

# Short Talk

(SHT106a)

**Be careful what you  
promise**

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**ALL AGE WORSHIP**  
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## SHORT TALK: “Be careful what you promise”

<b>Aim of Short talk:</b>	To encourage people to: i) be careful what they promise others, and ii) to follow through in keeping the promises that they make.
<b>Use of Short talk:</b>	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.
<b>Main themes:</b>	Promises
<b>Biblical references:</b>	Mark 6:14-29
<b>Lectionary:</b>	Year B 2021 – The 6 <sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity
<b>Props:</b>	A box/tin/packets of chocolate biscuits, a pile of scrap paper (or other rubbish) and a black sack to put the rubbish in.
<b>Before the service:</b>	Scatter the scrap paper (or other rubbish) behind where you will be standing to create a “mess” that will take a minute to clear up.

Brief a child / teenager before the service asking them to:

- stand up to offer their help,
- clear up the rubbish mess and
- ask for the whole tin of biscuits.

.....

I was in a bit of a rush before the service today so I haven't managed to clear up this mess behind me.

- Some of you may have been wondering what all this rubbish is doing in the church.
- Don't worry we will sort it out at the end of the service.

*(Briefed child/teenager stands up where they are and says:)*

- *“I'll come and clear it up for you”*

That's very kind of you. Come and join me. *(Child/teenager joins you)*

- Here is a black sack to put the rubbish in, and I'll tell you what, I have a tin of chocolate biscuits here that I was going to share with everyone after the service, *(show tin/box/packets of chocolate biscuits)* but you can have 1<sup>st</sup> choice.
- I promise that when you have cleared up the rubbish you can have as many of these biscuits as you want. OK?

So let's see how quickly you can clear up the rubbish. *(Child/teenager clears up the rubbish into the black sack. When they have finished they join you)*

Thank you very much for doing that for me.

- Now how many of these chocolate biscuits would you like?

(Child/teenager says:)

- “All of them!”

All of them?

- There are quite a lot of biscuits here....and I had hoped that we could share them out with everyone after the service.
- Are you sure that you really want all of them?

(Child/teenager says:)

- “Yes please. You did **promise** that I could have as many of them as I want and I want all of them”

(Hand over the biscuits to the child who then goes and sits down)

I made rather a silly promise then didn't I?

- I didn't really think before I made it and so I was caught out when *N* (name of child/teenager volunteer) asked for all of the biscuits.

Now that was a set up and I told *N* to ask for all of them. They are not greedy and will be sharing the biscuits after the service with us all,

- but I wonder how many of you have made promises that you have later regretted making.

If you are a parent, you may have promised to take your children on a really special holiday but later regretted it when you found out how expensive the trip would be.

If you are a child you may have promised to look after your pet every day, and then you have regretted making that promise because of the amount of time it takes you to do that.

Many of us have made promises to people that have been very hard to keep,

- and so we need to be careful what promises we make because keeping our promises is really important.

Jesus said: “Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’....” (Matthew 5:37 ESV)

- in other words be true to your word and keep your promises.

But King Herod, who was the King in power when Jesus was around, made a silly promise to his niece on his birthday after she had danced for him.

- He promised to give her anything that she asked for.
- Perhaps the king thought that his niece would ask for jewels or fine clothes.

Unfortunately the girl asked for the prophet John the Baptist to be killed and because King Herod didn't want to lose face in front of the people around him, he had John killed.

- King Herod should never have made that silly promise should he?

So today, let me encourage you to be really careful what promises you make to other people so that in keeping them, you do good to other people and not harm.