

'Never Underestimate a Cup of Cold Water' June 29, 2008

*Receive, Accept, Welcome!*

Whoever welcomes you welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous. 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, he will not lose his reward. *(Matthew 10:40-42)*

Joke

Jesus is understating it when he says, "A simple act of hospitality and generosity -- giving a cup of cold water to someone who is thirsty -- demonstrates that you are my student." (my disciple)

You see, the gift is more than water; it is the sharing of the gift of life with one who is thirsty. And what we share, we receive back in abundance. Listen again to Jesus' words, and you'll see that he is emphasizing a truth that "Anyone who welcomes and accepts God's messenger will share in the messenger's reward. Anyone who welcomes a good person simply because of their goodness will share in that goodness. A simple act of hospitality and generosity -- giving a cup of cold water to someone who is thirsty -- demonstrates that you are my student. You won't lose a thing; in fact, you'll be greatly rewarded!"

This is the ultimate statement of stewardship, that when we give in His name, we will lose nothing, in fact, we will gain everything. The question before us, are we willing to give all?

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people from one another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left.

Then the King will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me."

Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when did we see you hungry and give you food, or thirsty and give you something to drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and give you clothing? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?"

And the King will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it for one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it for me."

Then he will say to those at his left hand, "Depart from me, you that are accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me."

Then they also will answer, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?"

Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it for one of the least of these, you did not do it for me."

Then they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life. (*Matthew 25:31-46*)

Often we hear a few words, and the rest vanishes from our mind. Here, we are fascinated by "a cup of cold water." We imagine ourselves out in the desert in scorching heat without a drop of water in our bottle. We are ready to despair. Suddenly, a good person appears from nowhere with a jar of cold water.

The Lord did not use abstract philosophical terms. Rather, he addressed our hearts by using images, situations, and stories with living people and creatures. It is better to translate the words and concepts into living images of our everyday life. We remember the blessed phrase, "and the Word became flesh" (John 1:14). So try a different translation (the Message, or for size, listening closely to the words!).

Three things I desire you take away from today's lesson:

1) We are all "disciples," learners, so pay close attention...

2) "Hospitality" is directly related to the life of Christ (His attributes- sheet of "attributes of God", from *Moms in Touch International*). One must study the Master and draw close to take on these attributes...

3) We must go "all the way..." *He Leadeth Me, # 461*

What do you want out of life? More than you have? Then give what you have and who you are, according to Jesus: "**Just a cup of cold water.**" He wasn't talking about charity, but about giving something of value to someone who really is thirsty or in need. Imagine *yourself* in a desert. You have one canteen of water. You run across someone who has no water, and is dying of thirst. Will you put some water to the lips of this parched person?

I want to close with a quote from John Fischer called, "The Mission is You!"...