



# Near and Now

*On purpose – The Seventy*

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## **Warm-up Question**

*Imagine yourself ready to go on a mission trip with your faith community.*

*Why would you go and how would you prepare?*



Photo by Illiya Vjestica on [Unsplash](#)

## **Discussion Questions**

1. What do you see in this image?
2. What do you feel looking at this image?
3. What stories from your own life does this image bring to mind?
4. What stories of the world does this image bring to mind?

## The Kingdom of Heaven Has Come Near to You

Read [Luke 10:1-12, 17-21](#)

### Bible Story Reflection

Let all of your hardships go. Choose the easy thing. In many ways, Jesus's commissioning of the seventy in Luke echoes this message. Consider the instructions he gives to them before he sends them on their way: Carry no purse or sandals. Speak peace when you enter a house. Eat what is placed before you. Invest in one home, one family, one town. Speak of what is near, not far. Don't linger in hopeless places. Don't be arrogant; remember that the kingdom of God comes near whether you are accepted *or* rejected. Trust that any peace which is given will return to you; nothing in God's kingdom goes to waste.

In other words, the task Jesus sets before the seventy is hard *because it is easy*. In fact, it's *so* easy, it feels both counter-cultural and counter-intuitive. It's *so* easy, it makes us suspicious and cynical. What is the task? The task is to live simply and vulnerably. The task is to rely on the grace and hospitality of others. The task is to stay in one place — to encounter and to deeply engage. The task is to live as guests, sharing our faith with others as if they're our hosts, the people we depend on for sustenance and shelter. The task is to speak peace, first and last. The task is to always believe in the abundance and nearness of God's Kingdom.

When the disciples return to Jesus, they are filled with joy. When we walk the path of vulnerability, peace-making, and love - evil trembles and the Kingdom of Heaven breaks through. If God asked for us to do something difficult, wouldn't we do it? So, why not do what's easy? Abundance flows out of simplicity in the Kingdom of God. Speak and share peace. Then sit back and watch the demons fall.

### Discussion Questions

1. In what situations is Jesus calling you to bear witness to the nearness of the kingdom of God? What will it mean for you to respond to his call?
2. In what ways does the Kingdom of God make you rejoice? Give examples.
3. Reflect on a time in your life when you felt rejected. What helped you get through it?
4. In what ways are you called to be a witness to God's love?
5. Have you ever had to warn someone about a serious danger? What did you do? How did they respond?
6. What makes you joyful? How can you share that joy with others?
7. Reflect on a time when you have been the stranger in a situation. How did it feel? What did it teach you about welcoming others?
8. How would you describe evangelism? In what ways can you be an evangelist in your own life?

### Activity Suggestions

1. Connect with a local church who sponsors a missionary. Write a letter of encouragement for the work they are doing and ask the church to send it to them. Spend time praying for them and the communities they are ministering to.
2. We don't always have to travel far away to be the hands and feet of Jesus. Plan a local mission trip in your community. What are the needs of your community? What acts of service could you do? How could you partner with others to make this experience a joyful one?
3. Make a piece of art (painting, drawing, sculpture etc.) that depicts how you understand the Kingdom of God to look like and feel like. Share your piece of art with another person.

### Prayer Concerns

Missionaries, Mission Developers, People in Poverty

### Closing Prayer

Send me to bring your kingdom near in all that I say, all that I do, and all that I am today. In the name of +Jesus, Amen.

