

PLAYING A SUPPORTING ROLE

I shared with everyone a few weeks ago that I had been asked by my daughter and some other students in her film class to play the role of a grieving father in their production. Filming finished a couple of weeks ago and it was edited and submitted to the teacher. He was very impressed by the final version and sent an e-mail to my daughter and her other colleagues complimenting them on what a great job they had done. The teacher did not send me an e-mail about my great acting contribution, but I just assumed he did not have my contact information.

The film was then submitted to the Cross Cuts competition to be judged against other submissions. In the days leading up to this competition, I began asking my daughter what I should wear to the night of the event. I thought a tuxedo might be in order just like we see people wearing at the Oscars, but she did not think that was a good idea. I thought about wearing a flowing scarf instead, but she said no to this suggestion as well. My daughter and wife insisted they would pick out what I should wear.

When I arrived at the Cross Cuts event, I immediately sought out one of my fellow supporting actors and gave him a big hug. Isn't this what actors and actresses from a cast do? We sat together once inside but, unfortunately, we were not seated around tables like what is seen at some award shows. We sat through many films in the first hour and then broke for intermission. During this break, we actors began to ask each other what each thought of our competition and our chances of winning. Isn't this what actors and actresses from a cast do as well?

Finally, intermission ended, and we watched more films. When our film came on my daughter nudged me to let me know. I don't think I was asleep when she did this. As the film began, I recognized my stubby hands on the steering wheel of the car. Then my face came on screen with a sad expression displaying my grief. The camera panned on both my daughter and me looking sad and showed the reason why with a shot of the bulletin she was holding from the funeral we just left. My role lasted maybe 20-30 seconds.

The film then moved on to the next scene and I was all smiles and even nudged my wife sitting beside me to see how impressed she was with my acting skills. Once our film was over, our section hooted and hollered with excitement. Isn't this what actors and actresses do as well? It came time to

announce the winner. We won first place and were awarded with a cheque for \$250. Despite my supporting role I was not invited on stage to accept the award. I also found it strange that I was not offered any of the prize money afterward. I was happy though to play a supporting role in their film and to see my name included in the credits for playing the role of "grieving dad."

My supporting role in my first film reminded me how we are invited to do the same in the story that God is writing. I thought about the young boy who played a supporting role in the miracle of the "Feeding of the 5,000" when he offered 5 barley loaves and 2 fish to Jesus. I also thought about the supporting role played by the owner of the colt who gave it to Jesus so that He could make His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. I was also reminded of the passage below about the many people who played a supporting role in Jesus' ministry:

Soon afterward Jesus began a tour on the nearby towns and villages preaching and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom of God. He took His twelve disciples with Him, along with some women He had healed and from whom He had cast out seven demons; Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's business manager; Susanna; and many others who were contributing their own resources to support Jesus and His disciples (Luke 8:1-3)

Luke provides us with a glimpse of some of the people behind the scenes that supported Jesus in His ministry. Even though the support offered by the boy who offered his lunch, the offering made by the owner of the colt, and the contributions of these women following Jesus were not as visible as the work of the disciples, their roles were just as essential in helping with His ministry.

We sometimes forget the privilege we are being given by playing a supporting role in the story God is writing. Let's not underestimate what God can do when we step up to the supporting roles He is asking of us. We may not fully see all that He is accomplishing through our supporting efforts, but we can rest assured that He is turning them into wins for the Kingdom of God.

I do not have any more acting jobs on my calendar at this time, but it has only been a few days since my acting premiere. If any director needs somebody to play the role of a grieving father, I can at least say I have experience.

Keep safe and God bless,

Pastor Dean