALENDAR SHOWS SATURDAY. THE CLOCK SHOWS 9:10. THE WIFE IS LOADING THE DISHWASHER. THE HUSBAND COMES IN CARRYING A BAG OF GOLF CLUBS.

### **HUSBAND**

I'm off then.

### **WIFE**

Shouldn't we be going to Tesco's?

### **HUSBAND**

( HE HAS FORGOTTEN) Oh no! I promised the lads a round this morning. I can't let them down can I? They'll be plenty of time this afternoon.

**SCENE 4. INT. – DAY: KITCHEN**

**THE CLOCK HAS ADVANCES TO 4:55. THE HUSBAND SNEAKS IN WITH HIS GOLF CLUBS.**

**HUSBAND**

Where has she got to?

**THE WIFE ENTERS BEHIND HER HUSBAND. SHE HAS HER COAT ON.**

**WIFE**

And where have you been?

**HUSBAND**

( STARTLED) Ummm. Well we went for a drink after the game.

**WIFE**

For five hours?

**HUSBAND**

It was only for four and a half.

**WIFE**

Leaving me to take the boys swimming, and then Mrs McGruber had one of her turns.

**HUSBAND**

But what about the horse riding?

**WIFE**

And I took the boys horse riding.

**HUSBAND**

Right.

**WIFE**

And I'm not doing another thing.

**HUSBAND**

Right.

**WIFE**

Right.

**SCENE 5. INT. – DAY: KITCHEN**

**THE CALENDAR INDICATES SUNDAY. IT IS 9:30 AM. THE HUSBAND HAS BREAKFAST READY.**

**HUSBAND**

( CALLING UPSTAIRS) Come on. We'll be late for church.

**WIFE ENTERS SLEEPILY.**

**WIFE**

I need to get the dinner on.

**HUSBAND**

Great. I'll peel the potatoes.

**THEY OPEN THE CUPBOARD, BUT IT'S EMPTY APART FROM A POT NOODLE, WHICH THE HUSBAND REMOVES AND SHOWS HIS WIFE.**

**WIFE**

Oh, no. We forgot to go to Tesco's.

**HUSBAND**

If we go now, we'll miss church.

**WIFE**

Well, we'll just have to miss it, that's all. We need food to live.

**SCENE 6. INT. – NIGHT: WORMWOOD'S STUDY**

**WORMWOOD SWITCHES OFF THE TV.**

**SCREWTAPE**

Well done nephew. Some real advances in our mission to disconnect our victims' faith from reality. I didn't think you had it in you.

**WORMWOOD**

Thank you uncle. We've made some spectacular advances since your day.

**SCREWTAPE**

Yes, tell them: "Put off till tomorrow everything you can." It makes use of their inherent laziness.

**WORMWOOD**

But that's the old saying, uncle. We now use one that's much much better.

**SCREWTAPE**

How do you mean?

**WORMWOOD**

What we tell humans these days is: "There will be more time tomorrow"!

**SCREWTAPE**

Yes, I see. "There will be more time tomorrow." It's an exceptionally clever lie.

**WORMWOOD**

And what outrageous fun – it's such a huge and obvious lie.

**SCREWTAPE**

And the humans swallow it?

**WORMWOOD**

Hook, line and sinker!