



Session 2: Be the Message



The Church's willingness to show compassion and justice in the world has been integral to its life throughout history.

Christian individuals and organisations have fought for equality and peace, and this work needs to continue through us today.

Previous session review

- Recap on your experience of the previous challenge. How did it go? Was it helpful?
- If you weren't able to try the challenge, explore the question: Where and how did you experience God last week?

Read

Read the passage several times through, slowly and prayerfully. It might help to use your imagination to picture the scene. At the end of the text you will find helpful background information in our 'Setting the Scene' section.

As you read, look out for shockers and blockers.

Shockers – a phrase, word, image or something from the text that resonates, stands out or connects with you.

Blockers – something from the text that raises questions for you.

Luke 10.1–12, 17–20

Later the Lord chose seventy-two other followers and sent them out two by two to every town and village where he was about to go. He said to them: A large crop is in the fields, but there are only a few workers. Ask the Lord in charge of the harvest to send out workers to bring it in. Now go, but remember, I am sending you like lambs into a pack of wolves.

Don't take along a money bag or a travelling bag or sandals. And don't waste time greeting people on the road. As soon as you enter a home, say, "God bless this home with peace." If the people living there are peace-loving, your prayer for peace will bless them. But if they are not peace-loving, your prayer will return to you. Stay with the same family, eating and drinking whatever they give you, because workers are worth what they earn. Don't move around from house to house. If the people of a town welcome you, eat whatever they offer. Heal their sick and say, "God's kingdom will soon be here!" But if the people of a town refuse to welcome you, go out into the street and say, "We are shaking the dust from our feet as a warning to you. And you can be sure that God's kingdom will soon be here!" I tell you that on the day of judgment the people of Sodom will get off easier than the people of that town!

When the seventy-two followers returned, they were excited and said, "Lord, even the demons obeyed when we spoke in your name!" Jesus told them: I saw Satan fall from heaven like a flash of lightning.

Setting the scene:

- Seventy-two seems to be a symbolic number, indicating that the Gospel is for the whole world. They are to go in pairs, to travel lightly and not to be distracted – Eastern greetings could be time consuming. This is urgent and important work.
- We do not know how long they were away on this mission, but they all came back feeling positive. Reunited with Jesus they recall their experiences. Although they had only visited a few small towns and healed some sick people – Jesus sees Satan suffering a notable defeat.
- Shaking dust off your feet was a symbolic action to warn that a town/community has placed itself out of God's people and that they are choosing to reject the Kingdom of God.
- Jesus turns their attention away from the current excitement to the eternal perspective. These people who have been brought into the Kingdom and have been healed will one day pass away. Rejoice in what is permanent and eternal – your names are written in heaven!

I have given you the power to trample on snakes and scorpions and to defeat the power of your enemy Satan. Nothing can harm you. But don't be happy because evil spirits obey you. Be happy that your names are written in heaven!

Contemporary English Version (CEV)

Reflect

After you have all had time to read the text, pause and be still to listen to God through the Scriptures.

Begin your reflection time by each naming your shockers and blockers. Listen carefully to each other, share your thoughts and reflect on this passage together.

You might also like to explore these questions:

Q1. Who told you about Jesus? How did you come to be a follower of Christ and who was influential in your life to make this happen?

Q2. What is your experience of speaking about your faith in God? In what ways have you tried to bring compassion and healing to others?

“We can open ourselves to the possibility that God may want to use us in a significant way. History is full of ordinary people who, like Amos, were called to positions of influence far beyond their intentions.”

*Richard J Foster
Streams Of Living Water*

Respond

Be The Message challenge: As a group, create a challenge to help you to become the message this week and be an actively compassionate person or choose from the following.

Challenge ideas:

1. Hospitality

Practicing hospitality is a great way to remind ourselves of the grace God extends to us. This week consider who you can spend time with. It would be easy to simply invite the ‘in crowd’ – but use this opportunity to invite people that won't necessarily raise your status. How about people new to your church, college or place of work? How about someone who needs encouragement and a chance to talk openly and receive support at this time? If it's appropriate, offer to pray for them as well.

2. Mission Possible

As a group, consider what kind of ‘mission’ you could take on. Is there something that your church is doing that you could be part of? Is there something within your community that you can serve and support? Is there an opportunity where you could demonstrate the love of God by helping the homeless, volunteering time at a soup kitchen, tidying up your local area or joining a befriending scheme?

3. Global Prayer

Part of being a global citizen is being globally informed. Commit some time this week to educating yourself about the needs of a particular area of the world. Read newspapers and scan the web to increase your knowledge of the situations in a certain country. If you know someone who is working or serving in that country, why not contact them to encourage them and commit to praying regularly for them and the work they are involved in?

Group Prayer

You might like to commit to praying for each person in the group this week as you explore ways to be the message and work for justice and compassion locally and globally.

Bringing *the Bible to* **Life**

