

Short Talk

(SHT193)

Whose voice are you listening to?

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ALL AGE WORSHIP
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SHORT TALK: “Whose voice are you listening to?”

- Aim of Short talk:** To encourage people to spend time with the Lord; listening to His voice, so that when temptation comes, they recognise the voice of the evil one and don't act on it.
- 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:** Jesus, Devil, Temptation, Listening
- Biblical references:** Matthew 4:1-11
- Lectionary:** Year A – The 1st Sunday of Lent
- Props:** You need a table on which you have laid 2 plates and 2 small cakes (eg. fairy cakes) as follows:
- Plate 1 - a small cake that is completely plain
 - Plate 2 - a small cake that is decorated beautifully with icing and other decorations to make it look very attractive
- Before the Service:** You will need 3 volunteers for this talk
- A parent
 - Their child
 - An adult whom the child doesn't know well
- Brief both the adults before the service as follows:
- Tell the **parent** that they are to warn their child not to eat the cake with the icing on it. It may look good on the outside, but inside is a sharp razor blade that will seriously cut their mouth.
 - Tell the **other adult** to tell the child that the cake without icing is boring and plain and that the one with icing will be utterly delicious. There isn't a problem with the cake with icing on it.
 - Tell **both adults** to stand either side of the child and to keep telling the child the different stories until you stop them.
 - Simply tell the **child** that you are going to ask them to choose between 2 cakes.

Would my 3 volunteers like to come forward. *(Prebriefed child, parent and other adult come forward)*

- So, C (name of child) come and stand behind my table *(C moves so that they are standing behind the table and facing the congregation)*
- P (name of parent) and A (name of adult) come and stand either side of C *(The 2 adults stand either side of the child)*

In front of you C, there are two small cakes.

- In a moment I am going to ask you to choose which one of these cakes you are going to eat.
- But before you choose, I want you to listen to what your parent has to say to you and what someone you don't really know has to say to you.
- Once they have spoken to you, you can then choose your cake.
- Is that okay?

Look at this beautiful cake *(Hold up small cake that is covered with icing and decorated beautifully).*

- I bet it tastes really delicious.

Look at this other one *(Hold up small cake that is plain)*

- It looks a bit plain doesn't it?

P – what do you have to say to C? *(P warns their child not to eat the cake with the icing on it. It may look good on the outside, but inside is a sharp razor blade that will seriously cut their mouth.)*

Oh – that's a shame – the cake looks so tasty.

- A – what do you have to say to C? *(A tells the child that the cake without icing is boring and plain and that the one with icing will be utterly delicious. There isn't a problem with the cake with icing on it.)*

It sounds from A like the iced cake is ok after all.....but are they telling the truth?

- P - do you have anything else to say C? *(P continues to warn their child not to eat the cake with the icing on it.)*
- A – do you have anything else to say to C? *(A continues to tell the child that the iced cake is ok)*

So, C, which voice are you going to listen to?

- The voice of someone who knows and loves you?
- Or the voice of someone you don't really know? *(C answers)*

Having listened to 2 different voices, which voice will you act on?

- Which cake will you choose to eat? *(C answers and you will need to respond accordingly, then send your volunteers back to their seats.)*

Just before Jesus began His teaching and healing ministry over 2000 years ago, the Holy Spirit led Him into the wilderness for 40 days.

- During those days, Jesus spent time fasting and praying,
- listening to what His Heavenly Father had to say to Him.

But at the end of 40 days, He heard another voice speaking to Him.

- This voice tempted Jesus, while He was hungry, to turn stones into bread.

This voice told Jesus to jump off the top of the temple,

- quoting a Scripture that said that God would tell His angels to make sure that Jesus didn't get hurt!

This voice tempted Jesus with all the riches the world could offer.

- The only hitch would be that Jesus had to worship him.

This voice tried to stop Jesus from obeying Father God and from walking the hard path to the cross.

But Jesus recognised that this voice was not the voice of love.

- Jesus had spent time listening to the voice of His Heavenly Father and He knew that this was not Father God speaking to Him.
- Jesus knew that this was the voice of God's enemy, the devil, and so He didn't act on what was said to Him.

Today, you and I will not only hear Father God's voice speaking to us,

- but we will also hear the voice of the devil tempting us to do wrong things.

The question is: "Whose voice are you listening to?"

- "Whose voice will you act upon?"

If you listen to Father God's voice speaking to you, He will lead you on the good and safe path through life, because He loves you,

- a bit like P led C not to eat the cake that looked good on the outside, but inside it held something very dangerous.

So, let's get good at listening to what Father God says to us;

- through spending time with Him; reading our Bibles and praying.

When we listen to Father God's voice, we will discover that we can say "no," like Jesus did, to the other voice we sometimes hear,

- the voice of the tempter, the devil.