

TITLE: Spiritual Warfare at the Altar

LOCATION/PROPS:

Church altar: No props necessary.

CHARACTERS:

- Altar worker:** A sincere person, under attack while trying to pray for someone in the altar service. Actor must have the ability to pray boldly and loudly. The part requires some improvisation. Any age.
- Angel:** Figure dressed in white. No wings please. Actor must be able to convey the positive aspects of praying at the altar.
- Demon:** Figure dressed in black. No horns, please. Actor must be able to create tension with his final, imposing speech. Any age. Demon is altogether sarcastic in everything he says.
- Praying person at the altar:** This person is oblivious to the demon or the angel. The battle is between the angel and the demon. They can hear each other but the man is oblivious to either of them.

SUNDAY MORNING

Altar worker is kneeling and praying with a man/woman in the altar. He is struggling with exactly how to pray for.

ALTAR WORKER

Dear Lord. Thank you for this morning...(continues praying - improvisation)...

A DEMON enters in all black and speaks to altar worker.

DEMON

You are getting very sleepy. Very sleepy. Your eyes are closing. You need your sleep. It's okay. You've worked hard. This service was too long anyway. You know you are hungry. Can't you hear your stomach growling? God understands that you need food. He made you. So, do what your stomach tells you to do.

The altar worker is dazed and rubbing his stomach. Demon, satisfied, walks out. The man being prayed for has a look of confusion.

ANGEL

Food can wait, the Lord is at work right now.
Do you want to do the will of the Lord or the
will of your stomach?

ALTAR WORKER

God, keep me focused on you and help me pray
for your wisdom...(continues praying for man
(improvisation).

Demon crosses the room to the altar worker and speaks into his ear.

DEMON

(laughing)

What did you think about that television show
last night? Pretty funny, wasn't it? How about
when that guy fell and dropped the cake? Was
that comedy or what? Think about that for a
little while.

Altar worker starts laughing loudly, distracted by that thought. The man getting
prayed for starts to show emotion. Demon, reveling in his success, walks out.

ANGEL

Speaking to the altar worker: focus your heart
and clear your mind on what the Lord is trying
to accomplish in this man's life.

ALTAR WORKER

Lord, I pray that you touch this man's life....
(Continues praying, improvisation).

Demon takes a breath, growing flustered. He snaps his fingers, signifying a
brilliant thought. He crosses the room and leans over to the Altar worker.

DEMON

You've had your eye on that pretty girl,
haven't you? You notice how she's been
looking at you lately? I bet she's interested in
you.

ALTAR WORKER

Lord, I pray that you would supply me with
Susan...oh wait I mean Lord I hope you will
bless this man...(improvisation.)

ANGEL

Keep your mind focused. Quit letting the enemy distract you. The Lord will supply you with all your needs in His time.

DEMON

Don't listen to that stupid angel. You deserve a nice girl like that. You need to be seen with that girl. I think it will help you be a good witness. God blesses those who love others. (Very sarcastic)

Altar worker nods in agreement.

DEMON (CONTINUES)

What's holding you back? Go for it. God will give you every desire of your heart, but he can't do it unless you quit praying for that stupid guy/girl.

ANGEL

Galatians 6:1 says "*Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.*" **DON'T LET THAT DEMON TEMPT YOU!!!**

ALTAR WORKER

Lord, forgive me for being so materialistic! Lord helps me to speak your words of life into this man(continues praying, improvisation).

Demon is losing his patience.

DEMON

Look, things at work really have been busy for you lately. You have a lot going on there.

ANGEL (WITH FEELING)

Demon, quit distracting him for the word of the Lord is his strength.

DEMON

In fact, have you seen your desk? It's piling up. Don't you think you should get to work early?

ALTAR WORKER

Lord, help me with my work. I'm really behind.

ANGEL TO ALTAR WORKER

The Lord is always there to help but now is not the time to think about that. Galatians 5:16 "*so I say live by the spirit and you will not gratify the desires of a sinful nature.*"

DEMON

That angel is always reading from that stupid book. He doesn't know what he's talking about. If you leave now, that will give you a good two-hour head start on your day. Think about it. Hey, you can pray in the car.

Altar worker stands and looks like he is thinking.

DEMON

That's it. You can pray anytime. Go on to work. That's it.

Demon exits. Altar worker stops again and falls to his knees.

ANGEL

The Lord is always with you. He will never leave you or forsake you. He is the strength that you need.

ALTAR WORKER

Lord, what was I thinking? Forgive me, Lord! You are the strength that I need and the strength that this man needs. (Continues praying, improvisation)

Demon storms in, rushing to the altar worker, screaming in his ear! But the Altar worker resists him, PRAYING LOUDLY as the Demon persists!

DEMON

God is not here, you despicable fool! You're all alone! He doesn't care about who you are praying for! He has enough to worry about! Besides, he knows what is needed, so why waste your time praying when you could be doing other things! Get off your knees and get out into the world! C'mon! You're wasting your time! Go! You think he listens to a sinner like you? He knows you're not spending time with the wife and kids because you're working late! Face it, you really don't care do you anymore? Time for new thrills! GET UP! GET OUT!

Demon storms out. The altar worker takes a breath, feeling the pressure lifted. He begins praying "in the Spirit" with a loud voice of victory concluding with a note of praise to God for His power and anointing.

ANGEL TURNS TO AUDIENCE

We can accomplish anything through Christ Jesus who is our strength.

ALTAR WORKER

Lord, I know that you want to really bless my brother/sister here at the altar today.

MAN/WOMAN IN ALTAR SPEAKS

He/she REALLY starts to pray now and "prays through." (This is a powerful moment as the demon leaves the room looking defeated and the person at the altar receives the victory and stands with hands raised thanking for victory)
Improvisation

THE END

THOUGHTS

Everyone agrees prayer at the altar is often difficult. But, have you ever wondered why? It is an awesome honor it is to step into the presence of God. But at the same time, we must realize the tremendous spiritual battle that takes place.

Ever wonder why prayer is so hard? Part of the reason is because prayer is a battle. We are shouting in the midst of war, trying to get our commander's attention. The enemy is all around.

The enemy's strategy is to interrupt and block the prayers of both the altar worker and the altar seeker. If it's important enough to attack, it's important enough to engage in. It will be hard, but we must fight on.

THEMES

ALTAR, PERSISTANCE, PRAYER, THE ENEMY, SUPERNATURAL