

THANKSGIVING CELEBRATION

by Tim Bass

GENRE: Comedy/Light Drama

SYNOPSIS: Joe is looking forward to celebrating the Thanksgiving holiday with his family, and this year the celebration involves more than just food and football.

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 1

TOPIC: Thankfulness

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: 2 Corinthians 4:14-15

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Worship Service

CHARACTERS: JOE

PROPS: None

COSTUMES: Modern

SOUND: One wireless microphone

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: Unspecified

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Director's Tip:

Tone: Even though the subject matter of this scene is fairly serious, one of the things that makes it “work” is the fact that the death of this believer is regarded as a reason to celebrate. For this reason, the tone of Joe’s lines should be kept light and good-natured. Encourage your actor to be as warm and personable as possible throughout the monologue. This not only brings an element of surprise to the conclusion, but also most clearly communicates the love and respect Joe has for his departed friend.

Motivation: Take some time to explore the objective of Joe’s monologue with your actor. Who is he talking to? What response is he hoping to get from them? Why is he saying these words at this time? Finding specific andactable answers to these questions will help focus your actor’s delivery, and will also avoid the monologue coming across as generic.

Application: Thanksgiving is a great opportunity to remember and honor the believers who have gone on to be with the Lord in the past year. This scene may be a nice “opener” for a time of remembrance in your service, with pictures or testimonies from the congregation to honor the dearly departed.

Fade In, Fade Out: The conclusion of the scene calls for a “slow fade” to blackout—this may not be possible with your particular lighting setup, but if it is, it’s worth trying. The psychological effects of a slow fade tend to produce a sense of reflection for what the audience has just seen, as opposed to an instantaneous “blackout,” which is usually more fitting for lighter scenes or musical numbers.

The Monologue Trap: Extended monologues can be a breeding ground for long pauses, so make sure your actor’s delivery is properly paced. Encourage him to take only the pauses that are necessary for maximum effect, and not to get too “reflective” and silent when reminiscing about Mr. Owens. Meaningful pauses are especially tempting when actors have no one to act opposite, so keep your ears open for “slow spots.”

Lights up on JOE, a middle-aged man.

JOE: Well, it’s Thanksgiving! Lots happening today in my house. Yours as well, I’m sure. Got the Macy’s Parade on TV. Grand bands from high schools all over America high-stepping their way down Broadway. Singers and dancers from the latest hit musical, spinning and twirling and gliding and lifting their voices up into the frigid New York City air. Got ol’ Tom Turkey smokin’ out back. We like to smoke the turkey over at our house. Lots of ways to prepare the Thanksgiving turkey. Smoke it, like we do, bake it, roast it, some folks even fry theirs. Almost everybody has a turkey today. It’s a tradition. Another tradition at Thanksgiving is having lots of family around to celebrate with. We do in our house. Brothers and sisters. Parents and kids. Lots of family, alright.