

Short Talk

(SHT185)

Are you inside or outside?

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ALL AGE WORSHIP
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SHORT TALK: “Are you inside or outside?”

Aim of Short talk:	To encourage people that through Jesus they are welcomed to be inside God’s family.
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:	Epiphany, Messiah, Jesus, God’s family
Biblical references:	Matthew 2:1-12
Lectionary:	Year A – The Epiphany
Props:	You need a long piece of rope; enough to create a large circle on the floor at the front of church.

Let’s play a game today of: “Inside or Outside”

- With this rope, I am going to make a large circle on the floor.
- If you are inside the rope, you are part of the group.
- If you are outside the rope, you are not part of the group.

So, my first group is a sprouts loving group.

- I have chosen you to be my “in” group.
- Anyone who likes to eat sprouts please come and stand inside the circle. *(People come and stand inside the circle)*

This group of people *(Point to people inside the circle)* are on the inside.

- They are the chosen ones.
- They can have sprout tastings.
- They can talk about how delicious sprouts are.
- They understand each other’s love for sprouts.

The rest of you are on the outside.

- You can’t be part of this group, because you don’t like sprouts. *(Send volunteers back to their seats)*

The second group I have chosen to be my “in” group is people with long hair.

- So, anyone with long hair, please come and stand inside the circle. *(People come and stand inside the circle)*

This group of people (*Point to people inside the circle*) are on the inside.

- They are the chosen ones.
- They can share together about how to keep their hair in good condition.
- They can recommend to one another good hairdressers.
- They understand each other's love for long hair.

The rest of you are on the outside.

- You can't be part of this group because your hair isn't long enough.

Now that was a silly game....

- A game of who is on the inside and who is on the outside of the group.
- But you know, we can play that game in real life.

In our playgrounds, we can have a little group of friends, and we won't let anyone new join in with our game because they are different from us.

- In our offices and colleges, we can exclude people from conversations or social events because they aren't the same as us.
- We can even play the game in church; not welcoming people who are new or those who like to worship differently from us.

Father God isn't like that you know.

- He wants to invite everyone into His family.

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, Father God revealed to some men who weren't Jewish that the Messiah; God's chosen King, had arrived.

- These men, whom we know as the wise men, travelled a very long way to find Jesus.
- When they found Him, the Bible tells us that *"they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh."* (Matthew 2:11)

At that time, the Jewish people who lived in Israel thought that when the Messiah came, they would be the "in" ones; chosen to have a place in God's kingdom,

- whereas everyone else would be on the outside.

But God, guiding the wise men to worship baby Jesus, showed that He had a bigger plan than that.

- His plan was to create one big family of people who loved and worshipped Jesus, from both Jews and non Jews;
- one big family where everyone could be on the inside if they wanted to be, and where no-one was excluded.

Having been chosen to be part of God's family, can we make sure that we too are willing to welcome new people into it and never play the game of "inside or outside?"