SAVING THROW

PRINCIPLES

When playing this game there are seven principles to keep in mind at all times.

1. Evangelical premillenial dispensationalist protestant Christianity is always correct.
2. All other religions and philosophies are wrong and satanic, especially Catholicism.
3. Real Christianity is not well known, but deep down everyone knows it is true.
4. Christianity is known by all unbelievers, who persecute Christians constantly.
5. The Bible[1] is looked down upon, and unbelievers desperately put it down all the time.
6. Finding Jesus fixes people, like magic, making them nicer and more attractive.
7. Only accepting Jesus can save you. Good works do not count.[2]

SETTING UP

To play you will need 3 people, 15 tokens, and a 20-sided die. Set the tokens and the die in the center of the table.

First, pick a topic for the tract. This should be some kind of sin or incorrect belief that the tract will warn people against. If you have trouble thinking of one, you can simply roll a d20 on the list below.

1	Abortion	11	Halloween
2	Atheism/Secularism	12	Homosexuality
3	Catholicism	13	Islam
4	Communion Wafers	14	Jesuits
5	Communism	15	Mormons
6	The Cult of Ecologicalness	16	New World Order
7	Drugs/Alcohol/STDs	17	The Occult
8	Dungeons & Dragons	18	The Pope
9	Evolution	19	Voodoo
10	Freemasons/Baphomet	20	Witches/Paganism

THE THREE ROLES

One person will play the Sinner, one will be the Light, and one will be the Dark.

The Sinner is the protagonist of the piece, someone who has the potential to find Jesus but might not. He is an ordinary person, ignorant of scripture. He can be just a regular guy, a follower of a false religion, or even an unbeliever, occultist, or homosexual.[3]

The Light represents all the forces that push the Sinner towards Jesus. The Light's characters are tall, handsome/beautiful, clean-shaven, morally upright, and kind but firm. The player most familiar with the Bible should be the Light.

The Dark represents all the forces that push the Sinner towards damnation (i.e. anything in the universe other than Jesus). The Dark's characters are short, round, ugly, have stubble, are morally bankrupt, hate Jesus with every fiber of their being, and tend to laugh by going "HAW HAW HAW!"

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[1] KJV only!
[2] Isaiah 64:6
[3] To make a black version of your tract, give the Sinner and all other character an afro and bell bottoms.

THE STORY

The game plays out an improvised story. The Light and Dark players take turns presenting the Sinner player with arguments or situations. For each of these, the Light or Dark player claims a token depending on whether they Sinner's response tends towards Jesus or not-Jesus. The Light player can claim a second token if he can give a suitable quote from scripture. The Dark player can claim a second token if he can tie the darkness to the Catholic Church. Since the Light payer represents Jesus, he will be the final arbiter when it comes to assigning tokens. Continue taking turns until all of the tokens have gone to the Light and/or Dark players, then move on to the Saving Throw.

THE SAVING THROW

The Sinner player rolls the die, adding the number of Light tokens and subtracting the number of Dark tokens. If the result is 11 or higher, the Sinner character is able to accept Jesus before dying and is saved. On a 10 or less the Sinner fails to accept Jesus and is damned. Either way, he dies.[1]

EPILOGUE

If the Sinner is saved, the Light player takes on the role of an angel, who escorts the Sinner to the Throne of God for judgment.[2] Since he is saved, the Sinner goes to his reward in heaven.[3]

If the Sinner is damned, Death stops by and says "Hi there!" The Dark player then takes on the role of a demon (who may have been another Dark character wearing a mask) who taunts the dead Sinner and tells him that he goofed. The Light player plays an angel, who takes the Sinner before the Throne of God, and God/Jesus tells the Sinner character that he had the chance to repent and chose not to, so he will now go to hell.[4]

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[1] Luke 12:20
[2] Rev. 1:8
[3] Matthew 25:21
[4] Revelation 20:15

JACK CHICK SAYS THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO HEAVEN!

Saving Throw is a satire of the works of Jack Chick, an exceedingly prolific publisher of evangelical Christian tracts. Jack Chick is a fascinating figure, enmeshed in a paranoid, inward-looking worldview, yet with a deep vision that many find compelling, and some even find convincing. I won't claim to know what the ultimate truths of the cosmos are, but everything I have ever experienced tells me that in real life nothing is as straightforward as it is in Jack Chick's world. Religion is a complex, nuanced, and above all a very human thing. The true validity of a religious idea is in whether it leads to practical compassion,[1] and while there are many aspects of religion I find... unconvincing, there are undeniably many people who are kinder than they might be otherwise due to their encounter with Jesus or some other teacher.

For added fun, you can easily reskin this game to be about other over the top beliefs. Change the flavor of the Principles and of how the Light/Dark/Sinner work, and you can have it be about MRAs, D&D grognards, over the top otaku, PETA members, Cthulhu cultists, etc. Also, although comedy naturally lends itself to cutting down the powerful, don't assume that the stuff you believe in is above this kind of parody.

Further Reading/Viewing

The Battle for God, by Karen Armstrong

The Bible, Various Authors

Chick Publications (www.chick.com)

God's Cartoonist: Jack Chick's Comic Crusade

The Imp, by Dan Raeburn

The World of Jack T. Chick, by Robert B. Fowler

ART SPECS

- Cover: A d20 with a cross where the 20 would be.
- Sinner caught between Light and Dark
- Death saying "HI THERE!"
- A soul brought before the Throne of God

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[1] Karen Armstrong