

**Introduction**

1. We all want to be on the team, to make the cut.
  - a. I played football in Jr. High and tried out for the basketball team.
  - b. As a freshman, I worked hard to make the basketball team and made the first cut.
  - c. The week before our first game, the coach told us that he had to make a final cut after our last practice. Unfortunately, my name was one of two that coach called that day.
  - d. I was disappointed to not make the cut.
2. In Mark's narrative, we find another list of names. Jesus chose twelve disciples in whom he would invest teaching and authority to help in his ministry and to continue it after he went back to heaven.

**3. Read Mk 3:13-19.****A. The Place (13)**

1. "Jesus went up on a mountainside . . . ."
  - a. It was Jesus' custom to withdraw from the crowd after an intense time of teaching.
  - b. We have seen this before as Jesus went out very early to be alone a "solitary place" (cf., Mk 1:35).
2. ". . . Jesus called to him those he wanted, . . . ."
  - a. "called" (Gk., *proskaleitai*)
    - 1) Perhaps there was a large group of potential disciples that went with Jesus to the mountain from which he called the Twelve.
    - 2) Or maybe, Jesus just took the Twelve.
    - 3) In either case, Jesus extended a strong invitation for them to join him in ministry.
  - b. "wanted" (Gk., *ethelen*)
    - 1) Jesus did not extend his call lightly or selfishly.
    - 2) Lk 6:12 records that Jesus ". . . spent the night praying to God" before calling the Twelve in the morning.
    - 3) As in the Garden of Gethsemane, he spent the night discerning His Father's will so that he could do it.
3. ". . . and they came to him."
  - a. The Twelve that he called "came" (Gk., *apelthon*) to him.
  - b. They had a choice and by their freewill they came to Jesus.

**B. The Purpose (14-15)**

1. "He appointed twelve (Gk., *epoiesen dodeka*) . . ." (14)
  - a. Have you ever wondered why Jesus chose twelve disciples?
  - b. Warren Wiersbe notes, "The number of the disciples is significant because there were twelve tribes in the nation of Israel. In Genesis, God started with Jacob's twelve sons, and in Exodus, He built them into a mighty nation. Israel was chosen to bring the Messiah into the world so that through Him all the nations of the earth could be blessed (Gen. 12:1-3). However, the nation of Israel was now spiritually decayed and ready to reject her own Messiah. God had to establish 'a holy nation, a peculiar [purchased] people' (1 Peter 2:9), and the twelve apostles were the nucleus of this new 'spiritual' nation (Matt. 21:43)" (Warren Wiersbe, *Be Diligent*, 45-46).
  - c. William Lane adds "The Twelve reflect backward on the prior history of the people of God as the people of the twelve tribes. In proleptic fashion they represent the final form of the messianic community, the eschatological creation of God" (William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark*, 133).
  - d. This last point is made clear in the narrative of John's Revelation and his vision of the heaven: "One of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, 'Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.' And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. It had a great, high wall with twelve gates, and with twelve angels at the gates. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel. There were three gates on the east, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west. The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (Rev 21:9-14).
  - e. The Twelve become the foundation of the church, the breakout of the kingdom of God on earth.

## 2. The Triple Purpose of the Twelve

### a. “. . . that they might be with him . . .” (14)

- 1) Notice that Jesus’ first priority is being in special relationship with these men.
- 2) The first word about his purpose is not about service or doing but simply about being with them, getting to know them, and allowing them to know him.
- 3) The Christian life begins in simply being with the Lord.
- 4) Jesus highlighted the importance of being with him in his encounter with Martha: “As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, ‘Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!’ ‘Martha, Martha,’ the Lord answered, ‘you are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her’” (Lk 10:38-42).

### b. “. . . and that he might send (Gk., *apostelle*) them out to preach . . .” (14)

- 1) In Acts, these Twelve, less Judas Iscariot and with the addition of his replacement, Matthias, would become known as the Apostles.
- 2) Here the meaning of this word still carries its more common nature of ones sent out by another as emissaries, ambassadors, missionaries.
- 3) They are sent out first to preach (Gk., *kerussein*).
  - a) This word means “to proclaim the message” that they had received from Jesus, the Gospel.
  - b) As Jesus’ Apostles their primary duty was to proclaim the good news of the coming of the kingdom of God and the need for repentance and faith.
  - c) This message was their primary purpose, as it was Jesus’ primary purpose, and they would give priority in proclaiming it just as Jesus did.

### c. “. . . and to have authority to drive out demons” (15).

- 1) Jesus also came to minister healing of body and spirit.
- 2) As his ambassadors, the disciples were fully empowered with his healing abilities as well.
- 3) All people want miracles of healing but have greater need of spiritual healing in the Gospel.

## 3. I discern a three step process in Jesus’ discipleship method.

### a. **I do, and you watch.**

- 1) Jesus called these Twelve to be with him, to listen to him, to see what he did, to learn from him what it means to be a member of God’s kingdom.
- 2) Class was in session from Mk 1:16 – 6:6.

### b. **You do, and I watch.**

- 1) In Mk 6:7, Jesus sent “. . . them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits.”
- 2) The disciples were true to their calling. They gave priority to preaching repentance and also drove out demons and healed the sick (cf., Mk 6:12).
- 3) In Mk 6:30, the apostles reported back to Jesus “. . . all they had done and taught.”
- 4) Jesus continued to teach and to train his disciples to his last day on earth.

### c. **You do.**

- 1) The final phase of discipleship is for the discipled becomes the discipler.
- 2) Jesus sent out his apostles one last time in Mt 28:18-20: “. . . All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”
  - a) The scope of ministry was widened from the region of Galilee to “all nations.”
  - b) The disciples were now to be disciple-makers.
  - c) Jesus invested time and power in these men so that they could carry on his ministry after his death, resurrection, and ascension. He wanted them to train others.
- 3) The Apostle Paul knew the importance of completing the disciple-making process as revealed in his instruction to Timothy, his spiritual son and disciple: “You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others” (2 Tm 2:1-2).

**C. The Twelve (16-19)** – “These are the twelve he appointed: . . .”

1. The other gospel writers include similar lists (cf., Mt 10:2-4, Lk 6:14-16).
2. In Acts 1:23 Matthias replaced the deceased Judas Iscariot as noted above.
3. Mark referred frequently to this group as “the twelve” (cf., Mk 6:16).
4. We know more about a few of these disciples (i.e., Peter, James, and John) than we do about many of the others.
5. They were a diverse group of rather ordinary men.
  - a. “Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter),” (16)
    - 1) We have previously discussed the significance of Jesus’ name change of Simon to Peter (Ar., *cephas* = Gk., *petros* – “little rock”) (cf., Jn 1:42, Mt 16:18).
    - 2) Use of a surname or title “. . . frequently conferred a promise or designated appointment to a special task” (Lane, 134).
  - b. “James son of Zebedee and his brother John” (17)
    - 1) “(to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means ‘sons of thunder’)” (17)
    - 2) Boanerges is Hebrew. So, Mark defined it for his Roman audience.
    - 3) In this case, the name does not indicate a special appointment, as with Peter’s name change, but most likely refers to their fiery personalities (cf., Mk 9:38-31; 10:35-39; Lk 9:54-55).
    - 4) Also remember that Peter, James, and John, the first three named here, comprised the inner circle of Jesus’ closest disciples.
  - c. “Andrew” (18) – The names of the disciples after this point, with the exception of Judas Iscariot, do not recur in Mark. Some of them are mentioned by other gospel writers (e.g., Thomas – Jn 20:24-29).
  - d. “Philip” (18)
  - e. “Bartholomew” (18) – This name is a transliteration of the Hebrew name *bar Talmi* which literally means “son of Talmi.” This may be the disciple Nathaniel mentioned in John 1:43-51.
  - f. “Matthew” (18) – The list of disciples in Mt 10:3 adds “the tax collector” to this name which points to it most likely as a reference to Levi whom Jesus called in Mk 2:14.
  - g. “Thomas” (18)
  - h. “James son of Alphaeus” (18) – His father’s name is given to distinguish him from James, son of Zebedee who was listed earlier.
  - i. Thaddaeus” (18)
  - j. “Simon the Zealot” (18)
    - 1) He may have simply been a very zealous man who was earnestly seeking to follow God.
    - 2) Many scholars see this title as a reference to the loose, Jewish political group known as Zealots. They were a group of Jewish extremists organized to overthrow Rome.
  - k. “and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.” (19)
    - 1) The name/title Iscariot may be interpreted a number of ways.
    - 2) Iscariot may refer to his hometown of Kerioth; to the Jewish tribe of Issachar, or it may be translated as either “man of falsehood,” or “man of red hair.” (James A. Brooks, Mark, 72).
    - 3) Some scholars see this name/title as a form of the word *scarii*, which literally was a “small dagger.” If this is the case, Judas may have also belonged to the Zealots since this term was often used of this group because of the short daggers that they kept hidden in their cloaks and which they used to assassinate Romans and their supporters
6. Akin insightfully notes, “This group of men came from a variety of different backgrounds. They had different passions, interests, and agendas. But the thing they have in common was that Jesus called them out, committed Himself to invest in them, and used them to change the world. Likewise, we must call out those we wish to invest in as we continue to make disciples of Jesus today” (Daniel L. Akin, *Exalting Jesus in Mark, 72-73*).

#### **D. Lessons for Us**

1. Choose potential leaders wisely with prayer and the Father's guidance.
2. First be disciple and then become a disciple-maker. Invest in others to continue the chain of faithfulness in ministry and service to Christ.
3. Balance your time of being with the Lord with your time serving the Lord.
4. Don't be just a disciple (i.e., "learner") but also an apostle (i.e., "one sent out").
5. We are not all the same in background, economics, ethnicity, or political beliefs. However, in Christ we are all one with a common mission—the Great Commission.
6. Sometimes people will disappoint and hurt you. Akin writes, "Judas was chosen by our Lord to be with Him (3:14). He did not worm his way in, and he would serve well for a while. He gave evidence of loyalty. He even served as treasurer (John 12:4-5), though he was dishonest in his assignment. All of this is to remind us that if you live long enough and serve long enough you will be disappointed by people whom you love and who you thought loved you. You would let them guard your back, believing they would take a bullet for you, only to discover the knife in your back has their prints on it" (Akin, 73).
7. Fortunately, we can all make the cut on God's team. He has called your name to come follow Him. Your name is on His list. What is your response? Will you be his disciple and disciple-maker?