

Short Talk

(SHT214)

The Kingdom of God changes lives

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ALL AGE WORSHIP
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SHORT TALK: “The Kingdom of God changes lives”

- Aim of Short talk:** To encourage people that God’s Kingdom changes the lives of people in good ways, like yeast changes dough into soft and tasty bread.
- 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:** Kingdom of God, Yeast, Transformation
- Biblical references:** Matthew 13.31-33,44-52
- Lectionary:** Year A – The 7th Sunday after Trinity
- Props:** You will need:
- a freshly baked loaf of bread,
 - a dry Matzo cracker¹ (or something similar).
 - a packet of dried yeast
- Before the service:** Pre-brief your volunteers to agree with you that the bread tastes delicious and the crackers are taste-less!

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Mmmm, I love the smell of freshly baked bread. Don’t you?

- I have a delicious looking loaf here. *(Hold up loaf of bread)*
- Who would like to come and taste some of it? *(Receive your volunteers and give them a piece of bread to eat)*
- Isn’t that tasty? *(Receive responses)*
- Isn’t that lovely soft bread?
- Would anyone like some more? *(Receive responses and offer more bread to eat)*

Now I have a rather dry, hard and boring looking bread here. *(Hold up a Matzo cracker)*

- Would you like to taste this too? *(Receive responses)*
- Is it tasty? *(Receive responses)*
- This bread isn’t tasty at all, in fact it is rather tasteless and hard and completely different from the bread that we have just tasted.
- Thank you, volunteers, you can sit down again.

¹ You can purchase Matzo crackers on Amazon at www.amazon.co.uk

You know the difference between these two “breads” is caused by something very small.
(*Open packet of dried yeast and hold up a grain*)

These tiny little grains of yeast, when added to the bread dough completely change it.

- The first bread you tasted today had some yeast added to the dough before it was cooked.
- The second bread you tasted today didn't have any yeast added to the dough before it was cooked.

One bread is tasty, soft and good to eat, (*Hold up piece of bread*)

- while the other bread is rather tasteless, hard and boring to eat. (*Hold up piece of Matzo cracker*)

Jesus told a story about yeast and bread to His first century listeners. He said:
“*The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.*”

Jesus said that God's Kingdom is like yeast working its way through bread dough.

One of the things that Jesus is teaching us through this story is that God's Spirit gradually works through our lives, changing us for the better, as we surrender to God's rule.

The Holy Spirit changes us from the inside out....

- Changing our thinking,
- Changing our attitudes,
- Changing our behaviour
- until our lives are attractive to people around us, like “delicious tasting bread.”

We cannot see the mysterious and hidden movement of God at work in our lives,

- but other people around us can gradually see how we are changing for the better.

I also believe that Jesus' story is about Christians changing the lives of people around them,

- one person at a time,
- until the whole of our society is affected.

You may think that you can't do much to change the world,

- but be encouraged by this little grain of yeast, that can turn boring dough into beautiful tasting bread.

The small acts of kindness and love that you can do in response to God prompting you,

- and the short testimonies that you can chat about, can have a much bigger effect upon people's lives than you could ever imagine.