

DRAMA MINISTRY

The drama ministry at Family In Christ exists to grow and celebrate the dramatic artist and provides opportunities to connect people with the truth of God's Word through highly impactful dramas.

1 Peter 4:10-11

Making the Most of Your Drama Ministry

By Dale Phillips

“The world has yet to see what God can do through a person totally dedicated to the Lord.” Forty-five plus years ago, I heard words something to that effect spoken in a skit being presented based on the challenge that God used to powerfully impact Dwight L. Moody’s life and ministry. Now, all these years later, I can still see in my mind’s eye part of the scene being portrayed as well as hear those words that so captured D.L. Moody. Drama is definitely a powerful and effective tool of communication.

The United States has a uniquely effective airplane in its arsenal – the stealth bomber. It has the capacity of flying past the defenses set up to detect incoming aircraft, seeking out its target, and accomplishing its mission without detection. Our nation is wise to make the very best use it possibly can of this plane.

In the business of our King, we have the possibility of utilizing a uniquely effective tool of communication – drama. It has the capacity of getting past the defenses people set up to detect anything “religious,” to move into the inner person, to and unload its life-impacting truth, all without detection. In this visually oriented world, drama is a ministry worthy of our use and our using it to the max. As those indwelt by the Creator God of the universe, we as Christians should be at the cutting edge of making the most of the creative art form known as drama.

Work + Work = Our Drama Ministry Working to the Max

This formula takes the principle we find applied to our salvation in Philippians 2:12-13 and applies it to the drama ministry: Work out our drama ministry with fear and trembling for it is God who works in us to will and to act according to His good purpose (paraphrased).

To get the most from a drama ministry, we must work at it. Producing excellent drama is going to take our perspiration – there’s no way around it. But we need to be aware that our work, our perspiration alone is not enough to make the most of our drama ministry. We must foundationally make sure our work is based on the work of the Lord Jesus Christ in and through us. “For this purpose I labor, striving according to His power (God’s in Christ) which mightily works within me” (Colossians 1:29).

Check Our Motives

“Everyman’s way is right in his own eyes but the Lord weights our motives” (Proverbs 16:2). We need to make sure we have undertaken and are maintaining our drama ministry because our Lord has led and is leading us to do so. To make the most of our drama ministry, it is important that we know we have this ministry because of our Lord’s leadership, not merely because someone somewhere else is having great success with it.

It is important to develop a clear purpose statement so that those involved in the ministry will know the who, what, when, where and why of the ministry. Without a vision the people will fail to make the most of their drama ministry but those who find & keep a clear purpose statement before them will indeed make the most of it (Proverbs 29:18, paraphrased).

Think Outside of the Box

Let’s not get stuck “in the box” of utilizing the same dramatic form in the same setting again and again. Instead, let’s strive to use a variety of forms in a variety of settings. Drama comes in many different forms, including reader’s theater, monologue, sketch/skit/play, mime/pantomime, interpretive movement, clowning, puppetry, pageant and multimedia. Be open and ready to use any and all in the process of making the most of your drama ministry. When many think of a drama ministry in a church setting, they think of it being used in a worship service to set the theme of the sermon or perhaps as part of a seasonal pageant, but we need to know there are so many other settings where drama can be of great value.

In worship, it can enliven the time of announcements, call people to worship, invite people to or give voice to prayer, share Scripture, add another dimension to the worship music, be part of a children’s time and present the message, as well as set the theme for the sermon.

In education, it can be used to bring about positive student participation in the learning process or as a way of bringing the heart of truth into the heart of the students.

In evangelism, it can be used to lift up the gospel as part of an evangelistic meeting in the church or as a way to take the gospel outside the walls of the building.

In fellowship, it can be a part or the focus of a fellowship gathering, and it certainly has the potential of developing rich fellowship among those involved in the ministry.

In missions, it can help educate and challenge involvement in prayer for, giving to or going on mission, or in the presenting of the truth of Christ on the mission field.

Let's break out of any box we might have created as to where and how we use drama, and let's explore how drama might be used to positively impact communication in a wide spectrum of forms and settings. In doing so, we'll be actively moving toward making the most of our drama ministry.

Let's be ready to acknowledge our limitations, weaknesses and ignorance and be ready and willing to reach out and accept help. By being willing to admit that we have further to travel in our journey in and toward getting the most out of our drama ministry and being willing to seek out and accept help, we are in a better position to continue accomplishing that goal. God resists the 'ME' centered drama ministries that think they don't need help but gives His unearned favor to those who are humble enough to admit their need and to seek out and attend drama conferences & workshops, have someone in to conduct an onsite workshop, or pick the brain of those involved in drama in their area (James 4:6, paraphrased).

Work at applying proven drama techniques within your drama ministry. As with any endeavor, there are basics to a drama presentation that is done with excellence, such as stage composition and movement, projection, and character development. It is vital that these and other basics be adhered to in the drama ministry if we are going to be making the most of it.

Finding and Using Quality Material

An essential piece of the puzzle is finding quality material to work on and present that fits the form and setting we are targeting with any given project. Quality drama material will, among other things, be well-written, translate effectively from the written word to that which is presented, communicate the message intended, and develop the characters involved.

Some "fishing ponds" for such material are various Christian publishing houses and bookstores, the Internet, other drama ministries in our area, and folks gifted to write such material who might well be a part of our churches.

Assembling the Team

Recruit and develop a positive drama ministry team headed by a servant leader director(s). The size of a drama ministry team will depend on your local situation and purpose. Be aware that a team of one is not too few with which to begin. No matter the number, you are looking for people who are teachable, dependent on our Lord, and ready to work together with others on a team to accomplish the purpose of the ministry to the glory of the Lord.

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Prayer before, during, and following each project the drama ministry undertakes, no matter how big or small, is required in making the most of a drama ministry. Prayer is not something to merely be tacked onto what we are doing, but it is to permeate every piece and part of what we are about.

Our heavenly Father has gifted us with a wonderful tool with which to share the greatest good news of all time. Let's determine that we will unwrap this gift and make the most of the drama ministry God has given us.