

Drama Ministry®

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FINDING THE WORDS

by John Cospers

GENRE: Comedy

SYNOPSIS: A little girl gets unwanted advice from a televangelist and some stuffy Bible scholars on prayer before her dad helps her find the right words.

DIRECTOR'S TIPS: It's been said that in drama, the manner should reflect the matter. In this case, that means the audience will take their cues as to whether a subject matter is "serious" or not by the tone in which it is delivered.

The not-so-helpful visitors with their advice on prayer should be played over-the-top, but the final moment with Kat and her father should have a distinctly tender feel, mirroring the type of prayer conversation with the Father that Kat is searching for. Meshing these two tones together into one short scene can be tricky business, but if done well, the comedy and drama can each add to the other's effect without diminishing either. (Shakespeare employed this technique often—putting moments of seemingly absurd comedy even in dark tragedies. The idea is that by creating a moment of 'light', it makes the 'darkness' appear all the blacker by contrast.)

While the closing moments are of course by no means tragic, they are meant to be delivered with sincerity, so be sure to run the scene in its entirety plenty of times to make certain the mildly contrasting tones aren't jarring.

TIME: 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 2M, 1F

THEME: Prayer

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Matthew 6:5-15

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Seeker Service; Sermon Illustration

CHARACTERS:

KAT—a little girl

BUDDY—a televangelist

HEZEKIAH and ROMAN—know-it-all Bible scholars

DAD—Kat's father

PROPS: None

COSTUMES: Pajamas for Kat. A white suit for Buddy, dark suits for Hezekiah and Roman. Pajamas or casual clothes for Dad.

SOUND: Five wireless microphones.

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: A little girl's bedroom

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FINDING THE WORDS *by John Casper*

KAT is at center stage, on her knees, hands folded, facing the audience. She looks up to start praying.

KAT: God, It's me, Kat. We were talking today about praying to you, and I really want to do that. But I don't know how. Can you send someone to teach me how to pray?

BUDDY enters.

BUDDY: Ask and you shall receive!

KAT: How did you get in here?

BUDDY: The window was open. You want to know how to pray? I'll teach ya how to pray! You want the Lord ta hear ya? Then ya gotta shout!

KAT: Shout?

BUDDY: SHOUT! And I don't just mean gettin' loud. I mean gettin' holy, gettin' the Spirit. Do ya got the Spirit?

KAT: I don't know!

BUDDY: Then start wavin' your hands like this!

He does a dramatic, televangelist like wave. She tries to copy.

KAT: Like this?

BUDDY: That's it! And you gotta talk all choked up and husky, like this. *(Very dramatic)* Oh Lord! Oh Lord, lookee here! I ask you to bless this young woman with the gift of prayer! I ask that you show her how to be holy like me! Give her a holy voice! Give her holy hands! And give her--

HEZEKIAH enters.

HEZEKIAH: Oh give her a break! That's not how you teach someone to pray!

KAT: How did you get in here?

HEZEKIAH: The window was open. Listen, if you want to pray to God, you have to speak to him in his language, use his words.

KAT: But I only know English!

HEZEKIAH: God speaks English too. It's just King James English.

KAT: It is?