

# Drama Ministry®

POINT. CLICK. ACTION!

## LIFE BY THE NUMBERS by MARCIA A. ROBERTSON

**GENRE:** Light Comedy

**SYNOPSIS:** An artist assures his new student that following his guidance will produce a beautiful painting. The student's doubts, however, become a barrier to progress and force a decision between trust and fear.

**DIRECTOR'S TIP:** Timing during the portion of the drama when the STUDENT is hesitating is crucial. Don't rush this section but rather show the inner struggle the STUDENT is experiencing. The STUDENT wants to follow the TEACHER's directions but can't quite give up control in order to do so.

**TIME:** 6 minutes

**CAST BREAKDOWN:** 2

**TOPIC:** Doubts, Faith, Trust, Obedience

**SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:** Psalm 31:14; Proverbs 3:5-6

**CHURCH YEAR SEASON:** Anytime

**SUGGESTED USE:** Sermon starter

**CHARACTERS:**

TEACHER (Male)

STUDENT (Male or Female)

**PROPS:** One easel, one artist paintbrush, one palette of paints (this can be made of cardboard with dabs of paint on it - there should be a small dollop of green paint which can actually be used), one blank canvas, one canvas with a tree outlined on it (different numbers should be on the tree to indicate where the various paint colors go - the goal is to create a large but simple paint-by-numbers design), one table

**COSTUMES:** TEACHER is dressed in a smock and beret. STUDENT is dressed in present-day, casual clothing.

**SOUND:** Wireless mics.

**LIGHTING:** General stage.

**SCENE:** An artist's studio. Easel sets stage left with table nearby. Brush and palette are on table. Blank canvas is on easel and is positioned so that the audience can see it is blank. Numbered canvas lies on table. Position it so that the audience cannot see what is on it, but STUDENT can easily spot it.

### Drama Ministry

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*At Rise: TEACHER and STUDENT enter together from stage right and walk toward stage.*

**TEACHER:** So, are you ready to begin?

**STUDENT:** Yes! I can't wait to get started. I'm so excited to be studying under you.

*(By this time TEACHER and STUDENT have reached stage.)*

**TEACHER:** Good! Now, you need a brush *(hands paintbrush to STUDENT)*, and here are your paints *(hands palette to STUDENT)*.

**STUDENT:** Look at the colors—they're beautiful. And I love this brush. It rests perfectly in my hand. I feel like I was born to paint!

**TEACHER:** Excellent! And this is your canvas. *(Gestures toward blank canvas. STUDENT is surprised to see the canvas is blank.)*

**STUDENT:** This is it?

**TEACHER:** That's correct.

**STUDENT:** But....

**TEACHER:** Is there a problem?

**STUDENT:** There aren't any lines.

**TEACHER:** Lines? What kind of lines?

**STUDENT:** And there aren't any numbers.

**TEACHER:** Numbers? I don't understand. What do you mean by lines and numbers?

**STUDENT:** Like a paint-by-numbers kit. Lines that tell you what the picture is and numbers that tell you which colors go where.

**TEACHER:** *(chuckles)* We won't paint like that.

**STUDENT:** And there should be a guide—something that shows what the finished picture is supposed to look like.

**TEACHER:** You don't get that either.

**STUDENT:** Then how will I know what to paint?

**TEACHER:** I'll give you directions.