

The Way of Jesus

Discussion Guide

Matthew 10:40-42

Small Faithfulness, Kingdom Weight

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, teach us to see what you see and value what you value. Help us receive your people well, serve with humility, and trust that nothing done faithfully in your name is wasted. Amen.

Read Matthew 10:40

“Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.”

Observe

1. What word or idea is repeated in this verse?
2. Who is being received first?
3. According to Jesus, who is ultimately being received when his disciples are received?
4. What chain of sending and receiving do you see in this verse?

Interpret

5. What does it mean to “receive” or “welcome” someone in this context?
6. Why is receiving Jesus’ disciples treated as receiving Jesus himself?
7. What does this verse teach us about the connection between Jesus, his disciples, and the Father?
8. How does this verse remind us that Christian mission begins with God, not with us?

Reflect and Apply

9. How does this challenge the way we think about welcoming, supporting, or encouraging people who belong to Jesus?
10. Who are some people carrying the work or message of Jesus that we may be tempted to overlook?

11. What would it look like to receive Jesus' people with more than a polite greeting?

Read Matthew 10:41

"The one who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and the one who receives a righteous person because he is a righteous person will receive a righteous person's reward."

Observe

12. What two kinds of people does Jesus mention in this verse?
13. What does Jesus say about the person who receives a prophet?
14. What does Jesus say about the person who receives a righteous person?
15. What repeated phrase helps explain why the person is received?

Interpret

16. What is a prophet in the biblical story?
17. What might Jesus mean by a "righteous person"?
18. Why does the reason for receiving someone matter in this verse?
19. What does it mean that someone who welcomes a prophet or righteous person shares in a reward?
20. How is hospitality more than just being nice?

Reflect and Apply

21. Can you think of a biblical story where someone received a prophet or servant of God? What happened?
22. How might hospitality become partnership in the mission of God?
23. What are some hidden or supportive acts of service that make ministry possible?
24. Why do we sometimes value visible ministry more than quiet faithfulness?
25. How can we better honor and support people who are faithfully serving Jesus?

Read Matthew 10:42

"And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward."

Observe

26. What small act does Jesus mention?
27. Who receives the cup of cold water?
28. Why is the cup of cold water given?
29. What promise does Jesus make at the end of the verse?

Interpret

30. Why do you think Jesus uses such a small example as a cup of cold water?
31. Who are “these little ones” in this context?
32. What does this verse show us about what Jesus notices?
33. What does this verse teach us about small acts of mercy?
34. How does the phrase “because he is a disciple” shape the meaning of the act?

Reflect and Apply

35. What are some modern examples of giving “a cup of cold water”?
36. When has a small act of kindness or welcome meant a lot to you?
37. Who around you may need a simple act of mercy, encouragement, or welcome this week?
38. Why is it easy to underestimate small faithfulness?
39. How does this verse encourage people who serve quietly or behind the scenes?

Connect with Matthew 25:35-40

Read Matthew 25:35-40.

Observe

40. What acts of mercy does Jesus mention in Matthew 25?
41. How do the righteous respond when Jesus says they served him?
42. What does Jesus say they did when they served “the least of these”?

Interpret

43. How does Matthew 25 help us understand Matthew 10:40-42?
44. What connection do you see between “a cup of cold water” and “I was thirsty and you gave me drink”?
45. What does it mean that Jesus receives mercy shown to his people as mercy shown to himself?

Reflect and Apply

46. How should this shape the way we treat vulnerable, overlooked, tired, or faithful people who belong to Jesus?
47. What ordinary act of mercy might Jesus receive as love shown to him?

Connecting the Whole Passage

48. What is the main idea of Matthew 10:40-42?

49. How does this passage close out Jesus' mission instructions in Matthew 10?
50. How does this passage balance the earlier warnings about rejection, fear, opposition, and the cross?
51. What does this passage teach us about welcome?
52. What does this passage teach us about mission?
53. What does this passage teach us about reward?
54. What does this passage teach us about the way Jesus values small things?

The Way of Jesus

Throughout this series, we are asking how each passage forms us into the way of Jesus.

1. What kind of thing is this passage?

How does Matthew 10:40-42 function as the closing word of Jesus' mission discourse?

2. Where am I in the story?

Do you relate more to the sent disciple, the prophet, the righteous person, the little one, or the person offering a cup of cold water?

3. What echoes does this text carry?

How do stories of hospitality to Elijah or Elisha, along with Matthew 25, deepen this passage?

4. What does this reveal about God and King Jesus?

What does this passage show us about Jesus' identification with his people and the Father's care for hidden faithfulness?

5. How is this forming me into the way of Jesus?

What cup of cold water might Jesus be placing in your hand this week?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you for seeing what others overlook. Teach us to welcome your people, support your mission, and offer small acts of mercy with faithful hearts. Help us trust that nothing done in your name is wasted. Amen.