

CANCEL THAT ORDER
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*The stage is set as an executive's office. A clerk's desk is off to one side, or on the opposite side of an imaginary partition. Phones are on both desks to simulate an intercom system. On the other side of the platform from the clerk is a bench, used as an altar by Christian. There should be a microphone on the bench and one on the desk where God sits. God's microphone could use a little reverberation. The skit opens with **God**, in flowing robes, sitting at the executive desk and looking at an open roll of blueprints. He makes notes on a small pad. **Michael** is off to one side, tallying numbers on an old adding machine. He shakes his head from time to time. A halo is fixed, somewhat askew on his head, and bobbles as he shakes it. Otherwise the scene looks like a typical small office. As they work, **Christian** comes in from offstage. He kneels at the bench.*

God: *(Picks up the phone, presses an intercom button and a tone sounds. At the other desk, **Michael** picks up the phone) Michael?*

Michael: Yes, Boss?

God: Can you come in for a moment? I have a slight change order for this mansion.

Michael: There in a second. *(He gets up, pantomimes opening a door, and crosses to **God's** desk)*
Yes, Sir?

God: Right here. *(Points to the blueprint)* See this beautiful bathroom?

Michael: *(Looks smug)* On of my better efforts, don't you think? I distinctly remember this saint's words. His idea of heaven would be a bathroom of his own. Where no one is knocking on the door. See? *(Also points)* No door!

God: *(Sighs)* Michael, Michael, Michael! Glorified bodies. Remember? No need for bathrooms. Change it to a throne room. Or perhaps a library. Or maybe.... *(At this point, the voice of the **Christian** is heard over the speakers)*

Christian: Dear God.....

God: *(Holding up a finger to **Michael** as if to say, "Hold up a second")* There's our client now.

Christian: Just wanted to apologize. Been a long time since I talked with you. *(**God** nods)* It's not that I don't care. It's just. I've been so tired with all the overtime I've been working. I don't have the energy to much of anything. But I have to take the work. If I want a new house. And I'm sure tired of this one. I deserve a nice place to live. I'm sure you understand, Lord, *(**God** is frowning quite deeply)* living up in heaven like you do. But I promise. Soon as I get a down payment together, I'll devote more time to you. And your work. Thanks, God. I knew you'd understand. How important this house is to me. I love you. Amen! *(**Christian** gets up and leaves the stage)*

God: *(Sits for a long minute, then sighs sadly)* Well, Michael. Cancel the work order for this one. Put it in the inactive file. *(He rolls up the blueprints and hands them to Michael)*

Michael: No problem, sir! *(He takes the blueprints, crosses to the "door", opens it, and goes through, shuts it behind him, tosses the prints into a trash can, sits back down at his desk, and goes back to adding up figures)*

... **God** is beginning to write on a memo pad when **Christian** comes back in, kneels down, and begins to pray again....

Christian: Dear God,

God: *(Leans down to microphone)* Yes, Christian?

Christian: *(Jumps up startled and looks around)* Wow! I must be hallucinating. *(Looks up quizzically, cringing)* That really you, Lord?

God: Yes! What do you need?

Christian: Well, uh ... mainly to explain something. See, I need to go to my boss's Christmas party. Office politics, and all of that. I know some of the stuff that goes on there. You know, sometimes. Well, you know, you might be a little uncomfortable with it. But really, it's, uh, just once a year, and I figured, well, you probably would not mind my ..going ???

God: Does going to it bother you, Christian?

Christian: Well, no, not really. The party's really kind of fun. The people? That are so dull at the office? Really liven up after a few drinks. Singing and dancing like you've probably never seen. It's pretty cool. I mean, it's not like church or anything. Everyone is so happy at the party. Know what I mean?

God: I know exactly what you mean.

Christian: Well, good. I knew you wouldn't mind. Whew! Amen! *(Christian gets up and hurries offstage, jogging the side of his head, as if to wake himself up)*

God: *(Picks up the phone and pushes the intercom button)* Michael?

Michael: *(Picks up the intercom)* Yes, God?

God: You know that reservation we had for Christian. The spot right next to me?

Michael: At the wedding party?

God: That's the one. Cancel it. Move one of the elders into his spot. *(He sets the phone back down .. hard)*

Michael: *(Puts the phone down, shaking his head)* Boy, this has sure been happening a lot lately. *(Michael rummages around for a dry erase board, studies it for a second, then crosses something off and puts it away. He goes back to his addition)*

... **God** is going back to his work, when voices are heard over the speakers. The voices are those of **Christian** and his **wife**, offstage ...

Wife: I can't believe you're really going to that party. Thought you were gonna pray about it.

Christian: I did. God didn't seem to mind. Thought you were going with me?

Wife: When I prayed, God seemed a little hurt by the idea. I'm staying home. Take the van tonight. It handles better than the Ferrari on ice.

Christian: Thanks, but no thanks! The van is trashed. By those urchins you insist on picking up for Sunday School, I'm ashamed to be seen in it. Bad image for an up and coming executive. *(slight pause here)* In fact, I want the van cleaned. We're not running a bus route for the church any more. I paid for that van. If the pastor wants kids picked up, let the church buy a van. Get a driver. I deserve to have nice looking vehicles.

God: *(Into intercom)* Michael?

Michael: *(Picks up phone)* Yes, Lord?

God: Christian does not believe those less important than you should be allowed to soil your fine vehicles. What do you think?

Michael: *(Hesitates)* I think you're going to tell me. To cancel the order for his chariot of fire.

God: *(Smiling)* Well, after a few million years, you're starting to think like me. Cancel it, Michael!

Michael: Already done, Sir! Soon as I heard him talking. *(Puts down phone)*

Christian: *(Voice fades back in)* Besides, Honey. You'd be uncomfortable. How they dress and all.

Wife: *(Icily)* There a problem with how I dress?

Christian: You know what I mean. They dress in fashion. Always look so glamorous.

Wife: They also wear them short. Want me to look that "glamorous" too?

Christian: Nooo .. I'm just saying. Doesn't hurt to try and stay a bit in style. When you're gonna be around people. That's all.

God leans and presses the intercom again. **Michael** picks up the phone, exasperated...

Michael: Way ahead of you. Cancel the robe of righteousness. Right?

God: Well yes, Michael. That's right. How did you know?

Michael: Well, yesterday you canceled the crown of gold for Christian. Because of his love of earthly jewelry. And the day before that? You were so upset by his fixation on earthly investments you had gold paving stripped from his future neighborhood. Replaced with..(*shudders*) ..asphalt. Smelled like something from the pits of ... well, you know.

..While Michael talks, a small group of various workmen with appropriate attire and tools of the trades come in. All are somewhat grimy, but wear halos, also askew..

Michael: What can I do for you fellows?

Union leader: (*Twisting hard hat around in hand*) Well, Sir. We don't mean to complain, Sir. But something's got to be done. We were created to build homes for the saints of God. We're mighty good at it. Not bragging, Sir. Just complementing our Creator, same as yours. But lately, with stuff being canceled? If this continues, pretty soon, we won't have anything to do. Now we have heard, Sir. Idle hands are the, uh, you know who's workshop. We sure don't wanna end up down there. It's nothin but a sweat shop. So we were kind of wondering? What with you having the ear of the big man? Could you maybe get him to ease up a bit on the cancellations? And all ... Sir?

... As the union leader talks, God has gotten up, pantomimed opening the door, and been listening. As union leader finishes, God strides through briskly, clapping his hands ...

God: Okay! I've heard enough. I'll get down there and bring my people back home. While I still have a people. I'd hoped to reach a few more first, but even my very elect are being deceived. You! (*Points to the labor leader*) Get my white horse saddled, The rest of you, get weapons ready. Alert the saints already living here. We're going down. Move! Move! (*Labor delegation makes a hasty departure*) Michael, you get your armor on and get ready. And Michael (*Michael pauses in the act of leaving*) Get Gabriel for me. He's been practicing for eons. Time to make music. (*Michael leaves. God rubs hands together briskly as he walks off the platform. Just before he exits, he turns to the audience with a smile*). You have any idea how long I've been waiting for this?

.... God leaves and the lights fade to nothing.....then come up just enough to show Christian kneeling again at his bench...and the empty office area....

Christian: (*Nervously*) Say, God? This is Christian. Uh, thought maybe we could talk a little more. Haven't slept real well since that incredible sound. During the party last night. Can't find my wife either. Think she might've left me. Moved in with her Father. Maybe shouldn't have said that about her clothes. In fact, you might want to know. I didn't really enjoy the party either. And God, if you want? I can even cut back on my hours. What do you think, God? Uh God, it's me, Christian. You there?

.... As the prayer ends, we hear the phone, ringing and ringing and ringing. The sound slowly fades with the lights until both are gone....