

# DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS & MEDITATIONS YEAR A

By DON SCHWAGER

Source: <https://www.dailyscripture.net/>

FRIDAY 5 OCTOBER 2023 – 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time

Scripture: **Luke 10:1-12**

*1 After this the Lord appointed seventy others, and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to come. 2 And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest. 3 Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs in the midst of wolves. 4 Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and salute no one on the road. 5 Whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace be to this house!' 6 And if a son of peace is there, your peace shall rest upon him; but if not, it shall return to you. 7 And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages; do not go from house to house. 8 Whenever you enter a town and they receive you, eat what is set before you; 9 heal the sick in it and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.' 10 But whenever you enter a town and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, 11 'Even the dust of your town that clings to our feet, we wipe off against you; nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God has come near.' 12 I tell you, it shall be more tolerable on that day for Sodom than for that town.*

## **The Kingdom of God Has Come near to You**

**Meditation:** What kind of harvest does the Lord want us to reap today for his kingdom? When Jesus commissioned seventy of his disciples to go on mission, he gave them a vision of a vast field that is ready to be harvested for the kingdom of God. Jesus frequently used the image of a harvest to convey the coming of God's reign on earth. The harvest is the fruition of much labor and growth - beginning with the sowing of seeds, then growth to maturity, and finally the reaping of fruit for the harvest.

### ***God's word grows like a seed within us***

In like manner, the word of God is sown in the hearts of receptive men and women who hear his word, accept it with trust and obedience, and then share the abundant fruit of God's word in their life with others. The harvest Jesus had in mind was not only the gathering in of the people of Israel, but all the peoples (and nations) of the world. John the Evangelist tells us that "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

### ***Be a sower of God's word of peace and mercy***

What does Jesus mean when he says his disciples must be "lambs in the midst of wolves"? The prophet Isaiah foretold a time when wolves and lambs will dwell in peace (Isaiah 11:6 and 65:25). This certainly refers to the second coming of the Lord Jesus when all will be united under the Lordship of Jesus after he has put down his enemies and established the reign of God over the heavens and the earth. In the meantime, the disciples must expect opposition and persecution from those who would oppose the Gospel. Jesus came to lay down his life for us, as our sacrificial lamb, to atone for our sins and the sins of the world. We, in turn, must be willing to offer our lives with gratitude and humble service for our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

### ***We are called to speak and witness in God's name***

What is the significance of Jesus appointing seventy disciples to the ministry of the word? Seventy was a significant number in biblical times. Moses chose seventy elders to help him in the task of leading the people through the wilderness. The Jewish Sanhedrin, the governing council for the nation of Israel, was composed of seventy members. In Jesus' times seventy was held to be the number of nations throughout the world. Jesus commissioned the seventy to a two-fold task - to speak in his name and to act with his power.

Jesus gave his disciples instructions for how they were to carry out their ministry. They must go and serve as people without guile, full of charity (selfless giving in love) and peace, and simplicity. They must give their full attention to the proclamation of God's kingdom and not be diverted by other lesser things. They must travel light - only take what was essential and leave behind whatever would distract them - in order to concentrate on the task of speaking the word of the God. They must do their work, not for what they can get out of it, but for what they can

give freely to others, without expecting reward or payment. "Poverty of spirit" frees us from greed and preoccupation with possessions and makes ample room for God's provision. The Lord Jesus wants his disciples to be dependent on him and not on themselves.

God gives us his life-giving word that we may have abundant life in him. He wills to work in and through each of us for his glory. God shares his word with us and he commissions us to speak it boldly and plainly to others. Do you witness the truth and joy of the Gospel by word and example to those around you?

Lord Jesus, may the joy and truth of the Gospel transform my life that I may witness it to those around me. Grant that I may spread your truth and merciful love wherever I go.

---

### DAILY QUOTE FROM THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS

*Jesus the Good Shepherd changes wolves into sheep*

by Cyril of Alexandria (376-444 AD)

"How then does [Jesus] command the holy apostles, who are innocent men and 'sheep,' to seek the company of wolves, and go to them of their own will? Is not the danger apparent? Are they not set up as ready prey for their attacks? How can a sheep prevail over a wolf? How can one so peaceful conquer the savageness of beasts of prey? 'Yes,' he says, 'for they all have me as their Shepherd: small and great, people and princes, teachers and students. I will be with you, help you, and deliver you from all evil. I will tame the savage beasts. I will change wolves into sheep, and I will make the persecutors become the helpers of the persecuted. I will make those who wrong my ministers to be sharers in their pious designs. I make and unmake all things, and nothing can resist my will.'" (excerpt from COMMENTARY ON LUKE, HOMILY 61)