

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING

A CHRISTIAN ONE ACT

by Mike Whorley

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Cast:

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Audrey- HS Junior, serious, but with a killer dry wit, principled, inadvertent loner, figuring out how to love the sinner by reflecting back the consequences of sin, and tackling searching for truth without being a “Thumper”. Wants to be social, but not at the expense of betraying what is important to her. Carries the “curse” of intelligence.

Brad- Happy-go-lucky, funny, wise-cracking HS Junior, live and let live, don't get too serious about anything. Academically smart, but vested in becoming “something big”, something special, that his family would be proud of. Deals with serious issues by redirecting the conversation to something less confrontational as a way of being an Upper rather than a Downer. Believes that this is the way to navigate a happy, satisfying life.

Melissa-

Sharon} Two best friends, HS Sophomores, very social butterflies, want to be around everyone else's “Events” so they won't “miss anything”. Content to let life happen to them rather than having an effect on life themselves. Happy with doing what their parents did without giving a lot of thought about what is important beyond “being a part of” all that seems attractive. Silly innocence, with a dose of serendipity. Inseparable. Complete each other's sentences. Simple thinkers, comforted when things are just “black and white”.

Billy- Average guy, good natured, but processes information a little slower than most. Most subtlety goes over his head, and he can be the “deer in the headlights”, but his heart is usually in the right place, once he figures out which place he is in.
HS Sophomore.

Steve- Hard edged, sarcastic, tough guy. Dog-Eat-Dog mentality. Life is hard and you have to be “hard” back, if you're going to keep it from crushing you. Can be funny when it's at someone else's expense. Defensive when called out for meanness. “You just don't get it.” justification. HS Senior, wants to be a construction worker.

Sarah- Shy, sweet, self-deprecating, a little afraid of everything. Needs an invitation to become something. Would like to rise to the occasion if she could discover the confidence to do so. HS Sophomore.

Teacher- Voice of Teacher character whenever one is called for.

Any additional males and females can be “student body” characters who react to the speaking characters throughout the play, on cue.

Scene 1

Kids are coming in to Quaker Memorial High School (put in here the name of your church or high school to personalize the production) from stage left and right. They greet each other as crowd noise, before entering “Home Room”, from both sides of the stage. All take their seats as they are accustomed to doing.

Teacher: All right, settle down, settle down, I know who’s here and who’s not...

Steve: Are you SURE about that?

Student Crowd: groan!.....

Brad: SOME more than OTHERS.....(“others” referencing Steve)

Student Crowd: (snicker laughter, quickly dying off.....)

Brad: Lucky for you Steve, this HS counts “partly” as being here. It’s a money thing.

Student Crowd:(Laughter...all but Billy and Sarah)

Billy: I don’t get it...

Steve: There you go. (gesturing to Billy) My point exactly!

Sarah: I don’t get it either Billy....

Steve: If we keep this up, several here may add up to an entire person.....

Teacher: All right, all right! Pipe down! Don’t worry about the “partlies”, Steve, there’s enough of you to make up the difference for any “partlies”, so put a lid on it!...OK, During Humanities class, the school is doing a survey project on the question “What are the things most important to you, and what are you personally going to do to see to it that those things show up in your life?”

Melissa: Like who will I be in a relationship with?....

Sharon: Will I get the classes I want next year?...

Audrey: The REALLY important things might be a LITTLE BIGGER than that...

Steve: Says who?

Brad: Everybody has different things that are important to them. Life sorts out the different interests, and what you put into it determines how everything works out.

Billy: What if we haven't figured out what's most important yet? I think whatever we CAN figure out, we should just do the best that we can about it, till we figure something ELSE out.....

Sarah: I think so too, Billy....

Steve: Well, THERE you have it! These two have completed this project all by themselves....

Brad: Well, let's see what the big picture looks like when everybody has had their say before we call this project complete...

Audrey: Are you saying that THIS collection of people HERE is going to determine what is REALLY important?

Brad: Well,... that IS the assignment, isn't it? WE don't know what the outcome is going to be until WE answer the QUESTION...

Audrey: I'm just not sure we're going to get at what is most important by making a list of our personal preferences.

Billy: I don't get it.....What ARE we talking about?

Sarah: What are the most important things.....

Billy: Isn't doing the best you can the most important thing?

Audrey: Sure it is, Billy, but wouldn't the best you can be mean so much more if you knew WHO you were doing it for?

Billy: Now I'm REALLY CONFUSED...

Melissa and Sharon: ME TOO!....

Steve: Nah Billy, you are only partly confused. Team up with your other "partlies" and THEN you can be COMPLETELY confused.....

Student Crowd: (rebuke response- Back off!....What a jerk!...What do YOU know?!)

Brad: (to Crowd) OK, OK....(to Steve) No need to be mean, Steve...How are YOU going to answer the question?

Steve: The most important thing?... Taking care of YOURSELF, because NOBODY, no matter WHAT the intentions are, is gonna do THAT,... FOR you. I'LL take care of MINE, YOU take care of YOURS.

Audrey: (to Steve) And that's the MOST important thing?

Steve: Well, it's ahead of most everything ELSE that THIS world seems to value.

Audrey: But what about the next world?...

Steve: Well you can live in La-La Land if you want to, but I gotta live in THIS world.

Brad: OK, you two...Let's all go to Humanities Class and see what everybody thinks.

Audrey: (Sigh)...I'm mostly concerned about what "Somebody" thinks.

Billy: Do you mean the Principal?

Audrey: (Smiling) In a way,...I guess I do, Billy... (She gathers her things and heads out SL)

Billy: (out to the audience) I hope some of you are paying attention out there, 'cause I could use some help figuring out what the QUESTION is.....

Sarah: It's OK, Billy....(big inhale and sigh) We'll be confused together.... (they walk out together)

(All the rest of the students head out SR and SL doing small talk with who ever is walking out with them)

Scene 2

(all students come in Stage Right and Stage Left back to the seats they had before, but which is now Humanities Class for this period)

Teacher: All right Ladies and Gentlemen, our school-wide project involves us thinking about the two questions that were posed to you during Home Room. You all have had a study period between then and now. So one at a time, come forward and give your answers. There are no perfect and complete answers to anything, but finding the answers TO anything,... HAS to start somewhere. We will be recording your answers, and compiling them for research in order to reflect what our students today think are the most important things. And then, what they intend to do to reflect those things in their lives. You all drew a number upon entering class to put some order to this process, so come up and enlighten the rest of us when your number is called. Number 1.....

Sarah: Hello,... I'm Sarah... I do OK in most of my studies,... but I haven't found what I love yet... so that I can give my whole self to it,... be good at it,... and whatever it is,... make a difference that will inspire those around me to give THEIR best to it ALSO, ...(deep breath in and exhale out)...whatever it is.

Teacher: Number 2.....