

## From The Director's Chair

Please have at least one person answer the following questions and discuss. Also, please encourage everyone in the group to answer at least one question (go around in a circle). If you are too uncomfortable speaking say "pass" or wave your hand.

Most experts agree that communication is largely nonverbal. What are the various ways we communicate without any words at all?

What things do we miss when we read words only, as opposed to hearing them directly in person? (Or the reason someone got so mad when someone left them a note or text!)

I had an acting teacher who would say, "Don't let the words tell the story". This makes a lot of sense when we realize that less than 10 percent of communication is based on words alone (probably more like 4 to 7 percent!). The two biggest "tools" of the actor/director (in my opinion), are the Overall Objective and the Scene Objective. When the actor (or reader in our case) focuses on this, the story comes alive! As John the Baptist might say, "the words must decrease and the story increase".

**Overall Objective:** This is what your character wants from life. It is the single thing that drives him throughout the course of the story. Here are some good examples of Overall Objective: "To be loved by my father/mother", "To find love", "To be unconditionally loved", "To get power", "To have children", "To get married". If we consider that the play/story ends with this episode, which of these Overall Objectives would be the most accurate and strongest for Peter/Narrator Peter? If the play continued to the end of the gospels (Jesus's time on earth), what would be the best Overall Objective for Peter (maybe even something not in our examples?).

**Scene Objective:** Each Scene Objective must support the Overall Objective of the character. The Scene Objective rarely changes within a scene (only if some new and significant information comes to light). The Scene Objective should be worded in a way that requires a response from another character, or characters. Some good examples of Scene Objective are: "To get you to love me", "To get you to give me hope", "To make you validate me", "To get you to give me my power back", "To get you to give me a job", "To get you to worship me", "To make you my ally", "To make you wrong so I can be right", and "To get you to help me feel better". Which of these Scene Objectives do you think would be best for Peter in the short scene where he is out on the sea fishing with his friends? (It is possible that there are more than one good objective for a scene, but a good actor finds a strong one and goes for it!) What do you think is the most accurate and strongest Scene Objective for Peter/Narrator Peter in the final scene? What might be Jesus's Scene Objective in this final scene?

Even if you are not playing one of the main characters, you will make the reading more powerful if you have an Overall Objective for the entire four episodes of our story, and a Scene Objective

for each scene. Make sure they are accurate according to God's word; but within that context, choose what is most interesting and powerful. Try reading the script without thinking about the words themselves, and only about achieving your Scene Objectives. Make eye contact with the character you are trying to get a response from. And have fun!

My purpose here was not only to make your Reader's Theater more powerful, but to "get you to have a more interesting and meaningful discussion". Did I achieve my Objective?