

Short Talk

(SHT068a)

Trick Questions

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SHORT TALK: “TRICK QUESTIONS”

Aim of Short talk:	To show that although the Pharisees tried to trap Jesus with their questions, Jesus was able to see through their desire to entrap Him and gave a wise answer.
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:	Entrapment, Image of God
Biblical references:	Matthew 22:15-22, Genesis 1:27
Lectionary:	Year A – The 20 th Sunday after Trinity

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We are going to have a very simple quiz this morning.

- I need 4 volunteers. *(Receive 4 volunteers, preferable children, and put into two teams either side of you)*

I have 3 questions for you to answer.

- The first person to put their hand up and answer correctly will get the point.
- Whichever team answers the most questions correctly will be the winner.
- Is that clear?

OK question 1 is a Maths question.

- Are any of you good at Maths?

- 1) If it took eight men ten hours to build a wall, how long would it take four men to build it?
(Receive first answer and then give the correct answer)

The answer is: No time at all it is already built.

Question 2 is a Spelling question.

- Are any of you good at Spelling?

- 2) If you spell "sit all day in the bath" S-O-A-K, soak, and you spell "a funny story" J-O-K-E, joke, how do you spell "the white of an egg"? *(Receive first answer, which is often someone spelling Y-O-L-K and then give the correct answer)*

The answer is: A-L-B-U-M-E-N albumen or E-G-G-W-H-I-T-E egg white.

Question 3 is a Physics question.

- Are any of you good at physics?

- 3) How can you lift an elephant with one hand? *(Receive first answer and then give the correct answer)*

The answer is: It is not a problem, since you will never find an elephant with one hand.

Well done to our contestants this morning.

- They were all willing to have a go at my questions, and this team wins. (*Point at team*)
- Thank you for being good sports.....would you like to sit down?

Did you notice that all of my questions were trick questions?

- I was trying to catch you out wasn't I?
- I was trying to trap you into saying the wrong thing.

Now our quiz was a bit of fun, but sometimes people try to trap other people into saying the wrong thing so that they get into trouble.

- That's not very nice is it?
- It happened to Jesus a number of times.

One day some of the Jewish leaders who really hated Jesus, came with a question to try and trap Him.

- They asked Jesus: *"Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"* (Matthew 22:17)

Now if Jesus had said: *"Yes it is right to pay taxes to Caesar,"* the Jewish people who were following Him would have thought that Jesus didn't care about the terrible way that the Romans were treating them, and they would have turned against Jesus.

- Jesus' life would have been in danger.

On the other hand if Jesus had said: *"No it is not right to pay taxes to Caesar,"* the Jewish leaders would have thought that Jesus was a trouble maker and against Rome,

- and so Jesus would have been arrested and killed.

What a trick question that was for Jesus.

- What would Jesus say? How would He get out of the trap?

Jesus said this:

"Show me the coin used for paying the tax." They brought him a denarius, and he asked them, "Whose image is this? And whose inscription?" "Caesar's," they replied. Then he said to them, "So give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's." (Matthew 22:19-21)

Jesus didn't answer "yes" or "no" to the question the Jewish leaders asked him and fall into the trap that they had set Him.

- Instead he told the Jewish people and the leaders to give back to Caesar what belonged to Caesar; but also to give back to God what belonged to God.

Now it was obvious to the people what Jesus meant when He said give back to Caesar what belonged to Caesar.

- The coins used for paying the tax all belonged to Caesar and the people could see that because the coins all had the image or picture of Caesar on them.....
- a bit like all of our coins have a picture of the head of the Queen on them.
- So it was clear that Jesus was telling people to pay the tax.

But what did Jesus mean when He said give back to God what belongs to God?

- What does belong to God?
- What has His image?

Maybe part of the answer is that Jesus was challenging the Jewish people and leaders to remember that they had been made in God's image,

- and so to give back to God their whole lives as they belonged to Him.

The Jewish leaders who tried to trap Jesus ended up being challenged by Jesus.

- We may find that people try and trap us to say things that will harm us.
- If that happens, ask Jesus to help you give a good answer because He is close to you and always willing to give you the wisdom that you need,
- so that you, like Him, can avoid the traps that could hurt you.