

A PUPPET PLAY IN ONE ACT

The Wonderful Counselor

Based on Isaiah 9:6; John 14:16; 16:7 · Written by Carrie Elderberry



SUITABLE FOR

Ages 6 and up – adults too

CAST SIZE

8 puppets

PERFORMANCE TIME

8–10 minutes

PROPS REQUIRED

Thunder tube

MAIN THEME

The Counselor is always available and never changes; what changes is whether we slow down enough to receive Him.

Carrie Elderberry's Gospel Puppets · gospelpuppets.org

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To print just the play on its own, print pages 5-11.

PRODUCTION OVERVIEW

Synopsis

Seven very different PERSONS each get a chance to spend time with the COUNSELOR (representing the Holy Spirit of Christ), and six of them rush off—too busy, too distracted, too tired, too talkative, too transactional, or reciting prayers by rote. The seventh comes humbly, with no agenda, and finally receives what the Counselor has been offering all along: real relationship.

Spiritual Concept

The COUNSELOR never changes—He's patient, available, and genuinely wants relationship with each person who comes. What varies is how ready each person is to actually receive Him: busyness, distraction, exhaustion, one-sided chatter, a wish-list approach to prayer, and rote memorization all get in the way, until PERSON #7 comes with nothing to offer but an open heart.

Age Suitability

Best for ages 6 and up. The humor depends on recognizing modern habits (screens, rushing, empty ritual) that land better with kids old enough to notice those patterns in themselves or their families.

Performance Time

8-10 minutes

CAST & TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

Characters (in order of appearance)

C (THE COUNSELOR) — Represents the Holy Spirit of Christ. Use either a dove puppet or a lion.

PERSON #1 — Very full of self-importance, much too busy to pray.

PERSON #2 — Has made a god of technology.

PERSON #3 – Always too tired.

PERSON #4 – Too busy talking to listen.

PERSON #5 – Just wants to hand God a shopping list.

PERSON #6 – Uses a memorized prayer as a “good luck” charm.

PERSON #7 – Really interested in a personal relationship.

Prop Options

- Thunder tube
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PERFORMANCE NOTES FOR PUPPETEERS

New to puppets? General prep, technique, and voice tips live at gospelpuppets.org/getting-started.

Suggested Introduction

This is a play about the importance of keeping in touch with Jesus. He always has time for us, but we do not always make time for Him. There are seven people who have the opportunity to spend time with the Holy Spirit of Christ.

Character Notes

Each PERSON's flaw is played for gentle comedy, not cruelty—C is never sarcastic or unkind, even when frustrated. The “shake things up a bit” line after each exit is C's wry, affectionate resolve to keep pursuing them, not a threat.

PERSON #6's rapid-fire recitation of the Lord's Prayer (run together with hyphens) is meant to be delivered fast and breathlessly, almost like a speed-run, contrasted with PERSON #7's slow, genuine hesitancy at the end.

Staging

The thunder tube shakes after each PERSON exits—use it as a consistent scene-transition button throughout.

PERSON #4's rapid, run-on dialogue (about the goldfish) should be delivered fast enough that C genuinely can't get a word in, per the stage direction.

Reading the Script

CAPS = volume/intensity or emphasis.

Ellipsis (...) = the author's pacing notation.

Hyphens joining words in Person #6's prayer (e.g., "Our-Father-which-art-in-heaven") indicate rapid-fire, run-together delivery –not separate beats.

THE WONDERFUL COUNSELOR

Based on Isaiah 9:6; John 14:16; 16:7 · Written by Carrie Elderberry

"For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Isaiah 9:6 (NLT)

(Enter COUNSELOR.)

C: Come to Me, all you who are heavy laden, and I will give you rest...

(Enter PERSON #1, somewhat flustered. Talk like you have been running.)

PERSON #1: Well, ah, ah, LORD, I BARELY made it HERE on time, ah, ah, but here I AM!

C: Yes, you're here! That's wonderful! You are so very dear to Me.

PERSON #1: But I'm SO sorry, I just can't STAY! In FACT, I should be somewhere ELSE right NOW! There is just SO much to DO, and just so little TIME!

C: Speaking of TIME, spending time with ME is the most important thing you can ever DO.

PERSON #1: Sure, sure! But THEN I just don't know, how I would ever get everything ELSE done! There just AREN'T enough hours in the DAY!

C: Let's talk about that. I can HELP you manage your time better. I can even GIVE you the time for me, if you will let ME be in charge.

PERSON #1: Hey, I-UM-I'd just love to, but I just really don't have time TODAY! Maybe some other time, ok? I've just REALLY got to run! AMEN!

(Exit PERSON #1.)

C: *(thinks out loud)* Come back when you can stay longer! That WAS a pity, since I am the CREATOR of time. I will have to shake things up a bit for that one.

(Shake thunder tube.)

C: Well! Let's see who's next?

(Enter PERSON #2, wearing headphones and looking at a cell phone.)

PERSON #2: Ok. I know I'm SUPPOSED to do this. So, I'm here. Let's get this over with...

C: Let's talk together about what has been going on with you.

(PERSON #2 looking at "screen", appears not to hear)

C: You have become quite distracted.

PERSON #2: *(looks up)* Huh? Did you say something?

C: You know I love you, but you have been avoiding Me, and spending way too much time on technology.

PERSON #2: *(concentrates on technology)* Yeah...well...no, I'm fine... hey, just a minute...

C: You think you're FINE? There are big problems with your family, your work, and your friends.

PERSON #2: *(looks up again)* Huh? What's that?

C: Last time we really talked, you agreed there were a lot of things you needed me to take over.

PERSON #2: *(goes back to technology)* Yeah, well, I'm not really in the mood to think about ANY of that, right now.

C: You need to turn that right off, so we can really communicate.

PERSON #2: *(begins to walk away)* Look, Lord, I don't mean to be RUDE, but I want to focus elsewhere right now. Later, Ok? Amen.

C: It's up to you. I'll be here when you're ready,

(PERSON #2 exits.)

C: but I'm going to have to shake things up a bit for that dear one too.

(Shake thunder tube.)

(Enter PERSON #3. S/he shuffles along slowly, yawning.)

PERSON #3: Excuse me for yawning, but...oh LORD, am I ever tired...

C: Every time you talk to Me, you're exhausted.

PERSON #3: *(yawn)* Yeah, I've been staying up really late at night...

C: Maybe we should schedule our meetings for a DIFFERENT time of day. How about tomorrow morning?

PERSON #3: *(shocked, yawns again)* Oh, no! I'm not a morning person...

C: When WOULD be the best time for us then?

PERSON #3: *(yawns)* Oh, now is as good as any OTHER...

C: No, I mean, when will you be more ALERT?

PERSON #3: *(gets mad)* I'm ALERT...ENOUGH...what do you need me to be so alert for, anyway?

C: We need to be able to really communicate! My dear child, I want to hear how your life is going, your hopes and dreams and worries...

(PERSON #3 dozes off.)

C: And you need to be listening to me, too—

PERSON #3: *(snoring)* XZXZXSKSKSXXX

C: Oh, for heaven's sake—

PERSON #3: *(snoring)* XKXKXKSKSNGNGNXXXXX!!!!

C: Hey! Wake up!!!

PERSON #3: *(jumping)* XZXSKXS—What? Where's the fire? What's happening?

C: You fell asleep.

PERSON #3: *(yawn, exits)* Really? I guess I am too tired to talk right now. Look, maybe I'll pray later. I need to go get some rest. Ah—Amen...

(Exit PERSON #3.)

C: *(to audience)* We never do talk anymore. I am always put LAST. I'll have to shake things up a bit here, too.

(Shake thunder tube.)

(Enter PERSON #4.)

PERSON #4: *(giggles)* Hi God! Guess WHO? I'm HERE!

C: Hi yourself! How are you?

(PERSON #4 starts talking fast and never gives the COUNSELOR a chance to get a word in edgewise, though he tries.)

PERSON #4: Oh! Things are great! Just peachy! I don't have any complaints! Although actually, did You know my goldfish died?

C: Of course.

PERSON #4: But that's not really the end of the world, now, is it? I don't suppose it makes any difference to You if my goldfish died. But then again, it might? He was a very good little goldfish! Do goldfish go to heaven? I mean, if he had been a bad goldfish, would he go to goldfish HELL? I don't suppose You'd tell me, even if You know.

C: I love you so much, but how can I tell you ANYTHING when you—

PERSON #4: *(interrupting)* I guess I don't really need to know, but if I did need to know, WOULD You tell me? Do you know about things like that? You never seem to say much—

C: You never cease to amaze me.

PERSON #4: Giggle!

C: Every time you come you talk so much, and you never even THINK to listen—

PERSON #4: *(interrupting, then exits)* Well that's ok! I don't really need any help today! Even if I DID need something, I'm not sure that You would do anything about it, but that's OK too! I'll be back tomorrow to talk to You again! Bye God! Amen!

(Exit PERSON #4.)

C: One of these days I'll be able to get a word in edgewise...it's time to shake things up a bit.

(Shake thunder tube.)

(PERSON #5 walks up, looking over two long paper lists. End each sentence like a question.)

PERSON #5: Hey, listen, Father God, Lord? I don't really want to like, um...hear from YOU today? But I have made a couple of lists for you—

C: Here we go again with the lists. My dear—

PERSON #5: One list is of the things that I'm like, um..."thankful for"? But, like, make sure you look at this other list, Father God? It's kind of like, more important? It's the things that, I need You to, like, DO for me?

(PERSON #5 hands lists over.)

PERSON #5: Here you go! Thanks SO much!

C: This isn't really praying, not at all.

PERSON #5: *(exits)* Oh, and uh, uh, In-Jesus'-Name-Amen.

C: *(as if reading the lists)* Wow, how efficient. Let's see...the first list has Thank-you-for-this-day, Thank-you-for-my-family, Thank-you-for-my-friends...that's pretty much the usual.

C: *(looks at the other list)* And now for the other list...mmm...we really need to talk these over first, because some of them would do more harm than good. I'll need to shake things up a bit for this dear one, too.

(C sets lists aside. Shake thunder tube.)

(PERSON #6 enters, looks away from C, takes a deep breath.)

PERSON #6: Our-Father-which-art-in-heaven-hallowed-be-Thy-name!

C: Hold on there! Think about what you are saying—

(PERSON #6 takes another big breath.)

PERSON #6: *(stop to breathe)* Thy-kingdom-come-Thy-will-be-done-on-earth-as-it-is-in-heaven—

C: Beloved, stop! It's not a magic formula—

PERSON #6: Give-us-this-day-our-daily-bread-and-forgive-us-our-trespasses—

C: You don't even KNOW what a trespass is—

PERSON #6: *(stop for a breath)* as-we-forgive-those-who-trespass-against-us—

C: This is such a waste of time. You're not really praying to Me at all.

PERSON #6: (*breathe noisily*) And-lead-us-not-into-temptation-but-deliver-us-from-EEEEUUUL-For-Thine-is-the-kingdom-and-the-power-and-the-glory-forever-and-ever-AMEN! HA! Whew! I think I broke my speed record that time! Yes! Good to go!

C: My dear, that was so pathetic.

PERSON #6: (*exits*) Cha-Ching!

C: So many people think that prayer is like some kind of good luck charm. Got to shake things up QUITE a bit for that dear child!

(*Shake thunder tube.*)

(*PERSON #7 peeks at COUNSELOR from offstage.*)

PERSON #7: Hello? God? Are You really truly there?

C: Well, hello! Yes, I'm right here!

PERSON #7: (*enters*) Wow...I've heard about You. But I never thought I'd actually MEET You. You sure You're not too busy? I know I don't have an appointment...

C: You don't need one. I ALWAYS have time for you.

PERSON #7: Wow, thanks! But, um...I don't have any money, or anything to give You, though...

C: You have come to Me, because I have drawn you. That is enough. Do you know that I made you? And I love you?

PERSON #7: I heard that, but it seems too good to be true. I don't deserve Your love.

C: No. But I am the way, the truth, and the life.

PERSON #7: That is the best news I ever heard. Can I stay with you for a while?

C: You can stay with me forever!

PERSON #7: Thank You! I will! This is so wonderful! It's like being born again.

C: (*to audience*) Jesus says, in John Chapter 14, "If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever—the Spirit of truth."

(*PUPPETS 1-6 get back on stage; have #7 say "1, 2, 3".*)

PERSONS 1-7: That's all for today! Which of us is YOU??

THE END

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

Discussion Questions

1. Which of the seven Persons do you think is most like you sometimes—too busy, too distracted, too tired, too talkative, too transactional, or reciting words without thinking about them?
2. Why does the Counselor keep trying, even after six people rush off?
3. What made Person #7 different from the other six?
4. What does it mean that Jesus “always has time” for us?
5. Is there a habit in your own prayer life—or your family's—that this play reminds you of?

Related Bible Passages

Primary Text: Isaiah 9:6 – the prophecy that names the coming Messiah “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Additional Scripture:

- John 14:16 – Jesus promises to ask the Father to send “another Counselor” to be with His followers forever. (Reference; paraphrased in dialogue.)
- John 16:7 – Jesus tells His disciples it is actually to their advantage that He is going away, because He will send the Holy Spirit. (Reference only.)

Song Suggestions

- “Cares Chorus” – Kelly Willard – <https://open.spotify.com/track/7oYF1sq69iKD7hQMyuBSIh>
- “Open the Eyes of My Heart” – Paul Baloche – <https://open.spotify.com/track/4LSacIqXrVARWFxPBA77Nd>

Ministry Context

This play works well for a series on prayer, the Holy Spirit, or simply making time for God amid a busy life—it's an easy way to get both kids and adults in the audience laughing at habits they recognize in themselves. Consider pairing with a reading of Isaiah 9:6 or a short teaching on what it looks like to actually listen in prayer, not just talk.