

**6/28/26**  
**5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost**  
**For Group Meetings from June 21<sup>st</sup> – June 27<sup>th</sup>**

**OUR MISSION:** As a missional congregation we *celebrate* Christ's presence, *invite* people into a growing relationship with Jesus, and *equip* them to *serve* in a broken world.

**Prayer of the Day:** O God, you direct our lives by your grace, and your words of justice and mercy reshape the world. Mold us into a people who welcome your word and serve one another, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

**BIBLICAL EQUIPPING TOGETHER:**

**Share:** How did last week's scripture (Mark 10:35-45) work in your life this week?

**Mission:**

- What was most satisfying about your ministry last week?
- Where do you see God at work?
- How did you participate in God's missional activity?
- How did inviting go last Sunday?

**Hear:** Matthew 10:40-42

**Explore Questions:** (Use these or develop your own.)

1. Who is Jesus speaking to in this section, and what has he just been talking about in the verses before this?
2. According to Jesus, what does it mean to "welcome" one of his disciples?
3. What small act of kindness does Jesus specifically mention?

**Connect Questions:** (Use these or develop your own.)

1. When was the last time someone made you feel truly welcomed?
2. When has a small act changed your day recently?
3. Who in your life consistently offers "cups of cold water"? In other words, quiet, practical acts of care that often go unnoticed?

**Memorize this verse:** "And whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward." (Matthew 10:42) What seemingly small act has made a big difference in your life recently?

**BIBLICAL EQUIPPING APART:**

**Obey:** During this week follow through on your intentions.

**Meditate:** Meditate on Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18. How does this speak into your life?

**Reflect:** What have I learned in my week of living with this text? What can I share with my group when we next meet?

**Notes for ChristCare leaders:**

“Even.” It’s such a small word. You use it only when you want to make a point. A point about something surprising or unlikely. It’s functions a lot like the word “just” (as in “it takes just a little”) but intensified. Which is exactly how Jesus uses it here. Chapter 10 in Matthew is all about discipleship. He commissions the twelve disciples, empowers them to cure those who are sick and drive out evil spirits, sends them out to proclaim and enact the coming Kingdom of God, receives them back again with warnings of coming persecutions and trials, tells them whom to fear and whom to ignore, reminds them that the Gospel sparks division, calls them to take up their cross, and then promises them rewards for their faithfulness. And at just this point comes the “even.” Quite frankly, after all the stark and dramatic language, it’s a bit of an anticlimax. “Whoever welcomes you welcomes me...” Fine. Not only will the faithful disciples be rewarded, but those who welcome them will be included in God’s indulgence. But then, this: “and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward” (10:42). Really? That’s all it takes. Giving someone a cup of cold water? Not that offering welcome was all that arduous but, seriously, something as small as offering a cup of cold water is what it takes to secure one’s reward?

Yeah, that’s it. Because perhaps this whole chapter isn’t finally about what it takes to be a disciple but rather is simply describing what it actually means to be a disciple. Empowerment and struggle. Welcome and rejection. Division, persecution and the call to faithfulness. All of these are part of being a disciple of Jesus, then and now. And maybe this talk of reward isn’t about how one earns rewards but rather is about recognizing the rewards (the blessings) already showered upon them by God. Note that at this point Jesus isn’t talking about what the disciples are supposed to do. He’s talking about those who welcome them. The “little ones” are the very disciples he has commissioned and sent out. Those who welcome them would normally not be considered terribly important. They are servants to the apostles, helpers, facilitators, but not actors or agents, let alone the stars of the show. Yet even these, through as small a gesture as just giving a cup of water, are drawn into the mission of the disciples and, in turn, the mission of Jesus. Discipleship, in other words, doesn’t have to be heroic. Even offering a cold cup of water counts. Once you realize this, we can quickly add to the list. Just smiling at the strangers we see instead of ignoring them. Even offering a shoulder to cry on to one who grieves. Welcoming the new kid in school or at camp. Volunteering at Borderlands or I-Help. Being there when your kids need you. Speaking up for someone being discriminated against.

Small gestures, I know. Except that, in the kingdom of God, there is no small gesture when done in faith. Each and every act of kindness and generosity has an impact well beyond what you’d imagined. Jesus’ words seem to imply that no act of generosity or kindness will be forgotten. That’s an amazing thought. That even our smallest acts of kindness and generosity reverberate with cosmic significance. You never know the difference your faithful actions may have. And it’s a thought worth remembering. That we have the opportunity to be Jesus’ disciples and make a difference in the world each and every day and wherever they may be. Even our smallest acts of kindness and generosity done in faith are remembered, have cosmic significance, and make a difference beyond what we see, as each act of kindness and generosity done in the name of Christ reverberates out and is gathered into God’s work to love, bless, and save this world.

**Thanks be to God,**

Pastor Thadd (tbook@desertcross.org)

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*Traditional version:*

Our Father who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from  
evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power,  
And the glory, forever and ever. Amen

*Contemporary version:*

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,  
your will be done on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those  
Who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial  
And deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours,  
Now and forever. Amen