

In the Director's Chair

“Jeremy, we’d like you to be the drama director for next year’s Passion Play.” When Kristin Denslow, the Director for the 2004 AU Easter Passion Play said that, I was not sure how to respond. The first annual Passion Play, in 2003, was a huge success.

I had worked with it, in a relatively small role, and that had given me an idea of the effort the production required. But I have been involved in drama, either acting or directing, for several years, so the opportunity to work with something as significant as the Passion Play was exciting. But the decision was not as easy as I would have liked.

Although I love acting, my priority had to be to school. I had applied for and been accepted to the Doctor of Physical Therapy program at Andrews University, but the acceptance would only be good if I didn’t fail my classes this year. I was not sure how I could balance school, work, and the Passion Play, but after thinking about it, and a lot of prayer, I felt that God was offering me an opportunity to do something I love. The fact that the play would not only be a theatrical production but a huge ministry confirmed to me that this was something I was supposed to do.

So I told Kristin yes, and the process began. The first part wasn’t too intense—basic planning, recruiting people to coordinate various areas, and writing the script. The script was fun to do, as ninety percent came straight out of the Bible. The tough part was finding the people I needed, especially actors.

By the end of fall semester the play was starting to take more time, but it was at a level that I felt very confident I could handle. Then spring semester began and everything shifted into overdrive. As the play’s performance got closer, the details that needed to be dealt with seemed to



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multiply: finding more actors, scheduling rehearsals, getting props, building sets, design of costumes, maintaining adequate communication, finalizing performance rotations. Oh, and, of course, work and school. I had never been busier.

Although there were many details I had not been able to take care of as well as I would have liked, God worked them out, and when the time came the play seemed to almost run itself. There were no major, and very few minor, problems. And around 9500 people had the opportunity to meet Jesus face to face, and

experience what He went through to earn their salvation. The looks on people’s faces as they left the resurrection scene were an awesome reward.

Sunday night after it was all over, Kristin and I went to IHOP to get something to eat. Although it was close to

midnight, the adrenalin was still flowing, and we got even more excited when we saw a picture from the play on the front page of one of the local newspapers for sale in front of the restaurant. We dug through our pockets for change to buy a copy, and then went inside where Kristin excitedly told the waiter, “This is our Passion Play!”

“I know,” he responded. “I went to it! Twice!” He then told us that he was so moved the first time that he had then brought his family to see it. He also told us that he wanted to be involved in it next year.

A waitress there told us, “I wish I had gone.

Everyone that has come in here the last two days has been talking about it. I’m going to go next year.”

Seeing God use the students, faculty, and staff to reach the community in such a powerful way has been a humbling experience for me. I am proud to be part of a group of people that take both their education and the great commission seriously. And on a personal note, although I didn’t have a 4.0 last semester, I will be starting the DPT program this fall. God is great!

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