



ZOOM



**SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER**  
Matt Hanify, John Cisar and Thatcher Williams star in "The Bible: The Complete Word of God (abridged)."

#### "The Bible: The Complete Word of God (Abridged)"

**WHERE:** Viking Theatre at Grand View College, 2811 E. 14th St.

**WHEN:** Through Dec. 18

**CURTAIN:** 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday; 3 p.m. Sunday; 7:30 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday

**LENGTH:** 1 hour, 50 minutes

**RATING:** PG-13 for language and a few silly but sexually suggestive moments.

**TICKETS:** \$10 for adults; \$5 for students and seniors; \$2 for Grand View College students

## Amusing gags in 'Bible' supply inoffensive theatre fun

By JEFFREY BRUNER  
REGISTER THEATER CRITIC

December 5, 2005

A little forgiveness may be in order for the minor sins committed in Theater . . . for a Change's production of "The Bible: The Complete Word of God (Abridged)."

This community theater production of the Reduced Shakespeare Company comedy runs through Dec. 18 at the Viking Theatre at Grand View College.

The show is similar in structure to the company's Shakespeare play, a hit earlier this year at the Iowa Fringe Festival — take a massive subject, re-enact the famous parts with maximum camp, and toss in as many pop culture references as possible. It's essentially vaudeville with a little edge.

And the hardworking trio of Thatcher Williams, John Cisar and Matt Hanify work nonstop with the funny material — the Top Ten Rejected Commandments, the Tower of Babel represented as the worst soap opera ever broadcast on Telemundo, and so forth. My favorite was Cisar's bit on the Funniest Parts of the Book of Job, done entirely with facial expressions.

Yet opening night Friday was rough around the edges — the sound was too quiet at times, several lighting cues misfired, and a visual effect meant to show the enormity of the voice of God wasn't a good match with the booming voice from offstage. The show is so frenetic at times that the frat-boy camaraderie ebbed and flowed — it didn't quite have a we're-all-in-this-together feeling.

This was Theater . . . for a Change's first show at the Viking Theatre, so the technical issues should be smoothed over by this coming weekend.

More importantly, Williams, Cisar and Hanify give three dedicated performances that never take anything too seriously while being careful to keep the comedy inoffensive. This is an irreverent, goofy evening of fun that should be amusing to anyone who ever attended Vacation Bible School.

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