

Short Talk

(SHT133)

**The best words you
could ever hear**

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ALL AGE WORSHIP
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SHORT TALK: “The best words you could ever hear”

Aim of Short talk: To encourage people that when they choose to follow Jesus, Father God speaks words of love and identity to them, as He did to Jesus at His baptism.

Use of Short talk: This is a short All Age talk picking out one issue from the Lectionary Gospel reading of the Sunday main service. The talk stands alone and assumes that the Gospel Bible reading may not yet have been read to the congregation. It could be used for example, for the whole congregation before the children go out to their age specific groups, leaving the adults with a full sermon later.

Main themes: Words, Encouragement, Baptism

Biblical references: Luke 3:15-17, 21, 22, 1John 3:1, Romans 5:8, Psalm 147:11

Lectionary: Year C – The Baptism of Christ, The Second Sunday of Epiphany

NOTE: There are 2 different ways to begin this talk; one is a story¹ and the other is interactive. Choose which way suits your congregation the best.

Option1:

The words that we speak to one another are powerful and can change our lives in either a good or a bad way.

- Kind and truthful words can really build us up can't they?
- Let me tell you a true story about the power of speaking kind words.

One day, a teacher asked the young people in her class to write down the names of all their classmates on a piece of paper, leaving a space between each name.

Then she told them to think of the nicest thing they could say about each of their classmates and write it down. Once the young people had done this they handed in their papers to the teacher.

The teacher then typed up a list of what had been said about each person in the class. On Monday morning she gave each child a paper with the list of what their classmates had said about them.

Before long everyone was smiling.

"Really, I never knew that I meant anything to anyone!" and, "I didn't know others liked me so much," were most of the comments.

¹ This story is adapted and shortened from “Stories of kindness from around the world” – which can be found here: <https://www.kindspring.org/story/view.php?sid=7854>
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A few years later one of the young people called Mark was in the army and was killed serving his country. His teacher attended his funeral.

After the funeral, Mark's Father wanted to speak to the teacher. "We want to show you something," his father said, taking a wallet out of his pocket. "They found this on Mark when he was killed. We thought you might recognize it."

He carefully removed from his wallet two worn pieces of notebook paper that had obviously been taped, folded and refolded many times. The teacher knew without looking that the papers were the ones on which she had listed all the good things that each of Mark's classmates had said about him.

"Thank you so much for doing that," Mark's mother said. "As you can see, Mark treasured it."

Many of Mark's former classmates who had also attended the funeral started to gather around. They all admitted that they too had saved their lists.

Option 2:

The words that we speak to one another are powerful and can change our lives in either a good or a bad way.

- Kind and truthful words can really build us up can't they?

I wonder what words you have heard that have made you feel really good inside.

- Who would like to share some of the nicest words that someone has spoken to you?
(Receive a few responses)

[If people are shy about sharing, share something kind and truthful that someone has said to you to get the ball rolling!]

You know, we all need to hear kind and truthful words..... that is Father God's desire for us.

- Sadly we often hear negative and unkind words spoken to us and these words are often easier to remember than the kind and truthful words aren't they?

When Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan over 2000 years ago, at the very beginning of His public ministry, Father God spoke some amazing words to Him. Listen to what He said to Jesus:

- "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." (Luke 3:22)
- "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

Father God spoke the truth to Jesus that He was God's own Son; that He was loved and that Father God was pleased with Him.

- What incredible words of kindness and love to hear.

These words must have really built Jesus up, providing a firm foundation for His ministry.

It's great when people speak encouraging words to us,

- but you know the best words that we could ever hear are the words spoken to us by Father God, because His words are always true and will always build us up.

When we turn to Jesus, choosing to follow Him, Father God says to us that:

- We are His son or daughter. (1John 3:1)
- We are loved by Him. (Romans 5:8)
- We bring pleasure to Him. (Psalm 147:11)

These are the most powerful words that you will ever hear in your life because God speaks them, and they are true.

So how do we hear Father God speaking these wonderful words to us?

- Most of us will not hear Father God speaking to us in a voice speaking from heaven like Jesus did at His baptism.
- Most of us will hear Father God speaking to us in our thoughts as we sit quietly with Him, or as we read our Bibles and suddenly the words seem to touch our hearts.
- Other times we may hear His words spoken to us through another Christian.

The most important thing is that Father God wants us to hear these words and hold onto them through our lives.

So let's be very quiet for a moment.....you may want to shut your eyes as you become aware that Father God is here with us today, by His Spirit. (PAUSE)

Hear Him speak His words of truth to you today: *(Speak the following words slowly over people)*

- You are my son
- You are my daughter (PAUSE)
- I love you, totally and unconditionally (PAUSE)
- You bring me pleasure (PAUSE)

Hold onto those words today and tomorrow and for the rest of your life.

- These are the best words that you will ever hear.