Sermon: **Go and preach, ‘The Kingdom of heaven is near!’** (Matthew 10.7)

Quote from Air NZ: *Bucket lists are filled with mountains to climb and marathons to run. Which sounds like a lot of work! Lock in that dream holiday, whether it’s dancing in Buenos Aires, shopping in Los Angeles, or doing both in Timaru. Whatever gets your cogs turning.*

Have you made a bucket list? If so, what kind of thing is on it? Typically it would have places to visit, experiences to have. I wonder what a bucket list for a church would look like!? What about Jesus’ bucket list!

How much difference is there between what you habitually do, and your bucket list? A greater difference might suggest you are not being true to yourself, or ill health, maybe no time.

If Jesus was truly true to himself (= perfect) then we ought to be able to see his bucket list.

Our reading gives us strong clues: Jesus heals a dumb man, goes around preaching and healing.
He appoints disciples to follow his vision, and sets them off to preach and heal too.

It looks like Jesus bucket list was to heal folk. Many have a similar passion; social action. Christian World Service, brown bags, scarf knitting are examples.

Jesus’ true bucket list was not healing folk. Let that sink in.

Cf – if your bucket list had ‘visit the Great Wall of China’ on it, you’d have to fly on several planes. But flying is not the goal, but the means. Similarly, healing folk was the means to something bigger.

TEXT. Whether Jesus thought in terms of an earthly realm or a more spiritual realm does not matter here. Jesus’ true motivation, true bucket list was not healing but making the Kingdom of Heaven a reality. The reason for healing was not because he felt sorry (though he did), but because it was the means to prove the Kingdom of Heaven was a reality.

Eg Why did Jesus appoint and send out the 12? – TEXT! In that knowledge they were to heal.

There is a vast difference between doing good things because we are good people, and doing good things because we wish to show God is alive in our land. Can you see that?

We give brown bags to show the Kingdom of Heaven is near. The reason we make scarves to give away is to prove God is alive.

But why is that imp? Why is that so different? Knowing God is present gives hope, confidence, a raison d’ètre - all in short supply and make us more human, more like Jesus.
So let’s do good, to prove God!