

Short Talk

(SHT057)

Missing the Mark

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SHORT TALK: “MISSING THE MARK” (SHT057)

Aim of Short talk:	To help people understand that sin can be seen as “missing the mark” of obeying God’s commands.
Main themes:	Sin, love
Biblical references:	Romans 3:23, Mark 12:30-31
Props:	Target, bow and three arrows. A children’s set can be purchased for a reasonable price at Amazon or Argos.

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The Bible tells us that we have all sinned.

- So what is sin?
- To help us understand I need *N* to come and help me. (*Volunteer comes forward and you give them three arrows*)

I have a target here and I need *N* to shoot three of the arrows I have given them,

- so that they hit the target each time.

OK *N* you go and stand over there and I’ll stand here (*Ask N to stand so far away from you that it is totally impossible that their arrows will even hit the target*)

- When you are ready, please shoot one of your arrows and see if you can hit the target. (*N shoots an arrow*)
- Bad luck, try again. (*N shoots an arrow*)
- Have one last try. (*N shoots an arrow*)

Oh dear.....none of your arrows hit the target.....

- In fact they didn’t even get anywhere near the target.

That little illustration might help us understand what sin is.

- One of the words that the Bible uses to explain sin is the greek word, “*hamartia*” (ham-ar-tee'-ah), which means missing the mark,
- as we have just shown with our arrows missing the target.

Some of us might wonder what the mark or the target we are aiming for is.

- Listen to what Jesus says the target is:
- “*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength, and love your neighbour as yourself*” (Mark 12:30-31)

So imagine that the target represents the commands to love God and to love others.

- *N* please shoot your 4th arrow (*The arrow should miss the target*)
- Sin is when we fail to love God.
- *N* please shoot your 5th arrow (*The arrow should miss the target*)
- Sin is when we fail to love our neighbour.
- *N* please shoot your 6th arrow (*The arrow should miss the target*)
- Sin is when we rebel against God and put ourselves first.

We are all guilty of sin because we have all rebelled against God and ignored his commands.

- None of us has perfectly loved Him or perfectly loved our neighbour.
- It isn't simply those who commit murder, or rob banks that are sinners;
- we also are sinners according to the Bible.

The good news is that God has done something about our sin.

- He sent His Son Jesus into the world to call us back into relationship with Himself.
- Jesus lived a completely sin-free life.
- He loved Father God perfectly. *(Pick up arrow and stick it on the bullseye of the target)*
- He loved other people perfectly. *(Pick up arrow and stick it on the bullseye of the target)*
- He obeyed His Father completely and served other people. *(Pick up arrow and stick it on the bullseye of the target)*

In fact Jesus loved us all so much that He was willing to be crucified to pay for the sins that we have all committed.

- If we come to him, admitting that we are sinners.....Jesus not only forgives us and gives us a fresh start,
- but He also gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit to live inside us, who enables us to love and obey God and to love and serve other people.....
- That's good news isn't it?