

Sips of Water
Matthew 10:40-42
Grace, Southgate
June 28, 2026
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Proper A, Year A

Come Holy Spirit and enkindle within us the fire of your burning love, in your most blessed name we pray, amen.

Good morning.

I and perhaps others of you have longed for, wished for, prayed for legendary, miraculous change to our world. When it does not come to be, I can feel my soul deflate, my spirit wane, my hopes begin to drip away. I want big, bold beautiful transformation. Yet today as we hear the end of Jesus' words to the ones he sends out to heal the ills of the world, he concludes with this simple direction, "*Whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones, in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward,*" (Matthew 10:42b).

Sometimes it's not the massive, but rather the minute that begins the journey of the change. I think to myself, even in my most overwhelmed, anxiety-ridden, exhausted state, I can stop and go and get someone a glass of cold water. And in those moments when I have been thirsty, parched, in need of hydration, clear, cold water or even room temperature water has been just the elixir I've needed to carry on.

Friends, discipleship, welcome, hospitality, stunning sweeping, game-changing ministries all begin with a moment when we stop, move beyond ourselves and say, "Well, even I can do that..." "A glass of water, something to sip on? Yes, hang on for just a minute, let me go and get that for you." And care begins, connection develops. A journey of change and transformation is initiated.

I am not so sure that I am brave enough to leave everything and go out two by two, without an extra coat, staying amidst people I do not know, who may not want to receive me. But what I can do, I can offer those of you who are brave enough to go out, I can offer you a cup of water. Bit by bit, as the psalmist writes, morning by morning, a new practice, a new rhythm, a new ministry begins.

I am fascinated with people who undertake extraordinary physical endeavors. I don't do these things, but I do enjoy reading about them and hearing about them from the people who do undertake them. What stands out from my reading from people who survive Navy Seal training to people who finish Ironman's and ultra-marathons is the technique of breaking each portion of the training or race into a small "bite-size" chunk in which the end point for that section is attainable. The person participating can say to themselves, "I have

no idea how I will survive the next five weeks of this continues training or keep running for the next 20 hours, but I do know that I can make it through the next mile, or the top of this hill, where I'll give myself a chance to walk a bit." Studies show that individuals who do this with excessive endeavors are far more likely to succeed. It's a bit like the AA motto, of not knowing if a person can refrain from drinking for the remainder of their lives, that's unknowable, but today...they a person in recovery can say to themselves, today I can absolutely not drink, or even just in this next hour I will not drink.

Transformational ministries, daunting spiritual practices, like ultra marathons all begin with the first step, and then the next best step after. That's it.

That seemingly is what Jesus is saying to his disciples as he sends them out, to preach the Gospel and change people's lives. Jesus ends this discourse where most of us can begin. Offering a cup of cold water. One tiny sip, one precious step that can change our lives.

Blessed Summer friends. May you pray every morning as you wake. Offer thanks to God each night as you fall asleep. May you search for the Holy, day by day. Until one day you realize God and God's love is all around.

Amen.