

Is the altar—a sacred space set apart for meeting with God—meant to be used for jokes, casual conversations, entertainment, or light-hearted comedy?

Sadly, in many modern churches today, what was once treated as holy ground has become a stage for laughter, selfies, storytelling, and even flirtation. This is a dangerous shift.

Let us begin with the opening verse of the Book of Psalms:

Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers.

Psalms 1:1, ESV

The term “scoffers” refers to those who mock sacred things, who make light of what God calls holy. A person who jokes and plays around at the altar demonstrates that they no longer fear God. Reverence is absent. They treat God’s altar like any common stage or public platform. But Scripture is clear—God is holy and

must be approached with deep reverence.

A Biblical Warning: The Sin of Eli's Sons

Consider the example of Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli. They were priests, yet they treated the tabernacle of God with contempt.

Now Eli was very old, and he kept hearing all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who were serving at the entrance to the tent of meeting.

1 Samuel 2:22, ESV

They committed immorality right at the entrance of the sanctuary. When rebuked, they ignored correction and hardened their hearts. Eventually, judgment came swiftly upon them, and they died in battle, carrying the Ark of the Covenant. Their sin was not only personal—it brought reproach to God's house and the entire nation.

God Does Not Tolerate Mockery

The book of Proverbs further teaches:

A scoffer does not like to be reproved; he will not go to the wise.

Proverbs 15:12, ESV

Mockers despise correction because their hearts have grown proud and dull. When the altar becomes a place for jokes, storytelling, or dance performances that reflect worldly behavior, it's no longer serving its divine purpose. God does not dwell in places that are dishonored.

Even Jesus Himself drove out those who turned the temple into a place of business:

It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers.

Matthew 21:13, ESV

If Jesus cleansed the temple from misuse, should we not take greater care in how we treat the altar in our churches?

The Altar is Not for Entertainment

The altar is not a place to:

- Take selfies
- Engage in casual chatter
- Chew gum
- Eat snacks
- Flirt or act flirtatiously
- Parade in immodest or inappropriate attire
- Perform worldly danger
- Tell jokes or comedy skits

It is a place of sacrifice, prayer, worship, and encounter with the living God. To treat it like a comedy stage is to invite judgment rather than blessing.

Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.

Galatians 6:7, ESV

Even pagans treat their altars with fear. Should we show less reverence for the altar of the holy and living God?

Heaven's Example: Reverence in the Presence of God

In Revelation 4, we are given a glimpse of heaven's throne room:

Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads... and they cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 'Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power...

Revelation 4:4,10-11, ESV

Notice: the ones who surround God's throne are elders—mature, wise, and reverent—not scoffers or comedians. If this is the standard in heaven, how should we behave before God on earth?

A Call to Leaders and Believers Alike

If you are a pastor, evangelist, or church leader:

- STOP using the altar as a place for jokes and personal entertainment.
- STOP wasting time trying to amuse people instead of faithfully preaching the full Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- STOP joking with members at the altar. Jesus warned:

I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak.

Matthew 12:36, ESV

If you are a believer, whether a member, usher, or even the pastor's spouse or child:

The altar—and the entire sanctuary—is not a place to loiter,

laugh, or distract others.

When entering God's house, turn off your phone, sit quietly, and honor His presence.

Don't treat God's sanctuary like your personal playground. This is for your spiritual good.

Final Warning: The Lord is Coming

God is holy. He is not to be mocked or taken lightly.

Let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

Hebrews 12:28-29, ESV

Let us repent of irreverence and return to honoring the altar as the sacred place it is. For one day, we will all stand before His throne and give an account of how we treated His name and His

house.

THE LORD IS COMING.

Let us prepare ourselves in holiness, reverence, and fear of the Lord.

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