

Short Talk

(SHT151)

**Love marks us out
as followers of Jesus**

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ALL AGE WORSHIP
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SHORT TALK: “Love marks us out as followers of Jesus”

Aim of Short talk: To teach that love marks us out as followers of Jesus, and to challenge people to love one another in the same way that Jesus has loved them.

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: Love, Jesus, Discipleship

Biblical references: John 13:31-35

Lectionary: Year C – The 5th Sunday of Easter

Do any of you here belong to the Scout or Guide movement? *(Receive responses)*

- If people see you, how can they tell that you are a cub / scout / brownie or guide?
(Receive responses)

They can tell that you belong to the Scout / Guide movement mainly because of the uniform that you wear.

Some of you here might be part of a sports team.

- People can tell that you belong to the team because you wear the team shirt.

Are any of you in a club at school that gives you a badge to wear to show that you belong to it? *(Receive responses)*

- Some clubs give their members badges to wear so that other people can see the club that they belong to.

In some clubs you don't have a uniform or badge to wear, but you have a shared interest.

- Maybe you are all mad about playing chess,
- or playing darts,
- or owning a dachshund!
- Other people can tell that you belong to the club because you never stop talking about it.

Now the church isn't a club, but it is a group of people who follow Jesus.

- I wonder how people can tell that we are followers of Jesus?
- Imagine if someone from another planet came into this building one Sunday and saw us together.
- What would help them recognise that you and I are Jesus' followers? *(Receive responses)*

Let's hear what Jesus said is the way that people can recognise us as belonging to Him.
"Let me give you a new command: Love one another. In the same way I loved you, you love one another. This is how everyone will recognize that you are my disciples—when they see the love you have for each other." (John 13:34-35 The Message Version)

So how do people recognise that you and I are Jesus' followers? *(Receive responses)*

- They see the **love** that we have for one another.
- They see that we are loving one another in the same way that Jesus has loved us.

Love marks us out.

- It is our uniform if you like.
- It is the badge that we wear.

Now loving like Jesus means that:

- we speak kind and encouraging words to one another;
- not critical or unkind words.

Loving like Jesus means that:

- we think the best of one another,
- and don't gossip about each other.

Loving like Jesus means that:

- we are quick to forgive one another,
- and don't hold onto resentments.

Loving like Jesus means that:

- we put each other first,
- and look for ways that we can serve.

Loving like Jesus means that:

- we are patient, accepting, gentle, generous, faithful, slow to anger and self-controlled.

This kind of love isn't easy is it? It is costly.

- The good news is that we have the Holy Spirit living inside us and He gives us the strength to love like this.

So today let us ask ourselves the question: *"Would a person who has never come into this church before recognise that we are followers of Jesus by the love that we have for one another or not?"* PAUSE

- Now don't be tempted to look around at other people and think to yourself: *"They aren't very loving!"*
- Think about what **you** could do to make this a more loving community that brings glory to Jesus.