

LEARNING TO PRAY

by JOHN COSPER

GENRE: Drama/Light Comedy

SYNOPSIS: A woman looks back on her life of prayer. As she progresses from the simple prayers of childhood to the sophisticated prayers of adulthood, she ponders whether she missed the most important aspect of prayer relationship.

DIRECTOR'S TIP: This is a tricky sketch to direct. At first glance, since there are two characters, you'd think there'd be some relationship, some action between the two. While there is a relationship of sorts (they're really the same person), there is no interaction between them. So you'll need to direct this as if it were two different monologues.

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 2

TOPIC: Relationships, Prayer, Worship

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Luke 11:1-13, Romans 8:26-27

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Worship Service, Prayer Service, Bible Study

CHARACTERS:

SPEAKER - An adult woman

PRAYER - The same woman, growing from childhood to adulthood

PROPS: None

COSTUMES: Contemporary clothing

SOUND: Two wireless microphones

LIGHTING: Two general spotlights; one on Prayer, one on Speaker

SETTING: General

Drama Ministry

service@DramaMinistry.com
www.DramaMinistry.com
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Scene opens with spotlight on stage right. The PRAYER is on her knees praying in a child-like voice.

PRAYER: God is great, God is good, let us thank him for our food. By his hands we all are fed, give us, Lord, our daily bread. A-men.

Lights up stage left. The SPEAKER is standing or seated on a stool.

SPEAKER: With four simple lines, my prayer life began. As soon as I was able to talk, my mother and father taught me to pray. At every meal, I recited grace. Every night before going to bed, I prayed a chorus of "Now I lay me down to sleep." And in big church with the grown-ups, I recited the Lord's Prayer as only a three year old could...

Spot on PRAYER, still child-like.

PRAYER: Our Father, whose art is in heaven, Howard be thy name...

Spot off PRAYER.

SPEAKER: At first it was exciting to say my prayers. At that young age, it was quite an accomplishment to memorize one of them, much less three. But soon, I began to notice that grown ups prayed a lot differently than I. Rather than recite the same words every time, they made up their own prayers, asking God for special requests and blessings. It was almost like they were sharing with God a list of things they wanted for Christmas, and so I began praying the Santa Claus Prayer.

Spot on PRAYER.

PRAYER: *(Child-like, sweet, sucking up)* Dear God, it's me again, the really sweet girl who's been extra, extra good. Please let it be a sunny day tomorrow so I can play outside with my doggy. And help my grandma to feel better so she can bring me Yoo Hoos. And help me not to be afraid of the dark and not to think about the Saturday Sci-Fi double feature 'cause it scares me and gives me nightmares. And please let me grow up to be a ballerina, and have a million dollars, and a horsie, and a husband who looks like a Ken doll... except that he has real hair and not fake so I can run my fingers through it. Aaaaaa-men!

Spot off PRAYER.

SPEAKER: I loved the freedom of making up my own prayers. In those early carefree days, I'd often spend hours telling God everything I wanted out of life. But prayer habits began to change once I started school. The free time I once spent in prayer gave way to homework, after school sports, music lessons, and school programs. It wasn't that I loved God less. I just had less time.