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## Matthew 9:35–10:42—Commentary Notes\*

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### A. Introduction

The Lord Jesus had two main focuses in His earthly ministry. The first was to accomplish salvation on the cross, and the second was to train up the disciples. The Lord knew that the time for Him to depart would come when He finished His redemptive work on earth. Hence, He must train the disciples before He finished that work. Otherwise, the world would not know or have the chance to understand and accept the wonderful grace of salvation. Thus, we see the importance of the task of equipping the disciples.<sup>1</sup> Matthew 10 records the beginning of the Lord's training. He prepared them with clear instructions, reminders, and exhortation. By doing so, He shows us that while the proclamation of the message of the gospel of the kingdom is important, the raising up (or cultivation of) those who will be messengers for this message takes precedence.<sup>2</sup>

### B. Outline

- I. 9:35–10:4            Jesus called the twelve disciples.
- II. 10:5–15            Jesus bestowed authority and gave instructions to the disciples.
- III. 10:16–42        Jesus exhorted the disciples concerning coming persecution and the cost of their apostleship.

### C. Content

#### I. 9:35–10:4        **Jesus called the twelve disciples.**

Knowing the need of the vast field for the gospel, the Lord Jesus called twelve disciples (apostles) to the work of the harvest.

9:35 — “Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness.” This verse is the concluding statement for the Lord Jesus's ministry of proclaiming the truth and performing miracles that is recorded in chs. 5–9. It resembles 4:23, which marked the beginning of His earthly ministry. The Lord Jesus's work took Him “through all the towns and villages.” His tirelessly ministered with passion and enthusiasm and left his footprints in crowded cities as well as deserted backcountry.<sup>3</sup> Even when faced with opposition from the Pharisees, the Lord continued His work and preached the gospel of the kingdom of heaven.

9:36–38 — The need for workers. “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” The word “compassion” appears many times in the Synoptic Gospels (i.e., Matthew, Mark, and Luke).<sup>4</sup> It emphasizes the depth of the Lord Jesus's loving-kindness and

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\* Translator Note: These Commentary Notes were originally compiled in Chinese and translated into English for use by CCF International's English classes. All sources listed in the table (only listed in English when applicable) at the end of these notes were used and consulted in the original Chinese compilation. Please refer to the table for the references of each numbered annotation. For more information on the sources consulted, please contact CCF International. All biblical references are taken from The Holy Bible, New International Version® NIV® Copyright © 2011 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

mercy. It was this compassion that compelled Him to come down from heaven to earth to die for the sins of the world on the cross.

The Lord Jesus had deep compassion toward the many who came to hear His teachings and experience His healing. They were helpless in their sufferings and without a shepherd to guide and protect them. All they had were false leaders (the teachers of the law and the Pharisees), who led them away from the true and great Shepherd—Jesus. The Lord, therefore, pointed out the field dressed in white (i.e., ripened) to the disciples. There was no one to harvest the ripened crop. He asked them to pray to the Lord of the harvest, who is the Father, to send them and other workers to His field, for it was ready. The kingdom of heaven had come near (Matt 4:17) and a sufficient number of workers was needed to harvest it.

Why did the Lord Jesus ask His disciples to pray for the Lord of the harvest to send workers? Why could they not just proceed with the work themselves? It is because the work of God requires the commissioning of God. It is not a task that man should dive into with only human zeal. For unless the Lord sends, man lacks both the power and authority to do the work of harvesting. God is the one who prepares the heart. It is He who plants the truth in the heart of man and He who also brings forth a harvest (1 Cor 3:6–7; 2 Cor 9:10). What is more, harvesting a spiritual crop will inevitably result in many challenges for the workers. They will pay a personal price. Therefore, only those who are sent by God will be able to bear the work of harvesting.<sup>5</sup> Works such as planning many “activities” based only on human zeal without first hearing from God will result in work of straw and hay that cannot withstand the test of fire (1 Cor 3:10–15).

From these words of the Lord in vs. 38, we learn that a good worker must be sent by God Himself, and any such worker is the result of the prayers of the saints. The lack of workers today is often the result of the weakness of the church and the indifference in the hearts of believers. On the contrary, in ages past and present, whenever the church is strong, believers grow fervent and focus on prayer, and God’s workers multiply in number as a result.<sup>6</sup>

Are you willing to start praying Matthew 9:38 today for yourself? “Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” Are you willing to answer the Lord if and when He calls you?

10:1–4 — Selecting the twelve coworkers. The Lord chose and trained the twelve disciples and commissioned them with the greatest task in human history. They were all “unschooled, ordinary men” (Acts 4:13), yet they met the Lord’s expectation by accomplishing the mission that He entrusted to them! To this day, we are still blessed by the fruit of their labor.<sup>7</sup> Luke 6:12 tells us that the Lord spent an entire night praying before choosing the twelve disciples. If even Jesus, who knew the Father, prayed in such way, how much more should we! We should not partner with anyone in ministry or follow any Christian leader before bringing the matter to the Lord in prayer. We should also not casually extend invitations for others to pilot a ministry with us without first praying about it (Jer 23:21–22).

10:1 — The preparation. How did the Lord Jesus prepare His disciples to become “qualified” fishers of men? (1) By spending time with Him (Mark 3:13–14; John 12:26). The best preparation for the work of God is to first spend time with God, to get to know Him, and to develop a deep and intimate relationship with Him. A life of prayer and reflection on God’s Word is also an important qualification for God’s workers. Such vibrant and deep fellowship with the Lord should be maintained without interruption or ceasing. (2) By teaching them. The Lord Jesus taught them God’s Word and revealed the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven to them so that they would understand and receive (retain) God’s Word and teach it to others. Therefore, we can be effective in ministry only when we are first equipped with solid training ourselves.<sup>8</sup>

Before He sent them out, the Lord Jesus gave the disciples the power to preach His message. He

gave them the authority to overcome all kinds of unclean spirits and sicknesses in His name. The very purpose of the gospel is to defeat the devil, the enemy of God, and to heal this dark world and turn man to the true God.

10:2–4 — The Twelve Apostles. These twelve disciples of Jesus were men of ordinary wealth, status, and intellect, yet they were chosen by the Lord to bear much fruit for Him (John 15:16). What Jesus saw in them was not who they were at that moment but their soon-to-be transformed lives through Him. Therefore, we never need to be concerned with the little we have to offer to the Lord because Christ Himself can use the most ordinary of peoples to accomplish His greatest tasks.<sup>9</sup> “Apostle” in Greek means “one who is sent off.” It usually refers to one who is commissioned by a king and given the necessary authority to carry out his task. Generally speaking, apostles refers to two groups: (1) one that broadly includes Barnabas and Paul, who never physically followed Jesus but were counted as apostles (Acts 13:2–3; 14:4, 14), and (2) limited to just the original twelve disciples plus Matthias (Acts 1:26).<sup>10</sup> The New Testament lists the names of the twelve apostles a total of four times (Mark 3:16–19; Luke 6:13–16; Acts 1:13), which signifies that they were chosen and ordained by the Lord and set apart from the rest of the disciples to be apostles. They were given an exclusive mission and special authority. Their unique qualifications and proofs of apostleship are:

- 1) They saw the Lord with their own eyes (1 Cor 9:1; 15:7–8). They were witnesses of the Lord’s resurrection.
- 2) They possessed spiritual authority (10:1), including punishing evildoers (Acts 5:1–11; 13:6–12).
- 3) Their teachings were adopted by the church as the creed for our faith (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor 11:2; Gal 1:9; 2 Tim 1:13–14; 2 Pet 3:2).
- 4) They bore unique and visible fruit, such as opening doors to the gospel and planting churches (1 Cor 9:1–2).
- 5) They experienced unique suffering for the Lord (2 Cor 11:23–33; 12:12).

Today, we no longer have the narrow-sense of the office of apostleship, but we do however, have its broader function, as represented by those who are missionaries and every faithful minister and preacher of the Lord whom He has sent (2 Cor 5:20). Even though these people do not have the title of an apostle, they have comparable gifts as seen in church planters (Eph 4:11).

The Twelve (Apostles) can be placed into three categories.

Group One:

- 1) Peter (Simon, Cephas): “Rock.” His name is always the first mentioned in the New Testament’s list of apostles (Mark 3:16–19; Luke 6:13–16; Acts 1:13). Peter often showed himself to be the leader of his peers and spoke on their behalf (Matt 16:15–16; 17:4), but this does not mean that he was superior or more capable than others.
- 2) Andrew (brother of Peter, John 1:40): “Manly,” “strong,” “victorious,” and “courageous.” He was most effective at personal evangelism (John 1:40–42; 6:8–9; 12:20–22).
- 3) James (son of Zebedee): “Usurper.” He possessed an intense temperament, and the Lord gave him and his brother, John, the name “Boanerges,” which means “sons of thunder.” He was the first among the apostles to be martyred (Acts 12:1).
- 4) John (the younger son of Zebedee): “God is gracious” or “Yahweh is gracious.” He also had a strong temperament, but he was very close to the Lord. He was quiet and more cautious than the other disciples. He was *the disciple whom Jesus loved* (John 13:23; 21:7).

The above group of four consist of two pairs of brothers who were all fishermen by trade. Among the twelve disciples, Peter, James, and John were the closest with the Lord (Matt 17:1; 26:37; Mark 5:37).

## Group Two:

- 5) Philip: He had a conversation with Jesus concerning the feeding of the five thousand as recorded in the Gospel of John (John 6:5–7). He also introduced Gentile Greeks to Jesus (John 12:21–22) and once asked Jesus to show him the Father (John 14:8–9).
- 6) Bartholomew: He was possibly the Nathaniel in John's Gospel whose name means "gift of God" or "God has given" (John 1:45–49). He was very straightforward.
- 7) Thomas (Didymus): "Twin." He was suspicious by nature and doubted the resurrection of Jesus (John 20:24–27).
- 8) Matthew (son of Alphaeus, Mark 2:14): "Gift of God" or "gift of Yahweh." He was formerly named "Levi" and was a tax collector before being called by the Lord (Matt 9:9–10)—a "traitor" in the eyes of the Jewish community for oppressing his own people on behalf of Rome. Only in the Gospel of Matthew is he referred to (by himself) as "Matthew the tax collector," in remembrance of the grace of the Lord's calling despite his background.

## Group Three:

- 9) James (son of Alphaeus): Possibly the brother of Matthew.
- 10) Thaddaeus: Also referred to Judas, the brother of James (Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13).
- 11) Simon the Zealot: A revolutionist and a member of the Zealots, who fiercely opposed the Roman government (hence the name, Simon the Zealot). He came from Cana in Galilee where Jesus performed the miracle of turning water into wine.
- 12) Judas (Iscaiot): "Praise" or "the praised one." He loved money and perhaps never truly believed in the Lord (Matt 26:14–16; John 6:64; 12:4–6; Acts 1:18). He later betrayed Jesus and then committed suicide (Matt 27:1–4; Acts 1:16–20). He was the only one among the apostles who came from Judah; the rest were all Galileans.<sup>12</sup> His apostleship was later replaced by Matthias (Acts 1:26).

When we look closely, we see that the apostles were diverse. They represented different personality types, unique characteristics, and varying occupations. This demonstrates that Jesus worked with men of different social strata and backgrounds. Furthermore, the fact that Jesus chose twelve apostles is probably connected to the twelve tribes of Israel. The twelve tribes were the twelve pillars of the Old Testament, and the twelve apostles are the foundation of the church in the New Testament. The number twelve is also used in the book of Revelation to represent the glorious new Jerusalem, in which every number is a multiple of twelve (Rev 4:4; 21:12,14).

## II. 10:5–15                      Jesus bestowed authority and gave instructions to the disciples.

This passage records Jesus's instructions to the twelve disciples when he sent them and is specific for the Jews at that time. However, the underlying principles still apply to the church today.

10:5–6 — The scope of their work. At that time, the Lord instructed the apostles to share the gospel with only the Jews. The Gentiles and Samaritans were excluded. Most of Jesus's miracles during His early ministry were also only performed among the Jews. The apostles went into their synagogues, and the good news of the gospel was therefore first given to the Jews, just as Scripture records: "first to the Jew, then to the Gentile" (Matt 8:11; 21:43; Acts 13:46; 18:6; Rom 1:16b). The apostles later redirected the message of the gospel to the Gentiles after the Jews rejected it. The Jews were God's chosen people. Therefore, they were given the privilege of hearing the gospel first. But most importantly, the timing of the gospel for the Gentiles had not yet come. The apostles were not ready to proclaim the good news to the Gentiles because they did not yet understand that Christ was the Messiah of the Jews and also the Savior of the Gentiles (Gen 12:3; Acts 10:15, 34). It was not until they witnessed the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus and experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost that they began to understand the words of the prophets concerning salvation to the Gentile nations. To conclude, the apostles were not ready

at that time to minister among the Gentiles. Therefore, the Lord instructed them to preach only to the Jews.

10:7–8 — Their tasks. The apostles were assigned the tasks of preaching the message of the kingdom of heaven and proving their message by performing miracles (such as healing the sick and casting out demons). They proclaimed the same message as John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus did in His early ministry. “The kingdom of heaven has come near (Matt 3:2; Mark 1:14–15).” The term “kingdom of heaven” in their message is the same as the “kingdom of God” in Luke’s Gospel (Luke 9:2). The difference occurs because Matthew wrote his Gospel account for the Jews, who did not speak the name of God out of reverence for Him. Luke wrote to a Gentile audience and therefore had no such concern and restriction. The message of the kingdom at that time meant that the Messiah was to establish His kingdom and call His people to return and to repent (Mark 6:12). Today, the message of the heavenly kingdom is broader. It means that whoever receives (or believes) Christ to be his Savior receives the Holy Spirit (the indwelling of the Spirit) and becomes a part of the body of Christ (the church) and a citizen of the kingdom of heaven, all the while awaiting the return of the Lord (Matt 24:30; 26:64). To proclaim this message “as you go” meant to utilize every opportunity to share the Word, just as Paul described: “Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season” (2 Tim 4:2).<sup>13</sup>

10:8b–13 — The Lord Jesus instructed His apostles on their attitude and method of preaching.

1. 10:8b — Do not ask anything in return. “Freely you have received; freely give.” This reminded the apostles that their gift of healing came freely from God. Therefore, they must not use it for personal gain but “freely give” it. All the grace that Christ has given to us is “free.” Therefore, He wants us to “freely” help others without asking for anything in return. In doing so, those receiving the favor will know that God’s good news is a gift of grace. It is all His doing. No one is able to earn it as a wage for his effort. In addition, God desires us to know that He amply supplies those who work for Him. This is the focus of the verse that follows.
2. 10:9–10 — Rely on the Lord for provisions. “Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts—no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep.” This meant that the twelve apostles did not need to worry about the needs of their journey. They only needed to focus on preaching in faith, while trusting God to provide for all their needs. The Lord’s workers must learn to live such life of faith in which they come to experience God’s presence and provision so that their work and life become a beautiful testimony.
3. 10:11 — Be careful about where to stay. “Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave.” As it turns out, The Lord would provide for the needs of the apostles through those who received them into their homes. The Lord instructed them to choose to stay with a “worthy person,” those that feared God and responded to the message of the apostles.
4. 10:12–15 — The fruit of their service: received or rejected. The Lord instructed the disciples to greet a family with peace whenever they entered a home to share the gospel with them. God knows the heart. He knows who is worthy of the blessing of peace that is of the kingdom of heaven. If the apostles were rejected in doing the work of the Lord, He instructed them to “shake the dust off their feet” as they leave the town. This meant to regard the town as an unclean land of the Gentiles. At that time, to receive meant to identify with the Word of God. Therefore, to reject meant not accepting the message of the Lord. The Lord said that those towns who rejected the apostles would bear a more severe judgment than that of the two utterly evil cities of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:24–25).<sup>14</sup>

“The worker is worth his keep” (10:10). We need to learn to care for our pastors, ministers, missionaries, Sunday school teachers, and those who serve God by serving us (1 Cor 9:9–10; 1 Tim 5:17). Is God reminding you of particular action(s) you ought to take?

After the Lord Jesus sent out the apostles, He Himself “went on from there to teach and preach in the towns of Galilee” (Matt 11:1). Mark records that Jesus sent them out two by two (Mark 6:7), which we also see in 10:2–4. The names of the apostles were listed two by two. We can also learn a spiritual lesson from this. When two work in one accord and support each other, both will share the fruit of their labor (Eccl 4:9–12). Today, God’s commission for us is to preach to “all nations” (Matt 28:19–20) rather than to the Jews alone. The gospel of grace we preach (Acts 20:24) is that Christ suffered for our sins, died, and was resurrected. Those who believe in Christ Jesus will be saved.<sup>15</sup>

### **III. 10:16–42            Jesus exhorted the disciples concerning coming persecution and the cost of their apostleship.**

The Lord Jesus began to speak on the matter of persecution. He did not describe what the disciples would face while He was still on earth but rather the persecution that they will experience when they witness to the Gentiles (10:18). Furthermore, we understand from 10:22 that this will be a global persecution. However, the scope of the apostles’ work at that time was limited only to the Jews living in the Palestine area. This passage seems to point to the time between the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost and the second coming of the Lord. It is during this period when the disciples will be persecuted for the Lord’s sake, even unto martyrdom. The Lord warned them ahead of time as well as exhorted those who will later become His witnesses.<sup>16</sup>

10:16–39 – The hardship in missions. This passage deals with the difficulties and hardships in mission work and how we should face it. This is a practical help to every worker of the Lord throughout all generations. Below is a list of the hardships the Lord warned about, how His disciples should face them, and the Lord’s comfort to them.<sup>17</sup>

1. Hardship and persecution come from those who reject the Lord (10:16–23). The Lord sent His disciples into the world to preach the truth like sheep among wolves because the world rejects the truth (John 15:18–20). The Lord warned His disciples of potential danger and hardships and instructed them to endure it all as they continue to preach the Word and do the work of the Lord in the midst of challenges. Who are the wolves? It is those who persecute, harm, and even kill the Lord’s disciples. They could be (1) “religious leaders,” who enjoy the title only but bear no real spiritual fruit (10:17), (2) members of a believer’s household (10:21)—betrayal by family because of one’s religious beliefs occurs throughout the ages and will continue to occur until the Lord comes,<sup>18</sup> or (3) anyone who opposes God—for “you will be hated by everyone because of me” (10:22). Such opposition and suffering come because one openly confesses the Lord. These persecutions result because we witness the Lord with our lives, proclaim His name, and lead others to Christ. Paul said: “everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (2 Tim 3:12), “but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved” (10:22b). He exhorted believers to stand firm and endure to the end when faced with hatred and persecution because this is the best proof of the truthfulness of their faith. What is more, God will surely deliver us. Matthew 24:13 exhorts us similarly. However, man’s endurance is not the means to salvation because salvation is by God’s grace alone.<sup>19</sup>

The Lord also mentioned swords and disputes which also represent persecution and trials that the disciples will face (10:34). The root cause is not the gospel itself but the hearts that reject the gospel. The Lord Jesus told us very clearly that in Him, we will have peace even though we will have troubles in the world. The world and its prince, Satan, are enemies of God and of those who belong to Him. Light and darkness, righteousness and unrighteousness, belief and unbelief are never compatible. Therefore, such opposites will naturally give rise to conflict and wars.

2. Hardship that comes from family members or self (10:35–39). “Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me” (10:37). Note that this verse follows the thought that precedes. What is a believer to do when he encounters persecution in the home? Will you choose to continue believing or walk away from your faith? Jesus quoted Micah 7:5–6. “[A] man’s enemies will be the members of his own household” (10:36). He warns us that when the kingdom of God comes, believers and non-believers will become enemies. Those who are closest most often become our greatest obstacle in following the Lord if they do not yet believe or have not committed themselves to God. This is one price that a disciple of Jesus will need to pay. Unless the Lord is first in our lives and unless we love Him more than we love our families, we will not choose to continue to follow Him (10:37). Those who do not take up their cross to follow the Lord are not be worthy of being His disciples (10:38). “To take up [our] cross” means to accept any difficulty and persecution that comes our way because we confess the Lord and serve Him. It does not refer to trials or sufferings in general. Everyone who follows the Lord has their cross. We cannot refuse it simply because we are unwilling to leave our comfort zone or because we are afraid. The Lord promises to lead us through sufferings with Him by our side. He promises that we will receive the life that God has intended to mold us into, and finally, we will enjoy future glory with Christ (Matt 10:39; Rom 8:17).

Commitment to Christ might result in conflict and estrangement with our friends and loved ones. Jesus did not encourage us to rebel against our parents or to start a dispute at home. However, our values, morals, purpose, and choices will naturally differ from those of the world and naturally and inevitably be incompatible. Do not neglect your family members but remember that your commitment to God is even more important. He should be first in your life.<sup>21</sup> Let us ask the Lord to give us wisdom to know how we should be with our friends and families. Suffering for the Lord is temporal. Be willing to endure for the Lord and to witness well for Him in order to win the souls of our relatives for the Lord.

The Lord Jesus not only foretold the hardships His disciples will encounter, He also comforted and instructed them in how to face those challenges.

1. Be shrewd and gentle. He asked that we lean on Him closely as we labor for Him so that we may be as wise (sharp) as snakes when dealing with the evil of man—knowing when and how to keep ourselves from harm’s way and learning to hide in the cleft of the rock and adapt rather than directly confronting opposition. The Lord Jesus Himself gave us an example of such wisdom (Matt 22:17–19; John 8:6–7), but Christians often do not heed His instruction. Also, the Lord taught to be as innocent as doves who will not harm others or provoke them. Scripture describes how the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus like a dove. Likewise, we are to be as gentle as doves. Instead of struggling with others, we ought to treat them with love. This is the shrewdness and gentleness that our Lord requires as we face danger and hardship.
2. Do not be afraid. The Lord promised that He will be with those who serve Him. When being tried by a council, His Spirit will teach us what to say (note that this does not mean we do not prepare ahead of time, 10:19–20). When persecution and danger come, the workers of the Lord should seek an escape to protect ourselves from harm. God will also open a way of escape for us (10:23). This does not mean running away from our duties but from dangers. And as opportunities present themselves again, we return and “battle” again (for the gospel). When falsely accused by others, God will eventually vindicate us (10:25). “Beelzebul” means “the Lord of the Flies” and is another name for Satan. If a man should slander our Lord with such a foul name, how much more then will they do so to His servants. On the Day of Judgment, the righteousness of God will bring to light everything hidden (1 Cor 4:5). Therefore, do not be afraid to proclaim the words the Lord has for people (10:26). Even when threatened with our very life, know that the Lord permits such trials. Disciples who fear God should not be afraid of their

enemies. They can only kill the body and not the soul (10:28).<sup>19</sup> The Lord encouraged His disciples in 10:27, “What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs.” This means that the disciples of the Lord ought to courageously declare the message they received from the Lord to the world despite great danger and hardship because God cares for us and knows our circumstances. He treasures us so much that even our hairs have been numbered (10:29–31). Therefore, we do not need to be afraid of man but rather confess the Lord’s name before others lest He also disowns us on that day (10:32–33).

10:40–42 — The honor of God’s workers. Those who labor for the Lord are greatly honored. This can be seen through how God rewards those who are hospitable to His workers.

10:40 — Hospitality to the servants of God is hospitality to God. “Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.” The Lord esteems and identifies with those whom He sends. Therefore, whatever is done to a worker of God is done to the Lord, even to the Father as well. They will be rewarded and praised by the Lord.

10:41 — Receiving like rewards with the servants of God. “Whoever welcomes a prophet as a prophet will receive a prophet’s reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person as a righteous person will receive a righteous person’s reward.” In this verse, the apostles are referred to as prophets because they proclaim the message of God. Those who welcome them as prophets are in fact welcoming the Lord Jesus (Matt 25:37), and they will receive a prophet’s reward.

10:42 — A small act of kindness will receive a great reward. “And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.” How insignificant is a cup of cold water! One of the “little ones” may be disciples who appear to be poor and lowly, but who are beloved of God. In God’s eyes, because this cup of cold water was offered to this “little one” in love, it becomes great in value and carries eternal significance. It will be remembered forever! Therefore, the issue is not how much we have done, but if we did it in love for the Lord. If one who loves a worker of God is so highly esteemed by the Lord, how much more are the workers who labor for God?<sup>20</sup>

## **D. Conclusion**

In this lesson, we saw how Jesus chose His workers to become His right-hand men, His helpers on earth who will continue His work after His ascension.<sup>22</sup> The Lord asked His disciples to take up their cross and pay the price to follow Him without being afraid of hardship and persecution. We have the hope of eternal life. Therefore, we do not need to fear those who can only kill the body and not the soul. The trumpet of the Lord has sounded, and He is calling. Are you ready to be sent anytime the Lord calls you?

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#20. 聖經全書註釋	瑞福	20:#2.p16,40
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#22. 聖經串珠註釋	福音證主	22:#2.p264–265 23:#3.p390