

The Up and Up

In 1930, Pat O'Brien had a scene in a play, *The Up and Up*, in which he had to contend with two angry people at once – a person on the phone and one at his desk. To him, playing the scene was “like fighting through Notre Dame’s football line while singing *Danny Boy*.”

The play received mixed reviews and its outlook seemed dim. O'Brien thought, “Why knock myself out on something with no future?” But then a Bible verse echoed in his memory: “Whatever task lies to your hand, do it with all your might” (Ecclesiastes 9:10). And so, at every performance, he put his all into that scene, sometimes coming offstage wringing wet.

After the show closed, O'Brien went on to a few obscure parts. Then one day he received a phone call from a man who said, “Mr. Hughes is filming the play, *The Front Page*, and wants you in it.” O'Brien jumped at the opportunity. The film's director, Lewis Milestone, later told him why he was chosen. Milestone had gone to New York with friends, planning to see a hit show. But they were one seat short, so Milestone went to see *The Up and Up*. He said, “One scene really impressed me – the one at the desk.”

O'Brien's outstanding film career was launched by his giving his all – for a part that had seemed worthless.

In our careers in Life Care, Century Park and Life Care at Home, and in our personal lives, whatever we set out to do is worth doing right – and demands our best. That same verse that inspired Pat O'Brien should motivate us as well. Certainly, our residents deserve no less.

--Beecher Hunter