**The Lights, The Cameras, Action:**

**How Can Our Art Be Bigger Than Ourselves?**

Using the collaborative art of filmmaking as an illustration, this session will lead us in exploring how to embrace our purpose as artists, collaborating in God’s greater masterpiece. As the Director of a story being performed over all eternity, God guides us in our art, calling us to work in community to fulfill His will. And as we follow the direction of the Light, avoid the cameras of the world, and take actions to fulfill the Director's vision, we participate in the creation of His great chronicle of grace and hope.

**Joshua J. Masters** is a pastor, author, and international speaker with a heart for leading through culture and relationship building. He also serves as the Executive Director and missionary for Bridge Builders International, a U.S. based organization serving the Baltics and greater Europe. His book, *A Faith Unleashed: Living in the Hope of God’s Rescue*, premiered as an Amazon Best Seller and a Selah Awards Finalist. A member of the Screen Actors Guild (SAG-AFTRA), Joshua spent more than a decade working in the film, theater, and television industries. He has been featured on CBN Television, HIS Radio, the Light Radio Network, and is a regular Christian teacher and speaker for large groups. His new study series, *Experiencing the Word*, is being used by multiple churches to teach individuals how to meditate on the Bible and hear God's voice. He would love to connect with you at www.joshuajmasters.com.

* **Introduction**
  + Perhaps the best example of collaborative art is filmmaking, and it mirrors our call to live and serve in community with one another as believers.
  + The Light: We are a reflection of the light… not our own light. (Matthew 5:14; John 8:12)
  + The Cameras: Our Achievements- puts you in the center and then destroys you. (Romans 12:3; Phil 2:3)
  + Action: Every action we take is based on our balance of those two. (Colossians 3:23-24)
  + We embrace our purpose as artists, collaborating in God’s greater masterpiece.
* **The Art of the Body: Finding Balance in Community**
  + As the Director of a story being performed over all eternity, God guides us in our art, calling us to work in community to fulfill His will.
    - How do we embrace that as artists?
  + Filmmaking (and theater) are a model of how we as artists should operate in the body of Christ.
  + We are one body… (1 Corinthians 12:12-14; 1 Colossians 1:18)
* **Unity (1 Corinthians 1:10)**
  + Have you seen all the credits at the end of the movie (not the opening)?
  + Jesus is the head, the director.
    - He guides us in our art to complete his greater masterpiece.
    - Everyone’s art should funnel toward His will, His vision, and His purpose.
  + Film Departments and roles:
    - If any one of these is out of unity, the production suffers.
    - Director: Jesus.
    - Everyone relies and depends on others.
    - Production Dept. is about leadership and planning.
    - The Art department creates an environment through sets, props, costumes. Our lives and art create an environment that conveys God’s message. They build things
    - The Sound Department is focused on making sure the message is heard.
    - The Locations department is focused on where the message is heard (like missionaries)
    - Food services feeds the hungry.
  + They come together to fulfill a greater purpose and each part is important. Everyone is using their art, their gifts within the framework of a greater Masterpiece. (Victorian costumes in a sci-fi)
* **Authority, Submission, & Order (Hebrews 13:17)**
  + Everyone is placed under the authority of someone else… to learn, grow, and work.
    - 1st Assistant Director (Runs the set) He’s not the Director, it’s not his vision, but he oversees the mission.
      * Everyone follows the order of the day or things go awry.
      * Everyone needs a mentor and guide to help you fulfill your purpose.
  + Sometimes God places YOU in a position of servant leadership.
    - 2nd Unit Director (establishing shots)
  + Being under authority means submission to the director’s plan and schedule. Not being in control.
    - Call Sheets (plans change)
    - Pages (your role changes)
  + Being under authority means not being the center of attention.
    - Be okay with Being at the end of the credits
    - Being an Extra (They don’t get credit or focus but the story bland without them)
* **Community (1 Thessalonians 5:11)**
  + Encouraging and Building One Another Up
  + Avoid Competition
    - Stunt Achievement Story (safety vs acclaim)
    - There are some actors that want to be part of the team and some who don’t.
  + Looking Out for One Another
    - Video Clip (bucket)
    - As artists, we believe we think out of the box, but for many, we’re just creating our own box.
    - I’ve worked with some who want to be in community and some who didn’t.

**Wrap Up:**

* Unity of Purpose
* Submit to authority and act in the authority given
* Live in community