

# THE FIRST SENDING

MATTHEW 10



*A Scriptorium Study from The Fellowship of Ailbe*

T . M . M O O R E

**The Fellowship of Ailbe**

The First Sending: Matthew 10  
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## Matthew 10: Introduction

In Matthew 10, Jesus prepares His disciples for the first of what will be their life's vocation. This is both a time of training and a time of extending Jesus' Kingdom mission.

Jesus' instructions are clear, promising, and sobering. Proclaiming and bringing the Kingdom of God to the lost world can be a daunting challenge. But Jesus sent His disciples as He had been sent, and He sends us the same way.

As we study through this first sending of laborers into the harvest, let's try to learn as much as we can about what the Lord expects of us.

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We hope you find this study of Ecclesiastes a challenging and stretching experience of journeying more deeply into the Word of God. Thank you for joining us.

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## 1 The Right Credentials

*Pray Psalm 40.11-13.*

Do not withhold Your tender mercies from me, O LORD;  
Let Your lovingkindness and Your truth continually preserve me.  
For innumerable evils have surrounded me;  
My iniquities have overtaken me, so that I am not able to look up;  
They are more than the hairs of my head;  
Therefore my heart fails me.  
Be pleased, O LORD, to deliver me;  
O LORD, make haste to help me!

*Sing Psalm 40.11-13.*

(Dix: [\*For the Beauty of the Earth\*](#))

Keep Your mercy not from me; let Your love and truth prevail.  
Evil and iniquity make my trembling heart to fail.  
Lord, be pleased to rescue me! Let my shelter with You be.

*Read and meditate on Matthew 10.1-4.*

*Prepare.*

1. What qualified these men for the mission Jesus assigned them?
2. What did Jesus call them to do?

*Meditate.*

Immediately following His instruction to pray for laborers to be thrust forth into the harvest, Jesus gathered His disciples for their first mission.

Who were these men? And what qualified them for the mission Jesus gave them?

First, these were ordinary men – not a scholar or professional among them. They were fishermen, tax collectors, and who knows what else. Everyday men. They had no training for ministry. Their only real qualifications were (1) they had left everything to follow Jesus; (2) they had spent much time getting to know Him; (3) they sat at His feet to be instructed in the ways of the Kingdom; (4) they had observed His many good works; (5) they had publicly identified with Him; and (6) they had received authority from Him for their appointed work.

But wait...what about a Master of Divinity degree? Or some basic competency in Greek and Hebrew? Shouldn't they have had to pass some test, write a paper, or otherwise satisfy a set of trials?

They were just about to do all that, but in real time and real life, not in some classroom, scrawling memorized details into a blue book.

OK, yes, I'm a bit skeptical of the way we train people for the work of ministry, and of the people we determine to be qualified for such work. For the lifetime of this nation we have been preparing people for the ministry using a classroom model, teaching them how to pass tests and write papers, but not paying too much attention to what characterized the disciples at this point. The result is that the Church has drifted from its ancient moorings, and is having less and less Kingdom influence in a

culture and society that becomes increasingly secular, narcissistic, and hostile to God each year. In the evangelical world today, we have more seminaries, training more students, in more different degree programs, for more types of ministry, than at any previous time in the history of the Christian movement. Yet our impact for the Kingdom of God decreases daily. When do we stop to reevaluate what we're doing?

OK, got that off my chest.

The disciples are being sent to do essentially what they've seen Jesus doing – preaching, teaching, and rolling back the effects of sin. Luke tells us He sent them out in pairs. That's a good strategy, as each man would be able to support his co-laborer with prayer and encouragement, and bringing to remembrance the grace and mercy of Jesus.. Jesus gave them *power* for this mission. The Greek is ἐξουσία, *exousia*, and translates better *authority*. They were to invoke His Name in their work, and His Name would give them success in all things (cf. Lk. 10.17).

We have said that we must pay careful attention to the words and works of Jesus. Sending His disciples into the harvest as laborers for the Kingdom is also a work of Jesus, and one that reaches to every one of us as His followers.

*Reflect.*

1. Why did Jesus send His disciples out? How could He have been so confident in them?
2. What were they being sent to do? How does that relate to Jesus' sending us into our Personal Mission Field?
3. Do you have a prayer partner or ministry partner to help and encourage you in your work for the Lord? Why is it a good idea to have one?

*What kind of people were these? Fishermen and publicans. Indeed, four of them were lowly fishermen and two were publicans—Matthew and James—and one was even a traitor. These “he sent!”* John Chrysostom (344-407), *The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 32.3*

*Thank You, Lord, for sending me into my Personal Mission Field. Help me as I go today so that...*

*Pray Psalm 40.1-10.*

As you wait on the Lord this morning, think about the day ahead. How will you show the Lord that you trust Him? Ask Him to help you delight to do His will, and to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom at every opportunity.

*Sing Psalm 40.1-10.*

**Psalm 40.1-10** (Dix: [\*For the Beauty of the Earth\*](#))

I waited patiently for God; He inclined and heard my cry,  
lifted me up above the sod, set me on a Rock on high!  
New songs in my mouth He gave; may He through me many save.

Blessed are all who trust in You, turning both from lies and pride.  
Countless wonders, Lord, You do, and Your thoughts with us abide.  
Lord, Your worth who can declare? None with You can e'er compare.

Off'rings You do not require – open now my ears, O Lord!

What from me do You desire? Firm delight to do Your Word.  
Take my life in ev'ry part; write Your Law upon my heart.

Lord, Your truth will I proclaim to Your people gathered 'round,  
nor will I my lips restrain – let Your precious ways resound!  
Of Your saving grace and Word I would speak, most loving Lord.

## 2 Mission Mandate

*Pray Psalm 126.4, 5.*

Bring back our captivity, O Lord,  
as the streams in the South.  
Those who sow in tears  
shall reap in joy.

*Sing Psalm 126.4, 5.*

(Truro: [\*Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns\*](#))  
Restore our fortunes, Lord our King!  
Let grace like flowing streams prevail.  
All they with tears of joy shall sing  
who sow while yet they weep and wail.

*Read Matthew 10.1-15; meditate on verses 5-15.*

*Prepare.*

1. Where did Jesus send His disciples?
2. What did He send them to do?

*Meditate.*

This first mission of the disciples was a limited one. They were only to go to Jewish towns and homes (vv. 5, 6). As Jesus had come unto His own people (Jn. 1.11), so the disciples must limit their ministries to the people of Israel, at least for now. The time for reaching out to the Gentiles would come, and Jesus will foreshadow that time in His own ministry. For now, the disciples were to stay on home turf.

But what a mandate they were given! Preaching the Kingdom, healing, cleansing, raising the dead, casting out demons – all the works they had seen Jesus do, now they were empowered to do as well (vv. 7, 8).

They were not to worry about their daily needs (vv. 9, 10); God would take care of that, and Jesus had already taught them to look to Him for their provision (Matt. 6.1-10). The people they ministered to were used to providing for those who taught them. It was God's Law, as Paul explained (applying that Law to himself) in 1 Corinthians 9.13, 14 (cf. Lev. 6.16, etc.). So as Jesus sent them out to preach grace and salvation, He expected them to live by the Law of God. God would honor His Word.

In verses 11-15 Jesus explained how the leading of the Spirit would work in this mission. Wherever they went, they were to look for a household that was welcoming to them and their message. They should use that as their base of ministry for as long as they stayed in that place. They would be able to discern such a household by simply knocking on the door and greeting the people with the peace of God. Those in whom the Spirit of peace was working would welcome them and care for their needs. If the house they greeted was not welcoming, they should simply move on in peace. People and towns that did not receive their message should be given a visible sign of God's rejection: shaking the dust off their feet, so that not a trace of it remained with the men of peace. But they must not judge or condemn. God would take care of that in His own time (v. 15). They were on a

mission of peace, for peace is the condition of the Kingdom, and the fruit of righteousness and faithfulness.

Like the disciples, we are sent to bring the peace of Christ and His Kingdom to the world. God will provide for us as we go into our Personal Mission Fields. We're not looking for arguments, and we don't pass judgment. We offer the peace of the Lord, and all the blessings that attend to that through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We cannot make people believe. Hopefully, we can help them understand. And this is all we are charged with by the Lord.

*Reflect.*

1. What can you learn from this first mission for your work in your Personal Mission Field?
2. What is the message of the Kingdom Jesus has sent us to proclaim?
3. Why is it important that our mission consist both of true words and good works?

*Do you perceive the unparalleled magnificence of their ministry? Do you comprehend the dignity of the apostles? They are not authorized to speak of things perceivable by the senses. They do not repeat what Moses said or the prophets before them. Rather, they spoke of new and strange things. Moses and the prophets spoke of temporal promises of an earthly land. The apostles proclaimed the kingdom of heaven and all that this implies. John Chrysostom (344-407), *The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 32.4**

*Lord, make me a person of peace today, as I...*

*Pray Psalm 126.1-6.*

The Lord has set us free from the chains of sin and fear. Look ahead to your day: What opportunities for sowing the good seed of the Kingdom await you? Commit them to the Lord even now.

*Sing Psalm 126.1-6.*

**Psalm 126.1-6** (Truro: [\*Shout, for the Blessed Jesus Reigns\*](#))

When God restored our fortunes all,  
we were like those who sweetly dream.  
Our mouths with joy and laughter filled,  
made Him our constant song and theme.

Then the astonished nations said,  
"The Lord has done great things for them!"  
Indeed, great things our God has done,  
Whose Name we praise, Amen, Amen!

Restore our fortunes, Lord our King!  
Let grace like flowing streams prevail.  
All they with tears of joy shall sing  
who sow while yet they weep and wail.

They who in tears of sorrow sow  
and cast their seed on every hand,  
with joy shall reach their heav'nly home,  
and bring the harvest of their land.

### 3 Warning and Promise

*Pray Psalm 22.23-25.*

You who fear the LORD, praise Him!  
All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him,  
And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel!  
For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted;  
Nor has He hidden His face from Him;  
But when He cried to Him, He heard.  
My praise *shall be* of You in the great assembly;  
I will pay My vows before those who fear Him.

*Sing Psalm 22.23-25.*

(Darwall: [\*Rejoice, the Lord is King\*](#))

All you who fear the Lord, now praise His holy Name!  
You children of His glorious Word, declare His fame!  
We stand in awe of our eternal God, and on His mercy call.

For He has not despised the anguish of our King,  
Nor from Him hid His eyes, Who knew such suffering.  
Let praise arise from all who love and serve the Ruler of the skies!

*Read Matthew 10.1-26; meditate on verses 16-26.*

*Prepare.*

1. Of what did Jesus warn His disciples?
2. What did He promise them?

*Meditate.*

Don't you love the way Jesus uses metaphors? He piles them on here: "sheep in the midst of wolves"; "wise as serpents"; "harmless as doves". This is how the disciples were to think about their mission. They would be the objects of ravenous hatred on the part of some. So they needed to know how to move about among such people silently, stealthily, and without creating problems for themselves by needless provocations (v. 16). In spite of their best efforts to be meek, peaceable, quiet, and wise, people would dislike them and seek to do them harm (v. 17).

And if this was true for them, why should we think it would be otherwise for us?

Can you imagine one of the disciples breaking in at this point to explain, "Uh, Lord, evangelism is not my spiritual gift"? Jesus has the answer: "Go do it anyway, for I am commanding you; and when push comes to shove, and you need to have the right words to say, I'll provide them. And when I do, then the words you hear coming out of your mouth won't be your words, but those of the Spirit of God" (vv. 19, 20).

Think about that for a few minutes! What a tremendous fear-dispeller! It's not that they didn't need to prepare. Jesus had been preparing them for some time now. They knew what the Good News of the Kingdom entailed, and what they were to say. But you can't prepare for every objection, threat, or tirade by unbelieving folks. So just keep to the main points, and God will give you the words you

need.

But being a witness for Christ is a hard road. Someone will always be looking to do you in (vv. 21-23). When you encounter such people, there's no need to keep provoking them. Just move on, looking for the next "worthy household" where people will welcome what you have to share.

Jesus promised them also that He'd be right behind them (v. 23). He would walk the same path they did. What they had seen in Him, they should follow, teach, and do (vv. 24, 25). They should strive to be like Jesus, and so should we. And if that means people will say bad things about us or threaten us or wish us ill, well, it's nothing more than what Jesus endured, and look where it got Him (Ps. 110)!

Don't be afraid, witness for Christ. Don't cover the light Jesus has lit in your soul. Let it shine! Make His Good News known! He is right behind, right there inside you, and His Word will never return to Him without accomplishing what He sends it out through you to do.

*Reflect.*

1. What are the main points of the Gospel of the Kingdom?
2. Why are Christians no more consistent than they are at making this Good News known?
3. How can believers help one another be more faithful in this calling to take the Good News to the people in their Personal Mission Field?

*He is teaching them a new sort of warfare. He sends them out exposed, with only one coat, barefoot and without a staff, without clothing or provisions. The manner of their battle array is entirely unimpressive. He calls them to allow themselves to be totally supported by the generosity of such as receive them. All this is to accentuate his unspeakable power. Then, to press this reverse strategy to its limits, he tells them to exhibit the gentleness of sheep, even though they are going out among wolves, and not simply toward the wolves but trustfully moving right into the midst of the wolves.*  
John Chrysostom (433-407), *The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 33.1*

*Lord, as I look at the day ahead, I see opportunities to go in Your Name and to...*

*Pray Psalm 22.26-28.*

Jesus suffered and prevailed; if we have to suffer for the Gospel, we will prevail as well. Praise the Lord for His presence with you as you go out into your Personal Mission Field today.

*Sing Psalm 22.26-28.*

**Psalm 22.26-28** (Darwall, [\*Rejoice, the Lord is King\*](#))

The suffering King shall eat and praise with us the Lord.

Forever we His praise repeat and trust His Word.

Praise God above, all you who keep His vows and who His mercies love!

All nations shall repent and hasten to the Lord;

All those to whom His truth is sent shall praise His Word.

The Lord is King! His sovereign rule on high now we His people sing!

## 4 Whom to Fear

*Pray Psalm 31.1-5.*

In You, O LORD, I put my trust;  
Let me never be ashamed;  
Deliver me in Your righteousness.  
Bow down Your ear to me,  
Deliver me speedily;  
Be my rock of refuge,  
A fortress of defense to save me.  
For You *are* my rock and my fortress;  
Therefore, for Your name's sake,  
Lead me and guide me.  
Pull me out of the net which they have secretly laid for me,  
For You *are* my strength.  
Into Your hand I commit my spirit;  
You have redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.

*Sing Psalm 31.1-5.*

(Brother James' Air: [\*The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll not Want\*](#))  
In You, O Lord, I refuge take; let me not come to shame!  
In righteousness deliver me, according to Your Name.  
Incline Your ear, my prayer to hear, my Fortress strong to save!

For You my Rock and Fortress are; in Your Name lead and guide.  
You rescue me from ev'ry net which wicked men might hide.  
My Refuge strong, my spirit long in Your hand shall abide.

*Read Matthew 10.1-31; meditate on verses 27-31.*

*Prepare.*

1. Why should we not be afraid of people and what they might do?
2. What are we supposed to do with what we learn from Jesus?

*Meditate.*

As followers of Christ, we are to be sponges of the goodness and truth of the Lord. But let's remember that we don't fill sponges with water merely to see them fat and full. We fill them in order to put them to work in the tight squeezes and hard places of life, using them to scrub off sin and restore things to cleanliness and beauty.

And that's what we're supposed to do with whatever we learn from Jesus (v. 27). The things we learn from the Word of God – whether in our private reading and study, or through the preaching and teaching of the Word – are intended to fill us with Jesus. But only so that, our souls having been refreshed and renewed, we might squeeze Jesus into the nooks and crannies of our Personal Mission Field, scrubbing to cleanse and renew the world in His glory.

Of course, it's true that our scrubbing and seeking to cleanse matters might rub others the wrong

way. Some folks like their souls and lives dark and sinful and self-centered. They might respond unkindly to us as we're proclaiming Jesus and working to glorify Him in all our ways. But we must not fear them, nor what they might do to us (v. 28). We should fear God – that we might not shrink from obeying Him, or soak up all His beauty, goodness, and truth merely for ourselves. God knows how to move His people off that dime, and it isn't always a pleasant experience (Heb. 12.3-11).

God Who provides for us – even down to the words we need to speak (vv. 19, 20) – will protect and keep us as we carry out our mission from Him (vv. 29-31). So let's not allow fear to afflict us with spiritual lockjaw. Whatever we're learning from Jesus, let's find some way to talk about every day. Our Christian friends will rejoice to hear about Jesus. And the unbelievers? Well, who knows what God might do in their hearts, as we squeeze His sweet grace and truth into their ears?

*Reflect.*

1. Why is the sponge a good way of thinking about our life as followers of Christ?
2. Why do believers sometimes fear people? How can fearing God overcome that fear?
3. What can you do each day to prepare to share Jesus with someone else, whether a believer or an unbeliever?

*The point is not that Jesus was literally whispering into their ears or speaking in physical darkness. Rather, he was here pressing a strong figure of speech. He was conversing with them quietly and alone in a small corner of Palestine. In contrast with this tone of voice, they would soon be preaching with a boldness of speech that would in due time be conferred upon them. The metaphor of whispering in the ear in a dark place, in this present quietness, is contrasted with what is to come. For they were soon to be commissioned to speak not to one or two or three cities but to the whole world.*  
John Chrysostom (344-407), *The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 34.2*

*Give me something to share today, Lord, and help me to...*

*Pray Psalm 31.19-24.*

Praise the Lord for His abundant goodness, and fix it in your mind to share those blessings with someone today. Praise the Lord in advance for how He will guide, keep, and use you as His witness.

*Sing Psalm 31.19-24.*

**Psalm 31.19-24** (Brother James' Air: [\*The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll not Want\*](#))

How great the goodness You reserve for those who fear You, Lord,  
Who rest in You and boldly stand before men in Your Word.  
You cover them from plots of men; You shelter them, O Lord!

Blessed be the Lord, for He has shown His steadfast love to me!  
In my alarm I cried to Him; He heard my fervent plea!  
In fear and dread with You I pled; You heard and rescued me!

O love the Lord, all you, His saints! He keeps us faithfully.  
But all who act in sinful pride His wrath shall surely see.  
Be strong and let your heart not fret; wait on Him constantly!

## 5 Cutting Edge

*Pray Psalm 149.5-9.*

Let the saints be joyful in glory;  
Let them sing aloud on their beds.  
*Let* the high praises of God *be* in their mouth,  
And a two-edged sword in their hand,  
To execute vengeance on the nations,  
And punishments on the peoples;  
To bind their kings with chains,  
And their nobles with fetters of iron;  
To execute on them the written judgment—  
This honor have all His saints.  
Praise the LORD!

*Sing Psalm 149.5-9.*

(Toulon: [\*I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art\*](#))

Sing to the Lord, exult with great delight!  
Sing on your beds with joy to God by night!  
Sing praise and take His Word into your hand.  
Publish His grace and wrath in every land!

*Read Matthew 10.1-37; meditate on verse 32-37.*

*Prepare.*

1. What did Jesus come to bring to earth? What does that mean?
2. Where are Jesus' followers supposed to confess Him?

*Meditate.*

Confess Jesus; deny Him. We face this choice every day. If we fear God, we will confess Jesus, come what may. If we fear people, and what they might think or do, we will deny the Lord in our words and actions. We should not want to provoke the consequences of such denying (v. 33). To confess Jesus is to agree with Him concerning Who He is, what He has accomplished, what He demands, and what He promises. Confessing is an act of the tongue, but it must be backed up by a life for which that confession is the explanation (1 Pet. 3.15).

In fact, Christ, Who is the Prince of peace, did come to bring peace, but not as the first fruit of His effort. Peace is the condition of the Kingdom which exists where righteousness obtains, and righteousness is established by the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Jesus came to bring that Sword (v. 34), and it often has dividing effects. But the way to true and lasting peace is by the Sword of Jesus. The Sword of the Spirit is the cutting edge of the Kingdom and its coming on earth as in heaven.

We are to seek the Kingdom and righteousness of God, and peace, joy, and all things else will come with that. Men seek peace through compromise. Jesus establishes peace not through compromise, but by truth. Truth offends many, and makes a clear cut between those who submit to truth and those who insist they are truth in themselves (cf. Ps. 12.1-4). Jesus rides out with His Sword each day for the cause of truth, meekness, and righteousness (Ps. 45.3-5; Rev. 6.1, 2). Those who receive that

truth, submitting to it and wielding it with King Jesus, make divisions and enemies; yet they know peace and joy in the rule of their King.

If we love Jesus, we will take the Sword of truth in hand for all our relationships, roles, and responsibilities. If we love anything or anyone more than we love Jesus, we'll keep the Sword of the Spirit in its sheath, not wanting to offend anyone or make them feel uncomfortable. Here's a test for how much we love Jesus: How ready and consistent are we at wielding the Sword of the Spirit at every opportunity?

*Reflect.*

1. What does it mean to "wield the Sword of the Spirit"?
2. If someone asked you to confess Jesus, what would you say?
3. How can we know if we love Jesus as He expects?

*This is peace: when the cancer is cut away. Only with such radical surgery is it possible for heaven to be reunited to earth. Only in this way does the physician preserve the healthy tissue of the body. The incurable part must be amputated. Only in this way does the military commander preserve the peace: by cutting off those in rebellion.* John Chrysostom (344-407), *The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 35.1*

*Lord, today I take Your Sword in hand to...*

*Pray Psalm 149.1-4.*

Praise the Lord for making you, saving you, teaching you to know and praise Him, and sending you to beautify the world with His salvation.

*Sing Psalm 149.1-4.*

**Psalm 149.1-4** (Toulon: [\*I Greet Thee, Who My Sure Redeemer Art\*](#))

Sing to the Lord a glorious song and new!  
Praise Him you people, to Whom praise is due!  
Let us rejoice, let us be glad in Him  
Who has created us and cleansed our sin.

Praise Him with dance, with tambourine and lyre!  
To be so praised is God's one great desire.  
Lord, beautify Your holy ones with grace;  
show us the mercy of Your saving face.

## 6 All for Jesus

*Pray Psalm 84.8-12.*

O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer;  
Give ear, O God of Jacob! *Selah*  
O God, behold our shield,  
And look upon the face of Your anointed.  
For a day in Your courts *is* better than a thousand.  
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God  
Than dwell in the tents of wickedness.  
For the LORD God *is* a sun and shield;  
The LORD will give grace and glory;  
No good *thing* will He withhold  
From those who walk uprightly.  
O LORD of hosts,  
Blessed is the man who trusts in You!

*Sing Psalm 84.8-12.*

(Holy Manna: [\*Brethren, We Have Met to Worship\*](#))

Lord of hosts, my prayer receiving, hear me, help me by Your grace!  
In Your courts I stand believing; turn to me Your glorious face!  
Lord, our sun, our shield, our glory, no good thing will You deny  
to those who proclaim Your story, and who on Your grace rely.

*Read Matthew 10.1-42; meditate on verses 38-42.*

*Prepare.*

1. How is it possible to be “worthy” of Jesus?
2. Who are the “little ones” Jesus mentioned?

*Meditate.*

These are Jesus’ last words to His disciples before they depart for their mission. They are both sobering and encouraging.

Everyone in Jesus’ day would have understood His allusion to the “cross”. They knew what crucifixion was, and what it entailed. Jesus equated His disciples’ mission with His own (see on, vv. 40, 41). Even though they did not fully understand this reference to the cross, Jesus did; and they would no doubt get the point once He had completed His work.

The cross was the assigned means whereby God brought redemption to the world. Jesus’ death on the cross was the death of death and sin, and the portal to resurrection and eternal life. The disciples’ calling and mission would resemble this – sacrifice for the sake of redemption.

Each of us has a “cross” – a calling that requires death to self and entails bringing the redemption of Jesus to the world. They are worthy of Jesus who embrace their calling and pursue it diligently. We must “take” or “receive” our calling, and, emptying ourselves of all self-interest, let Jesus fill our calling with Himself. This is where we find the full and abundant life Jesus came to bring (v. 39).

See how closely Jesus identifies Himself with those who embrace His calling (v. 40). He is with us. He works through us, and He speaks through us, just as He had told His disciples. Those who receive and hear us, receive and hear Jesus. They shall have the “prophet’s reward” and the “righteous man’s reward” – the blessings that come from hearing the Word of God (vv. 41, 42). Jesus would make sure that His “little ones” would have all the provision and refreshment they would need for their mission (v. 42). Even as He spoke, we can imagine, He was preparing people to receive the disciples into their homes, provide meals and other refreshment for them, and thus enable them to carry out their calling. And those who provided and cared for them would receive the reward of peace that comes to those who receive the Word of God.

*Reflect.*

1. Why is the cross an appropriate way of thinking about your calling from the Lord?
2. How do our individual callings work to bring redeeming grace to the world?
3. What can we expect from Jesus as we give our all to Him?

*We are unworthy of Christ if we do not take up our own cross, by which we suffer, die and are buried and resurrected together with him. Only by this pledge of faith in the Spirit will he triumph in new life in us.* Hilary of Poitiers (315-367), *On Matthew 10.25-26*

*Thank You for calling me as Your disciple, Lord. Strengthen me for the work today, as I...*

*Pray Psalm 84.1-7.*

Offer yourself to Jesus, as a living sacrifice for His Kingdom and glory. Then pray for the opportunities you will have today to serve and bear witness.

*Sing Psalm 84.1-7.*

**Psalm 84.1-7** (Holy Manna: [\*Brethren, We Have Met to Worship\*](#))

Lord of hosts, how sweet Your dwelling; how my soul longs for Your courts!

Let my soul with joy keep telling of Your grace forever more.

Like a bird upon the altar, let my life to You belong.

Blessed are they who never falter as they praise Your grace with song!

Blessed are they whose strength is founded in Your strength, O Lord above.

All whose hearts in You are grounded journey in Your strength and love.

Though they weep with tears of sadness, grace shall all their way sustain.

In Your presence, filled with gladness, they shall conquer all their pain.

## 7 Sent

*Pray Psalm 145.1-3.*

I will extol You, my God, O King;  
And I will bless Your name forever and ever.  
Every day I will bless You,  
And I will praise Your name forever and ever.  
Great *is* the LORD, and greatly to be praised;  
And His greatness is unsearchable.

*Sing Psalm 145.1-3.*

(Brother James' Air: [\*The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want\*](#))

I will extol You, God, my King, and ever praise Your Name!  
I bless You, Lord, for everything each day, and e'er the same!  
Great are You, Lord, my praise I bring; unsearchable Your fame!

*Read and meditate on Matthew 10.1-42.*

*Prepare.*

1. What did Jesus send His disciples to do?
2. How did He assure them of His presence and provision?

*Meditate.*

Jesus sent His disciples out to do something they had never done before. These were common men, not trained missionaries. But Jesus had come to bring near the Kingdom of God, and those who followed Him into it needed to understand that their lives would never be the same. As He had been sent to the world, so He sent them, and sends us (Jn. 20.21).

Jesus told them to expect difficulty and opposition. They would be rejected by some, challenged by others, confronted with daunting situations, and dependent on the kindness of others. They were to proclaim the Kingdom and demonstrate its reality by all manner of good works. The same is true for us.

The disciples accepted this mission because they had left all to follow Jesus. Each of us has a mission, a calling, a cross to bear. We need to receive that calling daily and live for the Kingdom of God. Following Jesus is not some niche or sideline to life. It *is* life. If we want the full, abundant, righteous, mercy-filled, and joyous life that Jesus provides in His Kingdom, then we must die to this life and our selfish interests, and go like Jesus, as salt, light, and leaven to the world.

The Kingdom of God comes by prayer and doing. We can't wish it into being, and we mustn't wait for someone else to bring it near for us. We must "endure to the end" (v. 22) in our calling, looking to Jesus and following the example of His words and works. The world won't always like us; but the Lord is with us to provide, protect, and bless. Every day offers many next step opportunities for taking up our cross and following Jesus. What next steps are before you today?

*Reflect.*

1. How would you explain what it means to follow Jesus?

2. How does this first mission teach you to think about your own calling in the Kingdom of God?
3. What does it mean for you to lose your life for Jesus?

*Why should you be willing to give up your life? Only because you love it inordinately. So for the very reason of loving it inordinately, you will scorn loving it inordinately, and so it will be to your advantage to the highest degree. You will then in the truest sense love your life.* John Chrysostom (344-407), *The Gospel of Matthew, Homily 35.2*

*Help me to live for You and Your Kingdom today, O Lord, as I...*

*Pray Psalm 145.10-21.*

We have been sent by the Lord as agents of His redeeming grace. Commit this day to following Jesus, taking up your calling, living out His love, and declaring His works to the people you see.

*Sing Psalm 145.10-21.*

**Psalm 145.10-21** (Brother James' Air: [\*The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not Want\*](#))

Your works shall thank You; all Your saints shall bless and praise You, Lord.

Your reign we bless without restraint; Your power fills our words.

Our children we shall educate in all Your splendor, Lord.

Your Kingdom evermore shall be; You reign forever, Lord!

Your works You do so faithfully, according to Your Word.

The falling You uphold and the oppressed You rescue, Lord!

The eyes of all look up to You to meet our needs each day.

Open Your hand, provide the food we need, O Lord, we pray!

Kindness and righteousness You do, O Lord, in every way!

Be near to all who call on You; all those who fear You, bless.

Preserve all those whose love is true; save us in our distress.

Our mouths will speak with praise of You; Your holy Name we'll bless!

*Questions for Reflection or Discussion*

1. In what ways was the disciples' mission like Jesus' own mission?
2. What does it mean to take up your cross?
3. What can we learn about our own mission from this chapter?
4. How can we expect Jesus to be with us and to provide for and protect us on our mission?
5. What's the most important lesson you've learned from Matthew 10.1-42? How are you putting that lesson to work in your Personal Mission Field?

*For prayer:*

## The Fellowship of Ailbe

The Fellowship of Ailbe is a spiritual fellowship in the Celtic Christian tradition. Our goal is to promote revival, renewal, and awakening, following the teaching of Scripture and the example and heritage of our forebears in the faith.

The Fellowship of Ailbe offers many opportunities for training, prayer, personal growth, and ministry. Visit our website at [www.ailbe.org](http://www.ailbe.org) to learn more.

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Thank you.