

Short Talk

(SHT087)

When do you “See Red?”

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ALL AGE WORSHIP
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SHORT TALK: “When do you “see red?””

- Aim of Short talk:** To encourage people to:
i) be slow to anger, like God is, and
ii) get angry about the things that Jesus gets angry about rather than getting angry for selfish reasons.
- 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, Anger
- Biblical references:** John 2:13-22, James 1:19
- Lectionary:** Year B – The Third Sunday of Lent
- Props:** You will need a length of white lining paper, white and red paint.
- Preparation:** Before the service create an “Anger Scale” of colour on the lining paper with the paint, as shown in the Appendix.

.....
I wonder what makes you angry.....makes you really “see red.”

- Maybe someone at school borrowed your best pen and then lost it,
- or maybe someone told a lie about you that everybody believed.

If you are a driver, maybe someone cut you up at the traffic lights,

- or maybe your boss at work promoted somebody else instead of you.

All sorts of things in life can make us angry,

- and I have here what I call my “anger scale.” *(Pull out your rolled up piece of lining paper)*
- I need 2 volunteers to come and hold either end of it for me please. *(Receive 2 volunteers, unroll the lining paper and give either end to a volunteer to hold)*

At this end of my anger scale, *(point to white end of scale)*, I am feeling completely at peace and happy with the world,

- whereas at this end of my anger scale, *(point to red end of scale)*, I am absolutely blazing mad with anger, “seeing red,” and possibly shouting and yelling at someone.

In the middle of the anger scale, *(point to middle of scale)* I am feeling quite angry,

- and am possibly being irritable and grumpy with someone.

I wonder how quickly you go from here *(point to white end of scale)* to here *(point to red end of scale)*.

- Parents how quickly do you go from here *(point to white end of scale)* to here *(point to red end of scale)* when your children don’t listen to you?
- Perhaps you have been telling them to pick up their toys repeatedly and they are still playing on the play-station?

Children, how quickly do you go from here (*point to white end of scale*) to here (*point to red end of scale*) when you don't get what you want?

- Perhaps you have been asking your mum or dad for your tea for what seems like ages and they haven't responded quickly enough.

Adults, how quickly do you go from here (*point to white end of scale*) to here (*point to red end of scale*) when you meet frustrations at work, or at home with your spouse?

Young people, how quickly do you go from here (*point to white end of scale*) to here (*point to red end of scale*) when someone says something disrespectful to you?

We can all at times "see red" very quickly can't we?

- But how often do we "see red" for the right reasons?

Most of the time, if we are really honest, we can quickly "see red" because we didn't get our own way or because we didn't get what we thought that we deserved.

- Mainly our anger comes about through our own selfishness, and so we need to get rid of it as the Bible tells us to be "*slow to anger.*" (James 1:19)

But there are times when it can be right to get really angry.

- Perhaps we will see someone being treated really unfairly, or being hurt by somebody else and we will feel really angry and moved to do something.
- That godly kind of anger is the anger that we see in Jesus' life.

Jesus was someone who was normally slow to anger.

- He put up with all sorts of insults and people treating Him badly, however one day Jesus "saw red."

He was in the temple and John tells us that: "*he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.*" (John 2:14-15)

Jesus was angry because the temple, (which was where God's presence dwelt,) was being turned into a market place.

- God was being disrespected.

Not only that but ordinary people who were coming to worship at the temple were being ripped off by the money-changers and the animal sellers.

- Jesus was angry that people were being treated so unfairly.

Not only that but the buying and selling were happening in the only place where Gentiles could go and pray.

- Jesus was angry that people were being stopped from coming into God's presence...
- and so Jesus acted to end this wrong and sinful practice in the temple courts.

Next time you are tempted to get angry, ask yourself this question:

- Am I getting angry because I'm not getting my own way,
- or am I getting angry because someone else is being treated badly or unfairly?

Let's follow Jesus' example shall we and be slow to anger, and only "see red" when we see God dishonoured, or other people being treated badly.

Appendix – “Anger Scale”

