

PLAYING MY PART

I was asked to play a role in a movie recently. I am on camera almost every week filming our worship services so naturally some big screen movie company or the Hallmark Channel might be interested in me playing the role of a preacher. The request, however, came from my daughter for a movie she and a group of fellow students are doing in film class. When it was determined that they needed somebody who could dress up in black and appear at a cemetery for a certain scene, my daughter knew I was the perfect person for the role. I was thrilled to be asked because last year when my daughter directed a film for the "Cross Cuts" competition she gave my wife a role, but not me.

As the days got closer to filming, I asked my daughter to give me my lines so I could begin rehearsing. I was informed at that moment that they decided I should have no lines. Preachers like me are just used to opening our mouths and go on for long periods of time speaking. When the day for filming my role finally came, I was complimented for the funeral-looking attire that I was wearing. I think the compliment from these students doing the filming was their way of trying to get me into character and cooperating with their instructions.

In my first scene I was told to look sad and downcast while approaching a street corner in our car. When I stopped at the corner, I was to be yelled at by a pizza delivery person in their car angry that I was driving too slowly. When this driver raced off, they filmed my daughter placing her hand on my right hand on the steering wheel. I was told when she did that to place my left hand from the steering wheel on top of her hand as a gesture of care. Then the camera was placed on our dashboard focusing on an empty child's car seat in the back. This shot was meant to reveal the reason for our sadness and why we had just come from the cemetery.

I will be honest that I would have been more comfortable if I had lines to say. My role in the film is done for now. Much of the task ahead for my daughter and the other students making this film, is editing. I must have done okay in my acting debut because the students who were filming us said they would give me some lines in the next film. I might have to start looking for an agent to represent me.

Being asked to play a role in my daughter's movie reminded me of how God asks each one of us to play our part in the story He is writing. Paul reminds believers about this when he speaks about how we each have a special function in Christ's body:

Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other. In His grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly. (Romans 12:4-8)

Paul uses the concept of the human body to teach how we all have a unique and special role to play in Christ's body depending on the gifts God has blessed us with. We see in this passage that Paul is encouraging believers to not hold back in using their gifts for God's service, but rather to take on wholeheartedly the role He is giving them based on their abilities. After reading these words from Paul it is important that we examine whether we have been taking on the role God has assigned to us based on our gifts? For instance:

- **If our gift is serving, are we serving Him well in this role?**
- **If our gift is encouraging, are we taking on this role?**
- **If our gift is giving, are we being generous or holding back?**
- **If our gift is showing kindness, are we taking this on gladly?**

Let's make sure that we are playing the role God has called us to take on. By taking on these roles, we are not only showing our love for God, but for others.

I am looking forward to seeing the finished film my daughter and some of her classmates are making for the "Cross Cuts" competition. I may have no lines in this film, but I played my part. I wonder if I will get a standing ovation.

Keep Safe and God Bless,

Pastor Dean