

This week, I've been asking our students to share what brings them joy. I also asked them if they remembered something that might bring me joy...I shared a lot about it last year. If you guessed going on an adventure or traveling, then you guessed correctly!

I haven't been in classes the past two weeks because I was on a bit of adventure. I had the opportunity to travel with a group to New York City. We did some sightseeing, ate amazing food, saw a couple of Broadway shows, and enjoyed our time in the city. But the main reason that we had traveled there was to join 250 other singers and a full orchestra to sing at Carnegie Hall. Our concert was amazing, and it was quite an experience to sing in one of the finest concert halls in the country.

As we were practicing with our conductor, she was very particular. She was attentive to every note and rest, was concerned about diction, and wanted every dynamic level perfect. We were working hard to get everything exactly as she wanted it, but I could tell that she wanted something more that she wasn't hearing.

At one point she stopped rehearsal, put down her baton, clasped her hands and stood silently for a moment. We waited to hear what she would say. Finally, she spoke. "I don't think that you realize the significance of what you are about to do." I thought to myself, "Of course we know what we are doing – we are about to sing on the greatest stage in the world and it's going to be awesome." My thought was interrupted as she spoke again, "You are going to walk into a concert hall in the middle of New York City and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ. Do you all realize how important this is? It isn't everyday that the gospel is declared on stage at Carnegie Hall."

I'm pretty sure that my heart skipped a beat or several, as I was refocused on the purpose of our Carnegie Hall concert. In the midst of my amazing adventure, I almost missed the point. I was so busy thinking about traveling and shows and performing that I almost forgot the gospel...and that was the whole purpose of the concert. I had to humbly ask God to forgive me for being distracted by my favorite worldly things and ask Him to help me keep my focus on His plan for my adventure.

This is an important lesson for us at STP. We can become so involved with the busyness of the process that we almost miss the point. We are about sharing the gospel and every aspect of what we do should be Christ-centered. We have directors who pray over their scripts to make sure that everything on stage shares the gospel effectively. We light the stage to illuminate the gospel. We build sets to create the background to share the gospel. We create costumes that help our students become characters to share the gospel. We have sound to help us share the gospel. At STP, we are not here just to perform – we are called to share the gospel!!

We were created to glorify God, and we can't become so caught up in our love for performance that it becomes about us. We should be asking Him daily to set our eyes on Jesus and find ways to share His message of love, grace, and mercy. There is no greater joy!

**KEY VERSE:** For you, O Lord, have made me glad by your work;  
at the works of your hands I sing for joy. Psalm 92:4 ESV