

Dave the Freak

by John Cospir

Director's Notespg 31

Pastor's Notespg 32

GENRE: Comedy

SYNOPSIS: A girlfriend is stunned and a bit annoyed when she propositions her boyfriend only to have him turn her down, saying he's saving himself for marriage.

TIME: 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 1F, 1M

THEME: Abstinence, Purity

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: 1 Corinthians 6:12-20

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Youth Group, Singles Ministry, Sermon Illustration

CHARACTERS:

ANGELA—a single young woman

DAVE—a single guy saving himself for marriage

PROPS: None

COSTUMES: Nice "date" clothes

SOUND: Two wireless microphone

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: Outside an apartment

Dave the Freak

DIRECTOR'S NOTES

Role reversal

Comedy, as they say, almost always lies in irony. We're amused by things that are unexpected, specifically by things that are the exact opposite of what we expected, and the more the 'hook' of a scene flies in the face of expectations, the more amusing an audience will typically find it.

Bear this in mind when staging "Dave the Freak", as much of the humor comes from the surprising role reversal. Instead of immoral behavior being judged, it's exactly the other way around, as a person making a moral choice is called to task by someone choosing to live immorally. This is particularly important for the actress playing Angela to remember, as she should make it clear that Dave is the freak making the weird choices, not her. The more she can play up her stunned appall at his 'bizarre' worldview, the better.

Likewise, Dave should be played as 'normal' as possible for maximum comedic payoff. More irony lies in the fact that he's completely down-to-earth and likable, while she's talking to him like he's from another planet.

Time and place

As always, be aware of your audience. While there's of course no adult wording or staging in the scene, it does deal with a fairly grownup subject matter, and should be handled with care. Some drama teams are given a great deal of latitude as to what appears on stage, so remain accountable and be sure the scene is age appropriate for all audiences.

Sometimes it's not so much what's said or shown as what's implied, and that's problematic from a directing standpoint. The dialogue of the scene takes place in a public setting outside of an apartment, but the subject matter is inherently suggestive, and has to

be in order for the conversation about purity to take place. So proceed with caution. Keep the mannerisms and interaction between the actors as family-friendly as possible and let the dialogue do most of the work. No need to go overboard and 'sell' what's going on with too much body language—it will be impossible to miss.

Chemistry set

Humans are emotional creatures and theatre is a tricky business. As ridiculous as it sounds, acting a lot of romantic material can sometimes lead to strange vibes between actors, as we're being asked to 'play' attraction with someone and that can unintentionally stir up real feelings. As drama ministers, we should be concerned with more than just producing quality material, but also with the spiritual well-being of our actors, and that means not putting them in any kind of situation that may be perilous.

So use your head. Take care in casting males and females in romantic roles—be sure the actors in question are mature, grounded, and can handle the subject matter. Don't ask them to 'play' in any way during rehearsals that may lead to dangerous ground or inappropriate joking. Actors should also NEVER rehearse alone. This doesn't just apply to romantic material—actors should always have a director present when rehearsing to help them avoid bad habits and, if needed, act as referee.