



## Acedia, Rehearsals, and Me

6.14.09 by Dena Dyer

### Article:

When we open a new show at the Rockbox Theater, the professional theater where I work, I thoroughly enjoy the audiences' reactions to the hours and hours of practice put in by our cast and crew.

What I do NOT enjoy is the rehearsal process itself. I've been involved in singing and acting for most of my life, and I still abhor rehearsals.

It's just so much work.

I admit it—I'm lazy. While I love the spotlight and the actual performance aspect of live theater, the long hours spent away from my kids, hobbies, friends, and home frustrate me. I have to keep reminding myself that without the "boring-ness" of repeated rehearsals, our crew of singers and musicians wouldn't be successful. Self, I say, God wants you to be a good steward of your talents. That means putting in gobs of time . . . mostly in obscurity. And I continually tell myself that excellence of any sort takes hard work and discipline.

The irony is, I abhor *acedia* when I see it in other people. Kathleen Norris has talked about this idea of spiritual apathy in her recent memoir, *Acedia & Me: A Marriage, Monks, and a Writer's Life*.

A few years ago, an aspiring actress who worked at a burger joint asked my hubby how to break into the arts. He suggested she audition for her local theater and take acting lessons. But she waved off his advice, saying, "I'm good enough already. I just need someone to notice me."

I was appalled at her attitude. And I have a feeling she's still selling burgers.

But I see the same tendency in my kids—especially regarding chores and schoolwork—and I know they're probably getting it from dear old Mom. I hate this bent towards laziness in myself, and I truly am praying about it.

After all, *acedia* is most definitely a spiritual problem. Proverbs is full of scriptures touting the blessings that follow discipline, and the hardship that results when it's absent. [Hebrews 12:11](#) says, "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

In our media-drenched society, a governor-turned-presidential candidate or aspiring singer can go from obscurity to fame in seconds. Hard work and discipline are no longer the only ways to achieve lasting success (Paris Hilton, anyone?). But in the spiritual realm and the other areas that really matter—parenting, marriage, friendship—the things that last are those that take the most time and effort.

I long for the harvest of righteousness and peace mentioned in Hebrews. But that harvest won't come if we're lazy, sitting around and hoping for it. Each day, we have to rehearse the truths God has given us. We must sit with the Word and meditate on (and with) our Savior. As we continually surrender to God's work in and through us, he will produce holiness.

This high calling takes hard work.

It takes my time.

It takes my discipline.