

Short Talk

(SHT119a)

**What holds you back
from following
Jesus?**

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SHORT TALK: “What holds you back from following Jesus?”

- Aim of Short talk:** To challenge people to identify the things that hold them back from following Jesus and to deal with 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:** Discipleship, Money, Trust, Rewards
- Biblical references:** Mark 10: 17-31
- Lectionary:** Year B – The 19th Sunday after Trinity
- Props:** A piece of rope at the front of church. 2 glasses of juice, 2 biscuits and 2 bars of chocolate laid out on a table somewhere in the church.
- Before the Service:** You will need to prepare 2 volunteers before the service, either children or adults.
- Explain to volunteer 1 that when you invite them to follow you, they simply follow you wherever you go.
 - Explain to volunteer 2 that as soon as they arrive at the front of church they are to quickly tie a piece of rope tightly around their ankles so that they cannot walk. When you invite them to follow you, they stay where they are and they speak the red words in the script below:

.....

Today we are going to spend a few minutes thinking about our response to Jesus’ invitation to us of: *“Follow me.”*

Could my 2 volunteers come and join me please. *(Your 2 volunteers join you at the front and volunteer 2 immediately wraps the rope around their ankles.)*

In a moment I am going to invite you to follow me as I walk around the church.

- When I do that, simply start walking behind me. OK?

N1, (name of 1st volunteer) come follow me. (Begin walking down the centre of the church and volunteer 1 immediately follows behind you. Climb over a couple of chairs/pews etc to make it more interesting. Lead N1 to a table where you give them a drink and biscuit and a packet of sweets then lead N1 back to the front)

Well done N1, you are a great follower. Do go and sit down.

N2, (name of 2nd volunteer) come follow me. (Begin walking down the centre of the church and volunteer 2 remains where they are.

- What’s going on?
- Why aren’t you following me N2?

(N2 replies:) I can't follow you. My ankles are tied up.

That rope seems to be holding you back from following me N2.

- Simply untie it and come follow me.

(N2 replies:) I don't want to untie it. I am used to this rope being here.

But you are going to miss out on the adventure and the rewards of following me.

- That rope is holding you back. *(Walk back to the front and leave N2 tied up!)*

One day a very rich young man came to Jesus and wanted to know how he could receive eternal life.

- Jesus told the young man to go and sell everything that he had and give the money to the poor, then to come and follow Him.

You see Jesus knew that the young man's money was like an invisible rope wrapped around his life; holding him back from following Jesus and receiving eternal life.

Sadly the young man had put his trust in his riches and wasn't willing to trust Jesus more than them.

- When Jesus challenged the young man to get rid of what was holding him back, the young man walked away from Jesus.

Now Jesus also invites you and me to follow Him.

- He has promised to give us the gift of eternal life, which is the most wonderful gift we could receive,
- however many of us are also held back from following Jesus by different things in our lives.

Many of us put our trust in our money,

- and if Jesus asked us to give a proportion of that money away, we might not be willing to do that.
- Money holds us back.

Others of us might put our trust in what other people think of us,

- and if Jesus asked us to do something that wouldn't make us popular, we might not be willing to do that.
- Other people's opinion of us holds us back.

I wonder if there is something that might be holding you back from following Jesus with all of your heart.

- Why not pray and ask Jesus to show you if there is.
- If He shows you something, ask Him for the courage to deal with it, for the rewards that Jesus offers us are much greater than any rewards we have in this life.

(Volunteer 2 removes rope from ankles and walks back to their seat)