

# Draw Near in Faith

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] Luke chapter 10. This won't take too long. I appreciate you younger ones being here with us today as we prepare for the holiday club in the week ahead.
- Luke chapter 10 simply read, after this the Lord appointed 72 others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.
- He told them the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest therefore to send our workers into his harvest field.
- And then verse 3 says go. Go. Therefore go. Go and invite. Go and invite people to the kingdom.
- You're invited. It's always good to hear that, isn't it? You're invited.
- [ 1 : 3 7 ] We've arrived at the 10th chapter of Dr. Luke's biography.
- And when you go home, if you spend a while looking for it, you will notice that right across those 10 chapters, the little inner core message that keeps bouncing out off the page is, and you're also invited.
- Yep, Jesus is rallying around everyone, loving them all, reaching out, miracles here, miracles there, stories, teachings, ideas, all introducing this new, amazing kingdom-styled life.
- And there's countless accounts of people getting transformed. And then every few pages, right on cue, and it's for you too, you know.
- Right on cue. Miracles, transformed, story, parable, and it's for you as well. Miracle, story, transformed, it's for you too. Every few pages, it's also for you.
- [ 3 : 0 1 ] All you nations, all you tribes, all you tongues, you're also invited. Because Luke was, of course, trying to address the Gentile world and tell us, including everyone here today in 2025, that this incredible Messiah from within Judaism is for the whole world.
- And you're all invited. And today's reading couldn't be clear. Jesus is sending out the 72.
- And he's saying, go, go, go, go. Go and tell everyone that they are invited. Tell everyone the kingdom of God has come near you.
- And they are all invited to repent, to believe, and to join in. And 2,000 years later, the invite is as big and as exciting as it was back then.
- And tomorrow, Wester Hills Baptist Church, we're inviting lots and lots of children in here. And whether or not their parents or incurred linger in and out doesn't matter.
- [ 4 : 3 2 ] Because if, and it's a big if, if we do our job, we'll go out with the hearers to the whole area and not return voice.
- This is going to be a shop window for Jesus. An advertisement for Jesus, if you like. And for all the ones planning to come along this week, and for all of us here today, this biography of Jesus is written that they here coming, and we here today, we know that we are all invited to join this kingdom as well.

So, just what exactly is the invitation? Well, if for a moment you look with wide-opened eyes, and for a moment drop denominational agree or disagreements, and take note of some real-time and factual world-survey counts, you're invited to be part of the biggest and best movement on earth.

I'm always keeping an eye on world statistics. And I checked government statistics again just to be sure. And I can confirm, Christianity is still the biggest faith on the earth, covering one-third of the entire world, and providing the very best charities and services in everything, from one end of the system to the other, from food banks, cap centres, street pastors, right through to a probation service, and providing a listening ear in Parliament, and everything in between.

We, the Christian Church, started all these charities and services, Western world leaders agree, that if the Christian Church was removed from our countries, then the entire charitable sector would most likely collapse, as well over two-thirds of the volunteers are from within our churches, Christians.

[ 6 : 55 ] And the world leaders have agreed, that if the faith was gone from the world, that moral standards and right thinking would quickly evaporate, crime would fastly rise.

The UN itself believes, if the Christian Church wasn't sending missionaries, charitable and aid workers all over the world, then much of the world's economy, health and political structures would replenish and weaken overnight.

Our take on Remembrance Sunday, has by far been the greatest help, to the suffering and wounded, during the wars of the current day.

And many, many have testified, to being able to get beyond, the effects of war, by the Church's approach to remembrance. And every December, those of all faiths and none, comment, how our celebration of our King's birth, is by far the biggest, best and happiest time of the year.

And many have said, without it to look forward to, every year, their lives would replenish, and lose hope, altogether. So, what am I saying here?

[ 8 : 22 ] I guess I'm claiming, that this, Christian Church, that you're invited to, isn't just a group of people, in buildings across the world.

But it's actually, a revolutionary, electrifying, spiritual force, that for 2,000 years, has used millions, of ordinary people, to do phenomenal things, in every corner, and patch of the globe, all across the earth.

And that's what you're invited to join. And that's what everyone this week, will be invited to join. I very, very, very, very simply put, this is people like me, and you, ordinary folk, being friends with God.

And he, then doing awesome, God-loving actions, through us. And many of us here, have experienced, God, using us, in some of these ways.

Many of us here, can testify, to God having done, something amazing, through us. And that, of course, makes it, all the easier, to go and tell.

[ 9 : 37 ] All the easier, to open the doors tomorrow, and say, everyone come in, and hear what we have to say. Because we have personal, experience.

And that's why, the 72, were the perfect bunch, to be sent out, by Jesus. Because they have, personally, encountered, Jesus themselves.

They have, personally, seen Jesus, and his work. They have, personally, seen his actions. They have, personally, heard, his words, in his stories, first hand.

So it was all the easier, to go, and invite others. And for a moment, I want us to think, about the one. The one, the chosen one.

The 72, were setting out, to invite others to. A few of you, heard a shorter take, of this, one of our devotions, but here's the full, take on this.

[ 10 : 40 ] We are talking here, about the one, who blasted, light land, seas, mountains, into place, who spoke, roaring words, and his angels, filled the skies, who majestically, and mightily, commanded winds, waters, to be still, or to move, who stretched, his hand, across the horizons, and left, a scope of planets, and galaxies, in place, who had, all the strength, and boldness, and mindset, to destroy, evil, who conquered, the grave, and destroyed death, yet, look at him, on the earth, Jesus was pure, the saviour, was adored, by thousands, upon thousands, upon thousands, yet he was content, to live, a very simple, very basic, life, more than once, crowds offered, to make him, king, ruler, boss, he never took it, more than once, he was offered, the chance, to use his fame, to make lots of money, and get good places, he never, took it, he had no interest, in financial gain, the saviour's heart, was at peace, and content, in the position, and the life,

God had given him, and he didn't, look beyond it, he was content, in who he was, and what he had, he didn't ask for more, on his travels, he was joined, by a group, of very supportive, women, and men, from all walks, and classes, and cultures, who cared for him, helped him, provided for him, yet, he was never, accused, of any, favouring, taking advantage, disorder, discrimination, or anything else, because his heart, was pure, he was hit, and beat, by his own creation, and before, they even, requested, peace, he was willing, to forgive them, the disciples, got all worried, and fretted, at the thought, of feeding 5,000, but not Jesus, he prayed, the disciples, shouted, with fear, in a storm, in a boat, but not Jesus, he slept, he slept, in God's presence, at Jesus arrest,

Peter, drew a sword, to fight, the enemy, but not Jesus, he used it, as a chance, to show God's love, by healing, the enemy, when the disciples, abandoned him, and ran away, did Jesus, kick up a storm, when Peter, denied him, did Jesus, kick up a storm, declare hate for him, when the soldiers, spat on him, did Jesus, spit back, no, no, and no, because his heart, was focused, on matters, of much more, importance, his heart, was focused, on his high calling, from his father God, and he refused, to be guided, by anything else, he was completely, undeterred, by man's ways, because that focus, on his high calling, gave him fulfillment, and purpose, his heart, his life, his focus, was purposeful, which meant, he had one aim, and one ambition, to save people, from the devil, in fact,

Jesus could summarize, his entire life up, with one quick sentence, the son of man, came to seek, and save the lost, full stop, i.e., people, who don't know God, Jesus, describes them, as lost, that is lost, from their creator, God, and his goal, his job, save them, find them, connect them back, to God, but, he was not, so focused, on his goal, that he became, unpleasant, to be around, rather the opposite, actually, children, just wanted, to be around him, he gave such, a warm smile, had such a, peaceful manner, that in spite, of a culture, where children, were steered away, from the likes, of teachers, all the children, instead, felt welcome, around him, men, and women, from all walks, and classes, of life, followed him, everywhere, just to be around him, and he was, so easy going, he took time, to look at nature, he found, beauty in lilies, joy in worship, possibilities, and problems, he could spend, days with the same crowd, and when he's tired, when he's done, when he's knackered, he still says, tell them all, to stay for dinner, all 5,000 of them, and ultimately, he spent, 33 years, looking, at the utter, filth, of, humanity, and he could, still see beauty, in us, he still thought, we were worth, dying for, you see, that's because, his heart, his thoughts, reflected, his intimate relationship, with father God, he was constantly, in deep, personal prayer, to father God, he stated, that he and father God, are one, that he only does, what father God does, and that indeed, he is,

God, wow, what a heart, what a personality, what a way, to be described, Peter, who travelled with him, for three and a half years, described him, as a lamb, unblemished, spotless, John, also, after three and a half years, concluded, there is simply, no wrong, no filth, no sin, no cheek, no anger, no unrighteousness, in any shape, way, form at all, in Jesus, and there has never, ever, ever, been anyone, who has been able, to live, in such a beautiful, and lovely way, so it makes sense, that thousands, and thousands, from all cultures, ways, and classes, would literally, follow him everywhere, just to be around him, all the world offers, is pain, death, problems, worry, illness, arguments, politics, and then, there was Jesus, it was a no brainer, it was a no brainer, and here's the greatest, thing you will hear today, that same, wonderful, amazing Jesus, hasn't faded, or disappeared, as those statistics, show, two thousand years, later, his presence, is as big, in the world, as it was, in the first century, and here's something else, you're invited, you're invited, to have a relationship, with Jesus today, the same way, all those people, two thousand years ago, did, and people often, ask me at this point, but how, how can I have a, relationship with him, he's up there,

[18:18] I'm down here, this doesn't make much sense, well it starts, as any friendship starts, chatting, talking, getting to know one another, we call it prayer, talking to God, start talking, with God today, in prayer, get to know God, tell him what you think, tell him what's going on, ask him for help, to believe, tell him, you're starting a friendship, with him today, but next, also, very, very important, you Christians here, we disciples, at Wester Hills Baptist Church, we, like the 72, are invited, to join in, his mission field, and so, from the 72's, point of view, the invite is on us, he, has invited us, to be involved, in the, evangelistic, and national work, across Wester Hills, and beyond, wherever he takes us, and of course, the next, immediate bit, of that, is he has invited us, to be involved, in the work, of telling his message, this week, so like the 72, jump on board, have lots of fun, and like the 72, let it bring you, lots of joy, and then, like Jesus, let it send you, rocketing, verse 17, of chapter 10, the 72, returned with joy, and said,

Lord, even the demons, submit to us, in your name, he, Jesus, replied, I saw Satan, fall like lightning, from heaven, I have given you, authority, to trample on snakes, and scorpions, and to overcome, all the power, of the enemy, the 72, went out, and told, and told, and preached, and preached, and healed, and healed, and loved, and loved, and on returning, to Jesus, Jesus filled, with so much joy, and happiness, sort of explodes, a bit like a wild spring, a spaniel, the 72 are like, hey JC, even the demons, fled when we turned up, and Jesus said, I know, I saw him fall, like lightning, and rain, from the heavens above, he squirmed, he ran, he hid, he kept his distance, this week, because you guys, were preaching the gospel, I give you authority, to drive out demons, to trample on snakes, to overcome, all the power, of the enemy, and you did, you did, and I'm so pleased, he said, I'm so happy,

I can hear him saying, you've made my day, my week, my month, my year, the kingdom was on fire, Jesus was so, so excited, because of what, the 72 went out, and did, so let's be ready, let's also faithfully do it, this week, not just this week, but in the, months and years to come, across this area, but thinking about this week, let us with the braveness, and the boldness, of the 72, spend this week, preaching, loving, showing, telling, so that by the end of this week, we too, hear Jesus say, Westerhills Baptist Church, well done, we too, hear Jesus say, I saw Satan fall, in Westerhills, he knew his days, in Westerhills, are numbered, he fell like lightning, all because you, like the 72, told the gospel, this week, so let's do it, let's go, let's go, and do it, but one last thing, to finish on, in all of this excitement, and happy, and joy, and what we, can do for Jesus, keep your heart, focused, on your relationship, with God, because as Jesus, then says in verse 20, however, do not rejoice, that the spirit, submit to you, but rejoice, that your names, mission is great, the 72, left an incredible example, of how fun, they loved it, we love it,

Jesus loves it, but Jesus is very, very, very clear, when it comes to you, as in each individual, one of us, his first and foremost, focus, for you, is your relationship, with him, so this week, keep up your quiet times, and as the middle, of the week, comes along, and you begin, to feel tired, and done, keep up the quiet times, before coming here, on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday morning, keep close to Jesus, rejoicing, that ultimately, above all, your name is written, in heaven, above all, you're in the kingdom, that's first, and foremost, important, amen, let's pray, hallelujah, Lord Jesus, we worship you, that we, are, in the kingdom, and we ask you, to be close to us, Lord, and let these words, ponder our hearts, as we think about your vision, for us individually, for the week ahead, for the, for the, for the future ahead, come now,

Lord Jesus, amen, be thou my vision, lan, let's go for it, let's go for it, Thank you.