

The Missionary of Oz

By Brian Sylvia

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DEDICATION

To my wonderful wife Rebecca and my little princess Annaliene, whose eyes lit up as she was introduced to these characters on stage. Thanks for the support as we strive for excellence in Christian theatre. To the memory of my amazing parents, John and Dorothea Sylvia, who always supported my passion for the dramatic arts, and to my incredible in-laws, Wilbur and Dianne Milligan, who have supported all of our ministry adventures.

STORY OF THE PLAY

This stage adaptation of Frank Baum's original story is perfect for churches and Christian schools. Dorothy, a teenager in Kansas, just isn't interested in church anymore. In fact, she's trying to determine what she really believes. Then in a dream, she finds she has been sent by God to a strange land, Oz, to be a missionary. Convinced she cannot accomplish the task, she is encouraged by Glinda the Good to seek the assistance of the Great Missionary in the Emerald City. On the way, she encounters three familiar characters who are also failed missionaries because of their doubts: the Scarecrow because he felt he wasn't smart enough, the Tin Man because he wasn't loving enough, and the Cowardly Lion because he wasn't brave enough. However, as they share Christ with Evillene, the wicked witch, Dorothy realizes her need for Christ. In the end, they find that the answer was in God's Word {2 Timothy 1:7} all along: "For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." Performance time: approximately 90 minutes.

ORIGINAL PRODUCTION

To the folks who have helped to bring these characters to life through the years, especially the two productions at StageRight Theatre Company in Maryland: Lee Krempel and Tal Zentmeyer {Scarecrow} for making me think I was watching Ray Bolger; Curtis Tasker {Tinman} and Taryn Adams Tasker {Addaperle} for twice playing those roles with excellence; Shane Hotchkin and JP Marker {Cowardly Lion} for bringing life to an incredibly animated character, Merci Klock {Evillene} and two amazing Dorothys, Niki Morrisette and Joy Smith.

Cover art specially designed by Curtis Tasker.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(4 M, 5 W, 8 Flexible)

AUNT EM

DOROTHY

PASTOR BEN/GREAT MISSIONARY

DUDLEY/SCARECROW

LANCE/TIN MAN

EUGENE/COWARDLY LION

BOQ: A Munchkin. Flexible.

ZOQ: Another.

GLINDA THE GOOD

ADDAPERLE: The southern belle witch.

EVILLENE: The wicked witch.

WINKLE: Castle slave. Flexible.

WONKLE: Another.

WANDA: Another.

WILLIE: Another.

GATEKEEPER: Of the Emerald City.

GUARD: For Evillene.

DOUBLING: BOQ, ZOQ, AUNT EM, and GLINDA may double as the GUARD, GATEKEEPER, or as one of the SLAVES.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1: Kansas – home of Aunt Em and Dorothy.

Scene 2: Munchkin Land – Dorothy meets Glinda, Addaperle and Munchkins.

Scene 3: Cornfield – farming field where Dorothy meets Scarecrow.

Scene 4: Forest – Dorothy and Scarecrow meet Tin Man.

Scene 5: Haunted Forest – Dorothy, Scarecrow and Tin Man meet Cowardly Lion.

Scene 6: Evillene's Castle – Evillene and Addaperle discuss Dorothy.

ACT II

Scene 1: Emerald City – characters meet the Great Missionary.

Scene 2: Evillene's Castle – Evillene captures the characters.

Scene 3: Emerald City – everyone gets their answers.

Scene 4: Kansas – home where Dorothy and Aunt Em discuss the “dream” and reaffirm their faith.

ACT I
Scene 1

(AT RISE: At home in Kansas. AUNT EM sits knitting.)

AUNT EM: Dorothy, come here please.

DOROTHY: *(Offstage.)* Just a second. *(Enters.)* Yes?

AUNT EM: It's getting late, aren't you going to youth group tonight?

DOROTHY: Actually, I wasn't planning on going. I really don't want to.

AUNT EM: You haven't been going too often lately...what's wrong?

DOROTHY: I'm sixteen now, Auntie Em. I've got better things to do than go to church all the time.

AUNT EM: *(Shocked.)* Oh, I'm surprised to hear that come from you.

(PASTOR BEN, DUDLEY, EUGENE and LANCE make their way to the door.)

AUNT EM: *(Cont'd.)* You used to go all the time.

PASTOR BEN: *(Peeking in door.)* Knock, knock! Hey, Dorothy!

DOROTHY: Pastor Ben! How long have you been there?

PASTOR BEN: Just got here. *(AUNT EM opens the screen door for them.)* I've got some of the guys with me. Just wondered if you needed a ride to youth group.

DOROTHY: No, I'm not sure, I, uh, I think I'm sick.

AUNT EM: Dorothy! You are not sick! And, these poor young men need to come inside! Why don't you introduce me to your friends.

DUDLEY: Dudley Jones, ma'am. My friends just call me Dud!

DOROTHY: *(Quietly.)* Moron!

DUDLEY: What was that?

DOROTHY: Uh, I was just wishing I could put more on – it's kind of chilly in here!

LANCE: And I'm Lance, Miss Gale.

DOROTHY: Lance *Romance!*

DUDLEY: I heard that one!

AUNT EM: *(To EUGENE.)* And you are?

EUGENE: Eugene Needermeier!

PASTOR BEN: Eugene's a bit shy!

DOROTHY: And a *lot* weird!

AUNT EM: So what brings you boys by today?

PASTOR BEN: Just driving the van through the neighborhood and checking to see if Dorothy was coming to youth group tonight.

AUNT EM: We were just discussing it. What do you say, Dorothy?

DOROTHY: Not tonight, Aunt Em. Sorry, Pastor Ben, I'm just going to hang out here tonight!

LANCE: Come on, Dottie, it's gonna be a great night.

DOROTHY: The name is Dorothy, and I don't think so.

EUGENE: I think she's ready for us to leave, guys. Let's go!

PASTOR BEN: Well, Dorothy, we wish you were coming. Miss Gale, have a great night.

DUDLEY: See you soon, Dorothy. *(HE trips on the way out the door. The MEN exit.)*

AUNT EM: Dorothy, I am disappointed in your behavior. You were a bit rude to those young men.

DOROTHY: But, Aunt Em, Dudley is a complete idiot. He has the IQ of a turnip. Lance is the youth group heartbreaker. He thinks he's way cuter than he ought to. And Eugene is the biggest wimp this side of the Rio Grande!

AUNT EM: Now, that is quite enough. Before you continue by saying bad things about that nice youth pastor, you need to consider your words.

(PASTOR BEN comes back to the screen door and overhears the conversation.)

DOROTHY: I don't want to be disrespectful or anything, but Pastor Ben just doesn't understand teenagers. He's way too intense and always trying to light a fire under us.

DOROTHY: *(Cont'd.)* Every week he's pushing us to make a decision for Christ or to represent Jesus in our school. He doesn't understand the pressures we face. He's way out of touch. *(PASTOR BEN exits silently.)*

AUNT EM: Out of touch? Dorothy, what has happened to you?

DOROTHY: Auntie Em, nothing's happened; I'm just growing up and not too sure anymore if all those things I've heard over the years are for me. Let's face it, some of those stories in the Bible are a bit far-fetched!

AUNT EM: You're disbelieving God?!

DOROTHY: I don't know what to believe or not believe anymore. My friends at school say I'm crazy to even believe in God, never mind go to church all the time.

AUNT EM: Dorothy, people will always laugh. You don't make your decision for Christ because of other people.

DOROTHY: Yeah, I've heard that line before too. *(Pause.)* I'm not sure about the whole Jesus thing and I certainly can't go around telling people about God if I feel that way. Besides, I don't want to lose any friends.

AUNT EM: Your friends will never determine your life's path, unless you allow them to. You need a relationship with Christ. And they need to see that. If they are really your friends, they'll respect that.

DOROTHY: I don't know.

AUNT EM: Well, I'm going to do the dishes. You decide what you are going to do. *(Pause.)* I'd go if I were you. *(Exits.)*

DOROTHY: *(Thinking. SFX: We hear her pre-record thoughts.)* Y'know, God, I don't know what's real any more. I don't even know if you're really even hearing me right now. I know I'm probably too critical of the kids in youth group. And I probably care too much what others think. *(Curls up in the chair to read the family Bible.)* Sure, I'd tell others about you if I knew you were real myself. I want to do what's right, but I need to know. Right now there's just too much fear in my heart. Please? *(SHE reads for several moments, yawns, and falls asleep. MUSIC plays as scene is transformed around her.)*

End of Freeview

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