



# MINISTRIES

A Ministry of the Athens Universal Life Church  
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<https://aulc.us>

**TITLE:** The Promise of the Double Blessing

**SERMON IN A SENTENCE:** Christ promises that all who bless God by receiving God's people will in return receive God's blessing.

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 10:40-42

Today's scripture lesson comes from the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 10, verses 40 to 42.,,,

Starting at verse 40:,,,

“The one who welcomes you welcomes Me, and the one who welcomes Me welcomes Him who sent Me. ,,,

Anyone who welcomes a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward. And anyone who welcomes a righteous person because he's righteous will receive a righteous person's reward. ,,,

And whoever gives just a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple—I assure you: He will never lose his reward!” ,,,

-- May the Lord add His Blessing to the reading of His Word!,,,

-- Hello, I am Doctor Rob White with the A U L C Ministries with our message this week.,,,

-- I am happy that you can take a few minutes out of your busy week to be with us today!,,,

What does it mean to be a Christian? Does it mean always being happy? Always smiling? Always pleasant? That's what some people think. For them, the church is a place of peace and quiet in a noisy world—a slow-pitch break from a hardball game. For them, the word "Christian" is synonymous with "nice." They know that some Christians are not nice, but doubt that they are really Christian,,,

I wonder what they would think if they met Jesus face to face. Jesus was not nice. He didn't have a pleasant word for everyone. He didn't make everyone feel good. They didn't kill Jesus because he was so nice. They killed him because he was such a pain.,,,

Christians can be a pain too. We Christians are always caught in the tension between communicating God's love for people and God's hatred for sin. We will never get in trouble by telling people that God loves them, but we will make enemies by telling people that they need to change their ways. Sometimes we have to do that.,,,

Jesus knew that his disciples would face opposition just as he did. Jesus knew that his disciples would be persecuted. He knew that some of them would be killed for their faith, just as he would be killed. Some of them would even die on a cross, just as he would die on a cross. All those things would happen because people did not want to hear what God sent the disciples to say.,,,

Jesus addresses all those issues in the first part of the tenth chapter of Matthew, where he sends his disciples on a mission. Then we come to our text for today, where Jesus tells his disciples:,,,

"He who receives you receives me,  
and he who receives me receives him who sent me" ,,,

In other words, Jesus first spells out for his disciples that they will experience opposition. He then follows up by telling the disciples that God will bless those who help them. ,,,

That is the Jewish concept of *shaliah*. The idea is that, when the king sends an emissary to conduct his business, he expects people to treat the emissary as if he were the king himself. If anyone mistreats the emissary, the king will punish them. If anyone helps the emissary, the king will reward them. ,,,

The reason behind *shaliah* is simple. The king cannot do everything. He must delegate—must send others to do his work. If people mistreat the king's workers, nothing will get done. The king must protect his people, so he says, "If you treat my people well, you will be rewarded. If you treat them badly, you will be punished.",,,

So now, in Matthew 10, we have the King of Kings sending his disciples to proclaim the gospel. He tells them:,,,

"He who receives you receives me,  
and he who receives me receives him who sent me.  
He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet  
will receive a prophet's reward.  
He who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man  
will receive a righteous man's reward" ,,,

I call this the Promise of the Double Blessing. That promise goes like this:,,,

When we bless God,  
God will bless us in return.,,,

Someone else came up with the same idea, but said it differently. They said:,,,

God will be no one's debtor.,,,

To be honest, you won't find either of those statements in the Bible—at least not in those exact words. You won't find: "When we bless God, God will bless us in return." ,,,

Nor will you find: "God will be no one's debtor." ,,,

But that is what Jesus meant when he said:,,,

"He who receives you receives me,  
and he who receives me receives him who sent me.  
He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet  
will receive a prophet's reward." ,,,

That is Jesus' promise to take care of those who take care of his disciples. That's quite a promise—coming from Jesus, as it does. There are some people who might want to show us hospitality, but who might have little to give. But Jesus is living in glory with the Father. It is that glory to which Jesus promises to welcome us. That's quite a promise!,,,

I am looking forward to seeing Jesus. I am looking forward to having him welcome me into his glory. I am looking forward to seeing the city whose streets are paved with gold and whose walls are encrusted with jewels. ,,,

But we might worry that we have missed the opportunity to secure this promise. Perhaps Jesus meant that he would bless those who welcomed the apostles—and we have no chance to do that. But Jesus said:,,,

"He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet  
will receive a prophet's reward." ,,,

Who is a prophet? A prophet is simply a person called by God to tell God's truth. There is no shortage of prophets today. Missionaries are prophets. And preachers. And Sunday school teachers. And youth group leaders. There are prophets who proclaim Christ through their music—and prophets who proclaim Christ through their art. There are prophets who proclaim Christ through their suffering—through their quiet faith as they live with illness or loss.,,,

There are prophets scattered throughout this congregation today. They are the people who call us to faithful service—who call us to holy living—who call us to deeper faith. Prophets are not always popular, because prophets tell the truth. We like people who affirm who we are, but prophets call us to be better. They call us to greater service—holier lives—deeper faith. So we might not like them—but we need to acknowledge that they are God-sent. And we need to give them our support.,,,

Jesus said that, when we welcome one of those prophets—when we help them—when we offer our support—when we hold them up in prayer—we will receive a prophet's reward. What an offer! ,,,

And Jesus said:,,,

"He who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man  
will receive a righteous man's reward".

Who is a righteous person? Righteous people are people who live holy lives. Not "holier-than thou" lives—nor self-righteous lives—but holy lives. You know people like that. When you are in their presence, you stand a little straighter—you speak a bit more carefully. It isn't that you are afraid. It is simply that, when you see the quality of their lives, you want to be more like them. Jesus said:,,,

"He who receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man  
will receive a righteous man's reward.",,,

What an offer! What a promise!,,,

Jesus concluded with these words:,,,

"Whoever gives one of these little ones  
just a cup of cold water to drink in the name of a disciple,  
most certainly I tell you he will in no way lose his reward". ,,,

In this context, when Jesus talks about "little ones," he is talking about little people of faith: ,,

- He's talking about new people in faith—people in whom faith is just beginning to take root. ,,
- He is talking about people of delicate faith—people who need our encouragement and mentoring. ,,
- He is talking about children—little people who need to be taught—who need to learn the stories of the Bible—who need to learn what it means to be a Christian—who need to see dad and mom living lives of faith—who need to see us living as Christians.,,,

Jesus says—and this is the promise that I like best—Jesus says:,,,

"Whoever gives one of these little ones  
just a cup of cold water to drink in the name of a disciple,  
most certainly I tell you he will in no way lose his reward.",,,

"Just a cup of cold water." Who among us is so poor that we cannot offer a cup of cold water to someone in need? Jesus promises to notice every tiny gesture of kindness to these little ones. He promises to reward us for every good deed, however small.,,,

I cannot tell you exactly how Jesus will reward you for helping these prophets—these righteous persons—these little ones. But I can tell you this. Jesus gave his own life for us. Isn't it reasonable to assume that he will continue to be generous? He tells us that no one who gives even a cup of cold water to someone who is thirst will lose his or her reward.,,,

I call it the Promise of the Double Blessing. Give a blessing, and receive a blessing. Try it and see if Jesus is not faithful! ,,

-- That's our Lord's message for this Lord's Day and I hope you got a blessing out of it!,,

-- Go out this week and be a blessing and be blessed! -- For the more you are a blessing, the more you,, will be blessed!

-- Thank you all for watching and listening and we will see you all next week!

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