

Short Talk

(SHT075)

Messages

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ALL AGE WORSHIP
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SHORT TALK: “MESSAGES”

- Aim of Short talk:** To challenge people to act upon John the Baptist’s message to repent and turn away from their sins so that they can turn to Jesus.
- 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:** Advent, repentance
- Biblical references:** Mark 1:1-8,
- Lectionary:** Year B – The 2nd Sunday of Advent
- Props:** Five messages prepared as follows:
- i) A postcard with the words: “Having a great holiday. Wish you were here. Love Fiona”
 - ii) A mobile phone with a text message that says: “As you are hill-walking I thought you ought to know that I have just looked at the weather forecast and there is a very heavy snow storm heading your way in the next hour. Love Dad”
 - iii) A notecard on which is written:
“Thank you very much for the lovely meal you gave us last night. We really enjoyed spending the evening with you. Love Helen and Peter”
 - iv) An ansaphone message on a mobile phone that says,
“Emma has been taken to hospital having broken her leg in PE. Please contact Summerfield school reception urgently.”
 - v) A piece of A5 paper on which is written the following:
“Repent. After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” John the Baptist

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We are probably all used to getting messages from different people aren’t we?

- Some of the messages we receive will be words that someone speaks to us.
- Other messages will come through a text, whatsapp, or a phone call,
- while still others will come through a letter, an email or some other means of communication.

The important thing about receiving a message is deciding what to do with it.

Today I have 5 messages if I could have 5 volunteers who could come and read them out to everyone. *(Receive 5 volunteers who come and stand out at the front of the church. Give each person one of the 5 messages)*

- Our job as a congregation is to decide whether we need to do anything about the message or not.

Let's have our first message. *(Volunteer reads out the words on the postcard)*

- Do we need to do anything about that message or not? *(Receive responses)*
- No we don't do we?
- This message is simply about sharing news.

Let's have our second message. *(Volunteer reads out the words on the text message)*

- Do we need to do anything about that message or not? *(Receive responses)*
- Yes we do.

If we were hill walking and we had a message telling us that a heavy snow storm was heading our way, I think that we would want to get off the hill pretty quickly don't you?

- That message needs action.

If you chose to ignore the message what could happen?

- You could get very cold and possibly even get hypothermia.

Let's have our third message. *(Volunteer reads out the words on the notecard)*

- Do we need to do anything about that message or not? *(Receive responses)*
- No we don't do we?
- This message is simply about saying thank you.

Let's have our fourth message. *(Volunteer speaks out the words from the ansaphone)*

- Do we need to do anything about that message or not? *(Receive responses)*
- Yes of course we do.

We need to ring the school immediately and find out which hospital Emma has been taken to.

- That message needs action.

If you chose to ignore the message what could happen?

- Your relationship with Emma would be very damaged wouldn't it.

Let's have our fifth and final message. *(Volunteer speaks out the words on the A5 paper)*

John the Baptist gave this message to prepare the Israelite people to meet Jesus, the Messiah.

- He basically told them that they were living the wrong way by rebelling against God and that they needed to change direction and live the right way,
- which is what the word "repent" means.

Many people listened to John's message and they acted on it.

- They confessed their sins and they were baptised in the River Jordan as a sign of their change of heart.
- They were now ready to meet Jesus when He began His ministry.

So do you and I need to do anything about John the Baptist's message or not, or was John's message only given to the Israelite people over 2000 years ago? *(Receive responses)*

- We do need to do something about John's message.
- This is a message that needs action.

If we are going to meet Jesus and receive the life that He wants to give us, then we need to turn away from living a life that ignores God so that we can turn to Jesus.

- We too need to change direction.

Will you choose to act upon this important message or will you ignore it? *(Send your volunteers back to their seats)*