

Cup of Cold Water and Person of Peace in Context: A Missionary Commentary on Matthew 10: Ministering in Dangerous Places in the Power of the Holy Spirit

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Introduction

Much has been written concerning “*anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones*” (Matthew 10:42) (all references from NIV). Reading Matthew 10 in context produces a rich understanding of these words not consistent with typical popular interpretation.

The verses speaking of a “cup of cold water” are often used to support humanitarian ministries with evangelistic focus. This excerpts from a missionary newsletter illustrate the point: “If anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones...he will certainly not lose his reward.” - Matthew 10:42...Sow a financial seed to continue sharing the love of Jesus with the least and the lost in the nations of the world today!”¹ It is interesting that the part of the verse that is deleted is “because he is my disciple, I tell you the truth” and instead there is an emphasis on giving to the lost. Both verses given in the Bible containing this expression of a “cup of cold water” (Matt 10:42 and Mark 9:41) are speaking of giving water to followers of Christ, not the lost. In fact, in both references Jesus was stating that if someone gives you, the disciple taking the gospel out, a cup of cold water he will not lose his reward. Often today we reverse the authorial intent. We teach that the minister gives a cup of cold water to the lost. Rather Jesus said that if a non-believer gives a cup of cold water to the missionary, they will be rewarded.

Reading Matthew 10 in context will bring the proper focus of the cup of cold water particularly as it relates to the person of peace.

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Call and Authority

Matthew 10:1 *Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.*

There is a three-component pattern in Jesus' call to disciples: (1) to be with him, (2) to receive authority and power, and (3) to proclamation of the good news. We see this when Jesus called the twelve disciples (Mark 3:14-15), when he sent out the twelve (Matthew 10:1, 7; Luke 9:1-2), and when he sent out the seventy or seventy-two disciples (Luke 10). Each time he called individuals to be with him, then he gave them authority, and he sent them out to preach.

The authority came from the Father, through Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, to the disciples. That same Spirit that filled the disciples is poured out on his followers today (Acts 2:39). Those going to dangerous places have access to the same authority, power, and message to transform lives.

The Twelve named

2. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Zealot and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

Jesus called ordinary men who would accomplish supernatural things through the Spirit.

The Twelve sent out

5 These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: "Do not go among the Gentiles or enter any town of the Samaritans. 6 Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel.

Observe Jesus' use of the words go, no, and enter here: "go nowhere...enter no town...but go rather to...and preach as you go" (vss. 5, 6 and 7). Jesus was specific concerning where to go, where not to go, and what to do as they went. At this time in Jesus' ministry, he was

focused on the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Later he sent his disciples to all nations (Matt. 28:19-20). The Lord directs his disciples to certain people groups at particular times.²

In Paul's ministry there was a similar direction to not go to particular people at a specific time but go to another people. Paul did not base his mission on strategy alone but was also strongly influenced by the leading of the Spirit. Paul had attempted to go to Asia toward the beginning of his second missionary journey, but the Holy Spirit had forbidden him (Acts 16:6). He then tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them (Acts 16:7). Later God opened the door for Paul to establish the work in Ephesus, Asia (Acts 19). And 1 Peter 1:1 explains that God's elect was established in Bithynia. Jesus declared God's plan, "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19). Paul was attempting to do his part to fulfill God's plan. He strategized to go to Asia or Bithynia. God had a plan and a correct time to reach those two provinces, but God overruled Paul's strategy by his Spirit. God sent him to Europe on the second missionary journey rather than the places he had strategized. One can learn the principle that God works both through a believer's strategic planning and his Spirit's supernatural leading.

The Twelve sent to Preach

7 As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.'

The disciples were instructed to preach. The message was the same as John the Baptist had preached (Matt. 3:2) and Jesus was preaching (Matt. 4:17), "The kingdom of heaven is at hand." The kingdom of heaven is demonstrated in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 1-2) and the New Heaven and New Earth (Rev. 21-22) as a place where God and people love each other as he intended. Preaching is designed to unite people estranged by sin from God's love to himself. Jesus showed how the kingdom of heaven could exist in the hearts of people between the Garden and Heaven.

Authority utilized

8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.

The authority that Jesus gave in verse 1 he expected the disciples to use as they went to preach. God often shows himself strong where darkness is the strongest. Missionaries and evangelists should take opportunity to pray with the sick, raise the dead, and cast out demons when they enter communities where he is not known. God can even use disciples later who have earlier failed to drive out demons (Luke 9:40) on the mission field in dangerous places (Luke 10:1,9,17). There is a direct connection between miraculous power and proclamation of the good news. The disciples never failed to preach the gospel wherever they went. They knew that Jesus gave them authority over sick, disease, and devils so that people could be drawn to God. They never wasted the miracles by remaining silent. When God moved in the miraculous it had a dual purpose: (1) he loved the individual and wanted to minister to him/her, and (2) he loved the crowd and wanted to use the miracle to draw them to hear and receive the gospel. Do not waste the miracle. When God gives a miracle, preach the word.

The gift of the supernatural was given freely to the disciples and they were expected to give it free to those in the dangerous places they would go. No materials things of value were to be taken on the journey (vss. 9-10), but the spiritual things of greatest value were given freely because of God's love.

Jesus sent out Vulnerable Ministers

9 *“Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts— 10 no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep.*

Why did Jesus repeatedly state that his ministers should go to dangerous places with few material possessions? Why did Jesus tell the disciples to “Take nothing for the journey” (Mark 6:8) and go out without money, staff, extra coat, etc.? It may be in part because of the minister; Jesus wanted the disciples to learn faith and dependence on God. But could it also be in part because of the receivers? Could it be that Jesus was suggesting this method of evangelism, missions, and ministry not so much for the disciples, but so that the people to whom they came to minister would accept them in this vulnerable state?

Vulnerable mission is entering a community from a position of weakness and vulnerability rather than strength and power to reach people and plant churches through the

foolishness of preaching and the miraculous power of God. The biblical basis for vulnerable missions includes more than this passage in Matthew 10 but also the Book of Ruth, Luke 9 and 10, Philippians 2, and 1 Corinthians.

Ruth:

Ruth was poor, vulnerable, foreign, a widow, a religious outsider, from the despised Moabite people group, and an outcast. Ruth came into Bethlehem in this vulnerable state. But she was later received to the point of being highly honored and accepted by the community. Eventually her descendants became kings and even the Messiah came from her. It was her noble character and the *hesed* (unfailing love) she had for Naomi that endeared people to her. She was not a threat to the people of Bethlehem, but rather many pitied her, came to her aid, and supported her. Could her vulnerability have been a key to her acceptance in the community?

Jesus sent out the disciples:

The disciples were sent out as vulnerable men – commanded to go without gold, silver, copper, purses, bags, sandals, or staffs (Matt. 10:9-10, Luke 9:3-4, 10:4). It was to be their message and miracles that would bring people to love and follow Christ not their powerful position or wealth. They were often totally dependent upon a worthy person of peace accepting them in the city and even providing them with a cup of cold water (Matt. 10:42) for sustenance.

Philippians 2:6-8

Why did Jesus come to earth to a poor family in obscurity rather than being born in a palace to a wealthy and powerful king? The response this time would not be so that Jesus could learn faith because he had all faith. Again, could the focus of God's method be on the receivers rather than on the poor messenger? Jesus was the Son of God, yet he came humbly. He was a king yet came as a servant. He was all-powerful yet came in weakness. It was his character, words, love, and spiritual power that drew people to God.

1 Corinthians 1:18-2:5

What about the Apostle Paul? Why did he enter cities in weakness (1 Cor. 2:1-5) rather than showing his incredible credentials from the beginning (Phil. 3:4-6)? Could he have learned from his encounters with the risen Jesus (Gal. 1:12 and 19) and his discipleship under Barnabas who gave of his own possessions (Acts 4:36-37) and entered the new Antioch church in a way they accepted him (Acts 11:22-24) that the way to approach ministry is as a vulnerable person rather than as a powerful one? In 1 Corinthians 1:18–31, Paul has a discourse on the foolishness of the message of the cross according to man’s wisdom. He explains that “God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things – and the things that are not – to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him (1 Cor. 1:27-29). God chose vulnerable missionaries to open roads into villages that might not accept the powerful or strong.

Paul had much power and position to recommend him (Phil 3:4-6), but he set it aside when he went into cities as a vulnerable missionary (Phil 3:7). He came with only the gospel (1 Cor. 1:23) and the miraculous power of God (1 Cor. 2:4) and worked with his hands to support himself and his team (Acts 18:3, 1 Cor. 4:12).

Other examples of Vulnerable Missions:

Joseph came to Egypt as a slave, but God exalted him to prime minister to accomplish his purpose. Daniel entered Babylon as a captive, but God exalted him to the king’s advisor to proclaim his word.

Those who enter a place from a position of power and might are often met in battle and opposition. But those who enter a place from a position of vulnerability are often met with protection and assistance.

Why is this? Perhaps this is what Jesus was speaking of when he was full of joy (Luke 10:21) and said, “I praise you, Father...because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children.” Jesus was teaching that it is not the wise, powerful, wealthy, and learned that will carry his message to the world, but the foolish, weak, poor, and ignorant that will succeed in doing this.

There was a time for the demonstration of power, but it was God's miraculous power rather than human strength. There was a demonstration of strong character and mighty love and devotion, but not military power, political force, economic superiority, academic credentials, or social position. Why? Jesus taught often of the servant, the last being first, and the humble. Was this only for the Christian living in his culture or could it also be for the missionary in another culture and another time?

If missionaries were to understand that Christ's instruction to go into a village humbly was for the sake of reception rather than simply developing faith or some vow to poverty, they might find valuable inroads for ministry.

When a missionary enters a village vulnerably it is not our strength that people see. If some accept the minister with open and hospitable hearts like Boaz and the workers in his field, then they may also receive our message and miracles. If missionaries were to enter a village in power those same people may reject them and reject the gospel. "New Testament writers do that too. They never talk about submission without talking about Jesus, and of the cross. Jesus' version of submission is thoughtful, strong, purposeful, and sacrificial. It involves the full and determined embrace of his Father's will (which governs everything Jesus does) and the voluntary pouring out of his life to rescue a lost world. Submission is both. It is redemptive. It is the gospel. It is a way of showing Jesus to the world."³ This may be the reason Jesus told the disciples to enter villages taking nothing for their journey.

Worthy Persons of Peace

11 Whatever town or village you enter, search there for some worthy person and stay at their house until you leave. 12 As you enter the home, give it your greeting. 13 If the home is deserving, let your peace rest on it; if it is not, let your peace return to you. 14 If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet. 15 Truly I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.

The worthy person of peace Jesus described is willing to receive the messenger of the God even at risk to self and family. This person of peace has faith in God that is greater than fear of culture and community. The New Testament has examples of these people of peace: the

woman at the well (John 4), the demoniac (Mark 5), Cornelius (Acts 10:25-48), Lydia (Acts 16:13-15, 40), the Philippian jailor (Acts 16:29-34), Aquila and Pricilla (Acts 18:1-3), Justus (Acts 18:7). Rahab (Josh 2), Abraham (Gen. 18), and Lot (Gen. 19) in the Old Testament are also people of peace.

A person of peace is often a person of reputation. Sometimes they had a good reputation such as Cornelius or Lydia. And sometimes they had a bad reputation such as the woman at the well, the demoniac or Rahab. God can use the bad reputation as a demonstration to the community of his power and love.

A person of peace is a person of reference. Cornelius and the Philippian jailor referred their households (*oikos*) to Christ. The demoniac (Mark 5) had such an influence that the next time Jesus came to Decapolis a crowd (multitude) came to see him (Mark 7:31-37). The woman at the well brought the whole town of Samaria out to hear Jesus (John 4). Rahab referred her household to God, and they were saved (Joshua 6:23).

A person of peace is a person of responsibility and covenant. Rahab and the spies agree “our lives for your lives” (Joshua 2:14). Cornelius stated, “Now we are all here in the presence of God to listen to everything the Lord has commanded you to tell us” (Acts 10:33). A person of peace gives his/her word to the minister and keeps it even at risk of life.

Abraham demonstrated hospitality as a person of peace when the three messengers of God came to him and interceded for his family and the righteous in the city (Gen. 18).

Lot demonstrated many elements of a person of peace when the two messengers of God came to Sodom (Gen. 19). When the vulnerable messengers came into the city, he insisted they stay with him for protection in the wicked and violent city (Gen. 19:2-3). He was a person of reputation in the city sitting at the city gate (Gen. 19:1). He was a person of reference as he saved his daughters (Gen. 19:15-16) and sought to save his sons-in-law although they refused (Gen. 19:14) and his wife although she turned back (Gen. 19:26). And he was a person of responsibility and covenant when he protected the messengers at the risk of his own life (Gen. 19:6-9). In this case as instructed in Matthew 10:23, Lot and his family had to flee to another place.

Sheep Among Wolves

16 “I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. Therefore be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves.

Jesus acknowledged that he was sending the ones he loved and prayed for (John 17) into dangerous places when he said I am sending you as sheep among wolves. They were vulnerable volunteers as was he. He came to this world and humbled himself even to the extent of the cross (Phil 2:6-8). When he had all power to command thousands of angels and defeat his captors (Matt. 26:53) he submitted to their cruelty to win some. His followers were similar lambs willing to sacrifice even their lives so that others could know the love of God that they had experienced. In this way they would be innocent as doves.

Jesus instructed the disciples to be shrewd as snakes. Jesus encouraged his disciples to make wise decisions concerning their relations with their persecutors. Jesus handled his enemies in shrewd ways at times (Taxes to Caesar - Matt. 22:15-22, Mark 12:15-17, Luke 20:23-26; Widow of seven brother - Matt. 22:23-33, Mark 12:26-27, Luke 20:37-38; and Woman caught in adultery - John 8:1-11). Paul demonstrated shrewdness often before the councils by dividing them to distract attention from his case (Acts 23:6, 24:21, and 26:6-8). Jesus and Paul did not avoid all persecution, but they employed shrewd tactics at times when it was prudent. Jesus encouraged his followers to be equally shrewd in their dealings with persecutors in dangerous places.

The Spirit speaking through you

17 Be on your guard; you will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. 18 On my account you will be brought before governors and kings as witnesses to them and to the Gentiles. 19 But when they arrest you, do not worry about what to say or how to say it. At that time you will be given what to say, 20 for it will not be you speaking, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.

Jesus prepared ministers of the good news in dangerous places for the reality of arrest, trials, and persecution. He used words that were definite rather than possible such as “you will be handed over...flogged...and brought before governors” and “when they arrest you.” He said, “you will be” not “if you are”. But Jesus promised that the Spirit of the Father would not only be there with them but speaking through them in those situations. God had a plan to use the arrest of his disciples to give Spirit-inspired messages to governors and kings.

Brother against Brother

21 “Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; children will rebel against their parents and have them put to death. 22 You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.

Believers from other religions understand this passage in a deeper way than those living within a Christian culture. Family members see conversion to Christianity as apostasy. Revealing the convert to the authorities is an act of devotion to their god, religion, family, or culture. Missionaries to dangerous places need to develop a theology of persecution and understand how to mentor believers under persecution. Mordecai mentored Esther for a time to remain silent (Esther 2:10) and later to reveal her identity even at the risk of her life (Esther 4:8, 13-14). Jesus concludes this section with an eternal promise that transcends this life: “the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.”

Flee persecution to continue to preach

23 When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another. Truly I tell you, you will not finish going through the towns of Israel before the Son of Man comes. 24 “The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

In the face of persecution there are three primary responses: (1) deny your faith, (2) remain and endure persecution, or (3) flee from persecution. In this situation Jesus gave the Twelve the instruction to flee to another place. Why? Perhaps because he knew some villages in Judah were not ready for the good news. Perhaps he wanted to conserve the few (twelve) workers that he had. Whatever the reason, it was the will of Jesus to have the ministers flee persecution at this time in these villages.

Jesus again stated that persecution is the reality, not just a possibility: “When you are persecuted,” and “how much more the members of his household.” The disciples of Jesus in

dangerous places should not expect to have less harassment than their master had. If Jesus endured the persecution through the Spirit, his students could as well.

Do not fear, but fear

26 “So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. 27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. 28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. 30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

Fearing God, not man, is foundational for missionaries working in dangerous places. Matthew uses a word pattern similar to the earlier ‘go’ passage; “Go nowhere, enter no town (vs. 5), but go rather to (vs. 6).” He says, “do not be afraid (26) ...do not be afraid (28)...rather, be afraid (28)...so don’t be afraid (31).” Fear will prevent one from going or paralyze one when there. If one’s eyes are on the temporal, the body and this life, ministry will not be conducted in dangerous places. If one’s eyes are on the eternal, the soul and heaven, then ministry will actually thrive in dangerous places. What better place to rescue lost souls than in the darkness. The missionary who truly understands the Father’s power to save and his love to rescue will see dangerous places as the most promising field in which to preach the good news.

Jesus emphasized that his followers must have a worldview change: that eternal life is of greater value than this life. Peter grew from a follower who feared those who could kill his body (Luke 22:54-62) to one who feared the one who could destroy both soul and body (Acts 2:14, 4:28-30). No messenger to dangerous places will fulfill Jesus command to preach the message boldly unless he or she has learned not to be afraid those who can kill the body.

Acknowledge or disown

32 “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. 33 But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.

Jesus takes the previous conversation another level deeper. For the missionary and for the new believer in the dangerous area Jesus requires acknowledgement of him. There appears to be allowance for a season for secret believers such as in the case of Nicodemus (John 3), Joseph of Arimathea (John 19:38), and Old Testament examples of Naaman (1 Kings) and Esther (Esther). But Jesus makes it clear that there is a time in the life of every believer acknowledges that Jesus is his or her Lord. Nicodemus grew in his boldness (John 7:49-51) and Joseph become bold (Mark 15:43) and Esther boldly shares her identity at the risk of her life (Est. 7:3-4) which resulted in many people of many nationalities became Jews because of her boldness (Est. 8:17). Paul, like Jesus, requires a similar confession for believers (Rom. 10:9-10). Disowning Christ when confronted carries sad consequences (Matt. 10:33). But as demonstrated in Peter's case, Jesus forgives even those who disown him, and they can be used again if they repent and are willing to proclaim him publicly. The Holy Spirit's infilling on the Day of Pentecost gave Peter boldness. The same Spirit gives boldness to believers today.

Peace or sword

34 *"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. 35 For I have come to turn*

*"a man against his father,
a daughter against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—*

36 *a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.'*

37 *"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. 38 Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.*

Jesus spoke a difficult truth when he stated that he did not come to bring peace, but a sword. Why does the Prince of Peace (Is. 9:6) make such a statement? Peace comes to the person's soul, yet division may come between the believer and his/her family. Jesus acknowledged this reality. Observe the thrice-repeated phrase "not worthy of me" (37 and 38).

There will be some who deny him. But there will also be some who are worthy of him. The search for the worthy person of peace (Matt. 10:11) may ideally result in the person worthy of Christ. The love of God is so strong believers choose God's love and are willing to suffer familial discord and persecution to retain it. In the case of Muslims, they exchange the scorn of the *Umma* for the joy of *koinonia* in Christ. They are willing to acknowledge Christ before men rather than offend the one they love. God will certainly reward those who lose their life for his sake.

Those who receive you will receive a reward

40 "Anyone who welcomes you welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. 41 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. 42 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."

This pericope focuses on the person of peace who welcomes the minister of the good news. Observe the repetition:

Person of Peace: Anyone (person of peace) who welcomes you (disciple) welcomes me (Jesus),

Response: and anyone (person of peace) who welcomes me (Jesus) welcomes the one who sent me (God, the Father).

Person of peace: Whoever (person of peace) welcomes a prophet (disciple) as a prophet

Reward: will receive a prophet's reward, and

Person of peace: whoever (person of peace) welcomes a righteous person (disciple) as a righteous person

Reward: will receive a righteous person's reward.

Person of peace: And if anyone (person of peace) gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple (disciple),

Reward: truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward.

Jesus repeats four times that the person who welcomes the disciple will be rewarded. Both verses containing this expression of a cup of cold water (Matt 10:42 and Mark 9:41) are speaking of followers of Christ receiving the cup of water, not the lost.

“Receiving Jesus’ representatives with even a cup of cold water (10:42; Mk 9:41) probably refers to accepting into one’s home the missionaries who have abandoned their own homes and security to bring Christ’s message (10:11; cf. also 25:35-40). (Keener, Craig. A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans. 1999. 332.)

In fact, in both references Jesus was stating that if someone gives the disciple ministering the gospel a cup of cold water, he will not lose his reward. Often today the authorial intent is reversed. It is taught that the minister gives a cup of cold water to the lost. Rather Jesus said that if a non-believer, seeker, or person of peace gives a cup of cold water to the missionary, they will be rewarded. “Truly I tell you, anyone who gives you a cup of water in my name because you belong to the Messiah will certainly not lose their reward” (Mark 9:41).

Jesus devotes the end of this chapter on ministering in dangerous places in the power of the Holy Spirit to the person of peace. He speaks of the rewards the person of peace will receive. The person of peace was not in the audience as Jesus was speaking. Why would he devote so much of this chapter to this person? Perhaps Jesus was helping the missionary know how valuable this person of peace will be to the spread of the gospel in these dangerous places.

Truly the missionary is dependent on the Holy Spirit for every aspect of ministry in dangerous places: from power to perform the miraculous, to the words to speak before councils, to the message to preach, to providing the person of peace that will open the community to the gospel. The missionary will see success only as the Spirit moves on individuals and communities.

¹ David Cerullo, <http://www.inspirationtoday.com/ourministries/philippines.aspx> (accessed 18 June 2010).

² Lowenberg shares insight on a possible reason Jesus did not want his disciples going to the Gentiles. He concludes, “If His emissaries brought the good news to Gentiles and Samaritans without love and compassion, let alone without the parameters of making relationships, the message of the gospel would be tainted in its delivery (see Luke 9:54-55; Acts 10:28; 11:2-3).” Lowenberg, Doug, “Have we Missed the Main Point? The Purpose for Jesus’ Encounter with the Canaanite Woman (Matthew 15:21-28) *International Journal of Pentecostal Missiology* (9:1, 2023). <http://evangeluni.wpenginepowered.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/IJPM-91.7-Lowenberg-Canaanite-Woman.pdf> (accessed November 27, 2024.).

³ Carolyn Curtis James, *The Gospel of Ruth: Loving God Enough to Break the Rules*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009, 161.