

ALTAR WORKERS TRAINING!

*“Let all things be done decently and in order.”
I Corinthians 14:40*

*“Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear,
than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.”
Ecclesiastes 5:1*

Lesson Outline:

Introduction

Welcome and purpose of this training.

The word altar means “High Place” and was a place of sacrifice in which something or someone has to die and the place where man would meet God. Before the Priest went before God in the Old Testament, an innocent lamb would be sacrificed to bore the judgment of the guilty. The Priests would lay their hands upon the head of the offering symbolizing their sins being transferred to the offering and the life of the offering was transferred to them. The altar is what gave value to the sacrifice. Therefore, it was Jesus giving Himself as a ransom for the sins of mankind that gave value to His sacrifice.

Types of Altar Calls: A Spiritual Journey

The altar call is a divine invitation to draw nearer to God, to experience His grace in a profound and personal way. However, I want you to understand that not all altar calls are the same? Yes, indeed! Let's delve into this spiritual tapestry, unraveling the threads of various types of altar calls.

1. **The Salvation Call:** Have you heard the Gospel and found your heart moved? This call is for those who are ready to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. It's the first, crucial step on the road to redemption, a transformative moment filled with grace and mercy.
2. **The Rededication Call:** Ever felt like you've strayed from the path? Like you've let the world muddy your spiritual clarity? Fear not! The rededication call is a chance to recommit yourself to God, to cleanse your spirit, and return to the path of righteousness.
3. **The Healing Call:** Are you carrying burdens of physical ailment or emotional pain? The healing call is a powerful opportunity to seek divine intervention, to invite God's healing touch into your life.
4. **The Sanctification Call:** Have you yearned for a deeper, more intimate relationship with God? The sanctification call beckons us to consecrate ourselves fully to God's service, to strive for holiness in our thoughts, words, and deeds.

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Remember, each call is a divine invitation, an opportunity to deepen your relationship with God, to experience His love, mercy, and transformative power.

1. The Biblical Foundation of Altar Work

The biblical foundation of altar work is rooted in various principles and practices mentioned throughout the Bible. Here are some key elements:

- a. **Intercession:** In Exodus 32:30-32, Moses intercedes on behalf of the Israelites after their sin of idol worship. This act of standing in the gap for others is a fundamental element of altar work.
- b. **Confession and Repentance:** The altar is often a place where individuals come to confess their sins and seek repentance. This is seen in 1 John 1:9, which assures believers that if they confess their sins, God is faithful to forgive.
- c. **Salvation:** In Romans 10:9-10, Paul outlines the path to salvation – confessing with our mouth that Jesus is Lord and believing in our heart that God raised Him from the dead. Altar workers often guide individuals through this process.
- d. **Healing and Deliverance:** The Gospels are filled with instances of Jesus healing the sick and casting out demons. The altar can be a place where individuals seek similar healing and deliverance, with altar workers serving as vessels for God's power (Mark 16:17-18).
- e. **Baptism in the Holy Spirit:** In Acts 2:1-4, the disciples received the baptism of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Altar workers often pray for individuals to receive this same baptism.
- f. **Worship and Sacrifice:** In the Old Testament, altars were places of worship and sacrifice (Genesis 8:20). While the nature of these sacrifices has changed under the New Covenant, the altar remains a place where individuals offer their lives to God as "living sacrifices" (Romans 12:1).
- g. **Reconciliation:** In Matthew 5:23-24, Jesus instructs that if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift and first be reconciled to your brother. This highlights the role of the altar in reconciliation.

2. The Ministry of the Altar Worker: A Sacred Service

a. *Role and Responsibilities*

- i. *Spiritual Intercession:* Altar workers are tasked with interceding on behalf of others during worship services. They pray for individuals, asking for divine intervention in their lives.
 1. You are not here to stand around and look like something.
 2. You are not here to be in the way.
- ii. *Guiding Worshippers:* They guide worshippers who approach the altar for prayer, helping them to articulate their needs and desires to God.
- iii. *Ministering at the Altar:* During service, altar workers minister at the altar, providing spiritual support to those who come forward. This includes praying with them, offering words of comfort, and providing guidance based on biblical principles.

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1. The spirit may give you a word of encouragement before the man or woman of God gets to them to minister to them.
- iv. *Understanding of Salvation Principles:* Altar workers need to have a deep understanding of the principles of salvation as they often guide new believers through the process of accepting Christ.
- v. *Counseling:* They may provide basic spiritual counseling, listening to individuals who are seeking guidance and helping them find answers in their faith.
- vi. *Supporting Church Services:* Altar workers often play a role in the smooth running of church services. This might include preparing the altar for services, assisting with communion, or helping to maintain an atmosphere conducive to worship.
- vii. *Attunement to the Holy Spirit:* Above all, an altar worker must be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit, allowing it to guide their actions and words as they minister to others.

b. Characteristics of an Altar Worker

Do you comprehend the magnitude of your calling as an Altar Worker? This ministry is not a light undertaking. It requires a complete understanding, a wholehearted commitment, a readiness to stand in the gap. As an Altar Worker, you are bestowed with the divine privilege of intercession. You are called to engage in spiritual warfare, to battle fiercely for the souls of God's precious children. I implore you, dear Altar Workers, to embrace your calling with all your heart.

- i. The Altar Worker is expected to lead a life that is pleasing in the eyes of God.
- ii. It's essential for the Altar Worker to be redeemed and filled with the Holy Spirit.
- iii. The Altar Worker should exhibit confidence in wielding God's authority and truly sense a calling towards the prayer ministry.
- iv. An Altar Worker's life should be marked by regular prayer and intercession.
- v. The Altar Worker must be a dedicated member of the church, consistently fulfilling their tithing obligations.
- vi. Sensitivity to the guidance of the Holy Spirit is a vital trait for an Altar Worker.
- vii. The spirit of submission and the ability to follow leadership are key characteristics of an Altar Worker.
- viii. It's crucial for the Altar Worker to comprehend and be well-versed in the principles of salvation.
- ix. The Altar Worker should maintain a strong connection with God and a close relationship with the Pastor.
- x. Understanding the Pastor's heart and style of ministry is essential for an Altar Worker. They must be observant and familiar with any non-verbal cues or sign language used by the Pastor. (Know your Pastor)

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- xi. The Altar Worker should have confidence in their spiritual gifts to intercede on behalf of others and guide individuals toward Christ and His Kingdom. Essentially, they serve as an extended hand to those responding to God's call at the altar, aiding in their integration into the kingdom.

3. Practical Tips

- a. Respect the leadership of the gathering, whether it's a Pastor or an Evangelist. Every altar call is not the same. Maintain a modest appearance and ensure your breath is fresh (consider carrying mints). If you're accompanied by small children, please arrange for someone to watch over them. You must be completely prepared for the assignment. If you have a guest evangelist that is preparing to minister it is proper to ask are there any rules regarding assisting them during their altar call.
- b. Ensure that you do not draw attention towards yourself; instead, guide their focus towards Jesus for salvation, baptism in the Holy Spirit, deliverance, healing, and more. Always remember, we are merely humble instruments of the Lord, working in collaboration with Him. Being an altar worker is not about looking for ways to build your self-esteem.
- c. Always be prepared to serve. This means you should come fully ready, having spent time in prayer. Prayer is the cornerstone of preparation in Altar ministry. Pre-service prayer should not be seen as optional, but rather a critical prerequisite if we aim to minister under the Holy Spirit's anointing.
- d. Be ready to share scripture passages (Romans 3:23; 6:23; 5:8; 10:9-10) and lead individuals to Christ, always being sensitive to the Holy Spirit's guidance. Provide opportunities for baptism in the Holy Spirit, healing, or addressing other prayer needs.
- e. When praying, there should only be one person speaking aloud directly in front of the individual seeking prayer. This could be the evangelist, pastor, or even yourself. This allows the individual to concentrate on the prayer being said and prevents confusion. The role of the prayer leader can transition from one person to another in an orderly manner as prompted by the Holy Spirit. Other members of the altar team should intercede quietly. As a rule, men should pray with men, and women with women.
- f. Be ready to assist those who are overwhelmed by the power of the Holy Spirit, often referred to as being 'slain in the Spirit', as they may fall to the ground. For women wearing skirts or shorts, ensure their modesty is maintained by covering their legs. Be prepared to help individuals back on their feet when they rise. Keep in mind that people can sometimes fall of their own accord, without it being a result of the Holy Spirit's influence. In such instances, it's crucial to be there to support (or catch) them to prevent injury.
- g. Respect those who have fallen under the power of the Holy Spirit and do not disturb them while they are on the ground. Allow the Holy Spirit to minister during this time. The person is in that position for a reason, and we must honor this divine intervention.

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- h. Show compassion, not sympathy. Jesus demonstrated compassion through his actions, and we should follow His example. Focus on the solution rather than the problem. While Jesus was compassionate, He never displayed sympathy, which tends to fuel the flesh.
- i. Foster faith: Share scriptures that speak of victory and provide encouragement as the Holy Spirit guides you. After healing someone, Jesus often said, "Go in peace, your faith has made you whole". Remind the individual that Jesus still performs miracles, and it is His will for them to receive; He remains unchanging, yesterday, today, and forever. (Matthew 8:2-3)
- j. Challenge: Start with the question, "Are you born again?" Often, people may approach the altar for one reason, but the Holy Spirit has drawn them for salvation.
- k. Forgiveness: Ask if they need to forgive anyone. If they do, guide them in a prayer of forgiveness. Now is the time (Matthew 5:23-24; 6:14-15; 11:25, 2 Corinthians 2:10-11).

Q&A and Conclusion (5 mins)

Open the floor for questions.

Summarize the main points from the lesson, emphasizing the crucial role altar workers play in the church and the necessity of being spiritually prepared.