

Magic for the Gospel Magician

By MagicBob & Roger Magic Bus



CHINESE STICKS



This is yet another "packs small plays big" effect. Abbott's Magic sells a great stage size set. Twelve inches in length, made in metal, lacquered in red with polished brass tips, they are more suitable for stage work and can be seen and appreciated in larger auditoriums.

THE CHINESE STICKS

Many magicians have in their arsenal of effects the "Chinese Sticks". I have many versions made from plastic to steel. One of my favorites is the Kovari sticks where the strings can be pulled down all the way to the floor. To see this basic effect performed, go to a very old standard non-Gospel video version of the Kovari sticks I did at www.ChristianMagician.org. Click on program #7 of the "Now That's Magic!" series and fast forward to end of the program at the 24:30 mark of this 30-minute program.



For Gospel magicians, the Chinese Sticks and the "Pom-Pom Pole" have often been referred to as "prayer sticks" with many routines suggested regarding using the "tassels and tassels" to illustrate prayers "going up" and God answering them (with no apparent physical connection between the two). Below is a modified, more "teachy" longer version of this effect to help illustrate to children and adults some important Biblical aspects of prayer. Of course, you can change the routine as you see fit to incorporate the many other prayer verses in the Bible to fit with this overall theme of communication/unseen interaction between God and man. This routine would be terrific as part of a Sunday School lesson or church program. The thoughts below are by no means original by me. I have heard the same points made in various sermons over the years or seen published in several books on the topic of prayer.

Patter:

"One of the most famous verses in the Bible is Romans 8:28:

'And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him who have been called according to His purpose.'

But what I would like to illustrate next are the two verses just prior to verse 28, found in verses 26 and 27 of Romans 8. I believe these verses will REVOLUTIONIZE your prayer life and allow you to RETHINK how you pray."

"On this stick, you will notice a string is attached with a very short tassel on it. On this other stick, there is a very long string attached with another tassel on it. I would like to use these two stringed sticks to illustrate some ideas on how to pray, but just as importantly, how Romans 8 verses 26 and 27 apply to prayer."

"A good reminder to me HOW to pray is by making use of the word ACTS- where each letter A-C-T-S prompts me of what I can pray about."

A stands for ADORATION, I can exclaim and worship to God in my prayers as to how GREAT God is, thanking Him for his loving-kindness, His sending His Son to die for my sins, His justice, His mercy, His being eternal, His taking care of us."

(Pull down the right short string/tassel, while the left string/tassel goes up).

"Then we can pray what is signified by the letter C in ACTS, we should CONFESS our sins as he is faithful and just to forgive our sins. Psalm 24 verse 4 indicates we should pray with clean hands and a pure heart."

(Pull down on the left string, while the right string goes back up).

We can also pray what is signified by the letter T in ACTS- tell God what we are THANKFUL for including our liberty, our food, our health, our churches, our jobs, our families, our friendships. Finally, we can bring our SUPPLICATIONS to our Lord- this is what the letter S reminds us to do. We can pray about our personal needs, our families' physical and emotional needs, the salvation of others, what is heartfelt and really on our mind, rather than what the Bible calls "vain repetitions."

(While doing the T and S above, continue to pull one tassel down with the other one goes up).

You may want to review at this point with the audience or class ACTS again, reminding all of what each letter stands for, perhaps even asking everyone to say out loud "ACTS." This is a great memory aid to remind us what to pray about if we ever get "stuck" as to what we should be praying about. While doing this, keep repeating pulling on one string while the other one goes up, perhaps very slowly or at various speeds.

"The Bible says that God hears and ANSWERS our prayers"- but not always as we'd like. Sometimes the answer is NO, other times it may be GO, or SLOW, or GROW. Continue praying- God hears the prayer of the righteous (Proverbs 15:29)."

"Sometimes, we feel our prayers our NOT working. We may think that there is NO COMMUNICATION, no attachment between what we are saying or thinking and where God is. We seem a million miles apart."

(Show the two sticks are not attached around the back, pull them wide apart).

"We may keep praying, praying, praying... pulling for an answer. We are not sure if what we are praying is right or not."

(Pull both strings down on both sticks all the way to the floor if using a Kovari set of sticks, or slowly pull both strings down if you have a standard set.).

"That is where Romans 8 verses 26 and 27 come in. These verses have CHANGED my prayer life."

"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will."

WOW! We pray in weakness, don't we??? Our minds may be a mess, our grammar may be incorrect. We are often confused and weary. But it is not just I alone praying to God. There is a third party there in the room with us! It is like having a prayer attorney right there with us, or a speech editor, and He ACTS on our behalf, and straightens up our messed up prayers and INTERCEDES for us in ACCORDANCE with God's will. That's amazing! I can now pray KNOWING that the Holy Spirit is right there with me- so my prayers can be presented to God in a good way even though we are praying in WEAKNESS and not according as to how we ought to.

(Pull both strings upward at the same time- as to signify our prayers going "up").

(Start pulling the strings back up and down as in the beginning of the routine).

"So the thing we have learned today is to PRAY, pray without ceasing, even short "popcorn" sentence prayers throughout the day, knowing that His Spirit is interceding for us at the same time so our prayers will "go up" to be heard by a loving God who keeps His promises. I encourage you to think about those verses in Romans Chapter 8, it will CHANGE how you think

about prayer- you can KNOW His Spirit is interceding for you and I while we pray. Amen everyone? Amen."