

“The Ripple”

By Mark Engelhardt

Originally written for and performed at the 2009 Missouri District Sr. High Youth Gathering.

*Setting: Park with park bench.*

*One person questioning God’s will for them in his life, lamenting over his lack of “skills”; in the process he helps several people who cross the stage in front of him; he unwittingly helps each person using the gifts/skills that God has given him.*

(1 enters, she is out for her morning jog when she runs into 2, who is sitting on the park bench with his Bible and appears to be praying. 1 runs by and gets a cramp. 2 helps to stretch 1’s leg to get rid of the cramp.)

1: Ow, ow! Oh my! Oh this hurts?

2: (getting up) What is it? What happened?

1: (sitting down on bench) I’ve got a cramp. Oh man, this hurts.

2: Here, let me help you stretch it out. I’m going to pick up your leg and push back on your toes to stretch out that calf muscle. It’s going to hurt at first, but it will help get that cramp out.

1: Ow, Ow, Ow. Oh that smarts. (Slowly calming down)

2: How’s that feel, any better?

1: Oh, yeah. That feels a lot better. Thanks. So what are you doing out here?

2: Oh, I was just spending a little quiet time with God before I start off the day.

1: That’s great.

2: Yeah, I’ve been really struggling with what God wants me to do with my life.

1: Yeah?

2: Yeah. I mean, I know I want to serve God, but I just don’t know how to do it. It just seems like if you really want to make a difference anymore you’ve got to go big.

1: What do you mean?

2: Well, you know, like have some brilliant idea on how to save the world’s rain forests, or end world hunger.

- 1: That's "going big" alright.
- 2: But I have just never had the grades, or the connections, or the confidence to make a difference like that. I mean I want to serve, but I don't know how God wants me to do it.
- 3: (rides in on bike with chain off, stops and tries messing with it, but can't get it back on) Oh, man!
- 2: (to 1) Keep stretching that leg out. I'll be right back. (2 sees 3 struggle and goes over to help.) Looks like you could use a hand.
- 3: Yeah, I sure could. I don't know how to get this back on! I'm going to be late for work!
- 2: Do you mind if I take a look at it?
- 3: Oh, I don't want you to get your hands all greasy.
- 2: (Bending down to fix bike) Nah, don't worry about it. It's no big deal. See you just need to get it on here, and then pedal it this way, and...there you go. (Chain is back on).
- 3: Thank you so much, I'm on my way to work over at Sonic, and if I'm late again they're going to fire me! Come by later and I'll treat you to a drink.
- 2: Thanks, but you don't have to do that. I just enjoy helping people out.
- 3: Well, thanks again. See you later.
- 2: (walks back over to bench where 1 is stretching her leg.) Anyway, like I was saying, I just want to do something important with my life but I never feel like I'm being much of a help to anyone.
- 1: What are you talking about? What makes you think you need to be some important big shot to change somebody's life?
- 2: Well, look at all the people who are making a difference in the world: Brad and Angelina, adopting babies and helping people in New Orleans; Oprah, trying to help, well, everyone; even Dwayne "the Rock" Johnson has his own "foundation" to help kids around the world get healthy and physically fit.
- 1: Are you telling me that you can't help the people of New Orleans, or help kids get healthy because you don't have any "star power"?

2: No, of course not, but I'm just one person. The impact I make is just one drop in the ocean.

1: Well, maybe it takes a while for the ripples of that drop to be felt. But it still makes an impact.

4: (Interrupting as 4 roller blades through 1 and 2). Whoa, whoa, look out! Oh no! Rose bushes! (2 grabs onto 4 to keep 4 from falling. 4 falls on top of 2.)

2: Are you okay? (Helping 4 up)

4: Me? I should be asking that of you! I'm so sorry...and embarrassed.

2: Aw, don't worry about it. Besides, that's nothing, the last time I tried rollerblading I ended up as the hood ornament to a minivan.

4: (Laughing) That was awful nice of you to keep me from falling so hard.

2: Hey, I was happy to help. Besides, if I hadn't stopped you, you might have been wearing that rose bush! (gestures off stage at rose bushes).

4: Yeah, thanks again. Hey, I was just finishing my break from work, and I've got an extra bagel. I'd like you to have it.

2: You don't need to do that.

4: No. I insist. You saved me from a very prickly situation just now. It's the least I can do. I won't take no for an answer. (Hands 2 bag with bagel in it.)

2: Well, thank you. I appreciate it.

4: No, thank you. Have a great day!

2: You too.

(4 leaves, 2 turns back to talk to 1)

1: (laughing) That was hilarious! Are you okay?

2: Who me? Oh sure, I just hope she wasn't too embarrassed. I'm glad I could be in the right place at the right time.

1: I think someone's trying to tell you something.

2: What, you think she likes me?

1: I don't know about that, but like you said. You were in the right place at the right time.

2: So?

1: It's what I was trying to tell you before you got ran over.

2: What, that I'm a ripple in an ocean? I don't want to be a ripple, I want to be a tsunami!

1: You're missing the point. (Thinking for a moment.) Okay. Who was the greatest king in the Old Testament?

2: David.

1: What was his occupation?

2: He was a King. Duh.

1: No, no, before he was a king.

2: You mean as young man? He was a shepherd.

1: Right. Now what about Peter? What was his occupation?

2: A fisherman. What are we doing, playing Bible Trivia?

1: (Ignoring 2's last comment) Do you remember Rahab, the woman who hid Joshua's spies?

2: Yeah, I think so...

1: What was her profession?

2: I'm pretty sure she was a prostitute? Where are you going with all of this?

1: Hold on, one more. Who was the mother of Jesus?

2: (Confused look on his face) Mary.

1: And what was her background?

2: Well, she was a virgin, and she was just a teenager at the time of Jesus' birth.

1: Exactly. She was basically a peasant girl.

2: What's your point?

1: What's my point?! All of these people came from very humble beginnings. They were nobodies! And that's just a sampling of the nobodies God used. God uses the simple, ordinary things and people in life to grow His kingdom. Have you heard the saying "God doesn't call the qualified, he qualifies the called"? He doesn't wait for the person with the right skills to show up, He uses the people who are there, and equips them with what they need for that time.

2: Well then, how are you ever supposed to know what you're supposed to do with your life?

1: It's easy; you just do the right thing.

5: (Enters from across the way, walking slowly up to 1 and 2, obviously tired and hungry, dressed in shabby clothes that look dirty and slept in.) Excuse me, I don't mean to interrupt your conversation, but if I could just have a moment of your time?

2: (turning around to see 5) Sure, what can we do for you?

5: I seem to have run into a streak of bad luck and I was just wondering if you wouldn't be able to help out a vet in need? I'm not looking for anything big, but I could really use a bite to eat.

2: Hey, you know what, I happen to have an extra bagel right here. How does that sound?

5: That would be great. (2 hands 5 the bagel bag. 5 starts eating it right away.) Thank you so much. This is the first time I've eaten in three days. (5 exits)

1: (to 2) He gives you what you need when you need it.

2: I think I finally see what you're saying.

1: You know 2, you're already helping the world. God has already given you the gifts you need, for right now.

2: I guess I was so caught up in wanting to help the world that I didn't realize the world is right here.

1: And at the rate you're going, you're going to be a very busy servant of God.

2: What do you mean?

1: Well, just in the last ten minutes you've helped me with my leg, fixed that girl's bike, saved the other girl from falling into a rose bush, and gave a hungry vet the first food he's had in three days. If you keep that up, eventually you might just help the whole world, one person at a time.

2: Hey, thanks for being there for me.

1: No problem. I was just in the right place at the right time.

*End Scene*