**JESUS APPOINTED THE TWELVE**

Mark 3:13-19

Key Verse 14

“He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach”

**Introduction**



In today’s passage, Jesus appointed the twelve disciples. One of the great points of Mark’s gospel is Jesus’ disciple-raising ministry. Jesus’ ministry would have dwindled after His death and resurrection, had He not raised his disciples. Jesus left behind no written books. But, Jesus’ teaching was inscribed in the hearts of his disciples. In this way his message has reached succeeding generations and the whole world. Also His discipleship ministry was a turning point. Before this event, Jesus himself went out to find his disciples and healed the sick. But after this event, Jesus began to work with his twelve in everything. The twelve were just ordinary people. However Jesus is the best teacher and disciple maker. He made ordinary people the best students. He also made them the best disciple makers later. May the Lord have the same hope in our times through meditating today’s passage!

1. Read verse 13. What might have prompted Jesus to go up on a mountainside to pray? (Mk 3:7-12, Lk 6:12) What does “Jesus called those he wanted” and “they came to him” mean?

1-1, Read verse 13.

13 Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him.

1-2, What might have prompted Jesus to go up on a mountainside to pray? (Mk 3:7-12, Lk 6:12)

***Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed. 8 When they heard about all he was doing, many people came to him from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and the regions across the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon. 9 Because of the crowd he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from crowding him. 10 For he had healed many, so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch him. 11 Whenever the impure spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, “You are the Son of God.” 12 But he gave them strict orders not to tell others about him. (Mk3:7-12)***

***One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. (Lk 6:12)***

* As we have studied in chapter 3:7-12, the times in which Jesus worked were dark spiritually. Some people are willing to try to make things better, but when they realize how deep the darkness is, they give up.
* At such a moment, Jesus went up on a mountainside (13a). According to Luke, he spent the night praying to God (Lk 6:12).
* Jesus struggled to listen to what God really wanted him to do. There were many seemingly urgent issues such as delivering Israel from Roman oppression, feeding the hungry, freeing John the Baptist from prison, setting people free from Jewish legalism, and reviving the economy.
* Jesus was well aware of these issues. But he sought to know what God really wanted him to do.
* He wanted to see the big picture of God’s salvation work, beyond all of the troubling and pressing problems of the moment. This must have been the very reason why Jesus spent the night praying to God.

1-3, What does “Jesus called those he wanted” and “they came to him” mean?

***13 Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him.***

* After prayer, Jesus called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. Jesus had already called disciples from the outset of his ministry.
* Jesus called to him **“those he wanted.”** Jesus does not ask to look at a résumé first. He just calls to himself those he wants.
* This is God’s sovereignty. Though people want it or not, it has nothing to do with their desire. John 15:16 reads, “You did not choose me, but I chose you “
* His disciples must have been always thankful that Jesus called them. Whenever they introduced in their letters, they would start it, “I, Peter, to God’s elect”.
* When we look at the people Jesus chose, one by one, they were not special in terms of academics, social or economic status, or family background.
* They were very ordinary people and would have been nameless. Among them, there was even a tax collector, who was despised as a public sinner.
* We cannot discover through human analysis why Jesus chose them. But we find a clue in 1 Corinthians 1:28-29: “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.”
* These days also, Jesus calls each of us to be his disciples. This calling is most important for us. We are not qualified. But we are chosen according to his sovereign will and grace. So we should treasure this calling and keep it.
* When Jesus called, **“…they came to him.”** They were willing to commit themselves to Jesus. Commitment was crucial to be a disciple of Jesus.
* It is a life commitment. In this way they entered the school of Jesus and grew to be great spiritual leaders.

1. Read verses 14-15. Why might Jesus have chosen only the twelve instead of many? What can we learn from Jesus who designated them ‘apostles’? (footnote) What purposes did Jesus have for them.

2-1, Read verses 14-15.

14 He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons.

2-2, Why might Jesus have chosen only the twelve instead of many?

***14 He appointed twelve***

* Jesus appointed only the twelve. Why not 120 or 1,200 people? We do not know exactly why.
* But there are two guesses here. One is that number 12 in Hebrew is perfect number. 12 is thought to be the maximum number in a small group to have intimacy with a teacher.
* Another reason might be that as God called twelve tribes in Israel (but they failed in doing God’s vision), Jesus called 12 to begin a new God’s salvation history.
* But at this moment, he formed the band of twelve. Twelve was symbolic of the number of tribes of Israel.
* Jesus must have had a vision to raise twelve disciples as a royal priesthood for world salvation.

2-3, What can we learn from Jesus who designated them ‘apostles’? (footnote)

**Some manuscripts *twelve—designating them apostles—(Footnote & 1984 NIV)***

* A **disciple** is a follower and student of a mentor, teacher, or any other wise person. Someone who accepts and helps in spreading the teachings of another
* An **apostle** is sent to deliver or spread those teachings to others. The word "apostle" has two meanings, the larger meaning of a messenger and the narrow meaning to denote the twelve people directly linked to Jesus Christ.
* We can say that all apostles were disciples but all disciples are not apostles. An apostle was originally and usually referred to the early followers of Jesus who spread the Christian message to the world or to a person of the Christian missionary designated to spread the Christian message.
* Jesus did not try them with probation period at least 6 or 12 months. Jesus designated them as His apostles. What a vision Jesus had for them!
* The 12 Apostles (*Ἀπόστολος*, *apostolos*, somebody sent forth/sent out) were men that, according to the [Synoptic Gospels](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Synoptic_gospels) and [Christian](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christian) tradition, were chosen from among the [disciples](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disciple_(Christianity)) (students) of [Jesus](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus) for a mission.
* The original 12 were apostles sent out to the Jews, whereas Paul has the unique role of being designated as the apostle to the gentiles after Christ's resurrection and ascent. That’s why Paul introduced himself as an apostle of Christ Jesus.

2-4, What purposes did Jesus have for them.

***that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons.***

* It is this: **“that they might be with him.”** Jesus did not just transfer skills to the disciples through programs. He shared life together with them, which was typical for masters and disciples in Jesus’ day.
* Disciples learned everything from their teacher. They followed their teachers everywhere, learned lessons by imitation, and even copied their teacher’s eating style. Disciples learned to be just like their teachers.
* After a disciple was fully trained, he could become a teacher and raise disciples of his own.
* Disciples could endure all kinds of hardships, hoping that one day they would become the teachers with their own disciples.
* But there was something very different. Jesus’ disciples were not to raise up their own disciples, but to raise up disciples of Jesus.
* In Christian discipleship, there is only one master, Jesus (Mt 23:8-10). Jesus wants a direct and personal relationship with each of his disciples.
* By being with him, they can know Jesus, confess that he is the Messiah, the Son of God, have life in him, and preach the gospel to the whole world.
* We can have fellowship with Jesus by meditating on his words, through prayer, and by meeting together in his name with other believers.
* In this way, we can learn of Jesus and be transformed to be like him. In a word, this is living a Christ-centered life. It is to put Christ first in every area of our lives.
* **“that he might send them out to preach.”** Jesus spent a lot of time preaching. He showed an example to his disciples,except for one time when he sent them out to practice what they learned (6:7).
* This preparation shaped them for serving his world mission purpose in the future. After his resurrection, Jesus said in Mark 16:15: “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.”
* The apostles said, “We will turn this responsibility over to others and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word” (Ac 6:4). So the words of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly (Ac 6:7).
* The gospel continued to spread from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth (Ac 1:8).
* Jesus was not nearsighted in his purpose. Jesus had a long-range plan that took many years to fulfill.
* The third purpose was to **give them authority** to drive out demons. This does not mean that they all became exorcists. Rather Jesus equipped them to fight a spiritual battle against the devil.
* Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the powers of this dark world and the spiritual forces of evil (Eph 6:12).
* Apostle Paul said, “For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.
* We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ” (2 Cor 10:3-5).
* Jesus wanted his disciples to grow as spiritual leaders who could discern the devil’s work and demolish it by faith to set people free.
* Overall Jesus designated them as apostles so that they may commit themselves to become Jesus’ important ambassadors for His eternal Kingdom.

1. Read verses 16-19. Who are the twelve? To whom did Jesus give new names? What order can we find among them?

3-1, Read verses 16-19.

16 These are the twelve he appointed: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter), 17 James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means “sons of thunder”), 18 Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot 19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

3-2, Who are the twelve?

***16 These are the twelve he appointed: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter), 17 James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means “sons of thunder”), 18 Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot 19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.***

3-3, To whom did Jesus give new names?

* **Simon** is mentioned first and Jesus gave him the name Peter, which means rock. Jesus had hope for him to become a rocklike spiritual leader.
* Jesus gave **James and John** the name “Boanerges,” which means “sons of thunder.” We don’t know exactly why Jesus gave them this name. Maybe Jesus who understood their hot-tempered personality well and had hope for them to be powerful gospel preachers like the thunder.
* Andrew seems to have been vague, but he had a point to live by faith.
* Philip was calculative, which produced negativity. But he received Jesus’ love and grew as a shepherd for Greek truth seekers in John 12.
* Bartholomew seems to have been naïve. (‘Nathaneal’ in John 1:43-51) Jesus called him for all sincere people seeking for the truth!
* Matthew was an able and selfish man. He became a Saint Matthew who wrote the longest gospel, the book of Matthew.
* Thomas had a Ph.D. in doubt. He went out as a missionary to India that was considered to be the farthest land those days.
* We don’t know much about James son of Alphaeus or Thaddaeus. He is thought to be the brother of Matthew (Levi, the son of Alphaeus). He is known as James the less while James the greater who was the brother of John.
* Simon the Zealot was a patriot. Jesus shows compassion for patriot people so that they may seek God’s eternal kingdom rather than being stuck in their insatiable desire to fight against earthly kingdom like Roman empower.
* Judas Iscariot was double-minded. He is notorious as a betrayer. But Jesus called him with a hope, so that he may repent of his sins to worship God only.
* When we see these men, they had obvious weaknesses. They were nobodies, destined to live an ordinary life. But Jesus did not focus on their present condition.
* Jesus saw what they would become through his love and training. Jesus appointed the twelve—designating them apostles. Jesus saw great potential in each of them to become apostles and ambassadors of God’s eternal kingdom!

3-4, What order can we find among them?

***16 These are the twelve he appointed: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter), 17 James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means “sons of thunder”), 18 Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot 19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.***

* **Simon** was mentioned first. He had a big mouth. As a fisherman, he must have had tough lifestyle. But as his name is Simon meaning “sand”, he was very weak.
* One day he said I would never disown Jesus even if he might lose his life but the next day when the circumstance was different, he disowned Jesus three times. But Jesus had a vision for him to be rock so he changed his name to Peter and made him rock of church. According to Jesus’ vision, he became a top leader.
* **James and John** were mentioned next. They asked Jesus to call fire down from heaven to destroy people when they were angry. But Jesus gave them a nick name called “sons of thunder”.
* Jesus changed John to be an apostle of love. One of his books, 1 John is specialized at the matter of love. - These two disciples became good helpers for Peter and became key leaders among the twelve as we can see in Acts.
* **Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot -** Each name is precious and represent different people according to God’s wisdom to serve many in the world. They struggled with the idea ‘who is the greatest?’ But Jesus molded them to be servants of God. They must have accepted Jesus’ words, Mark 10:45 and became great servants of God. In fact without exception they sacrificed their lives for world mission.
* **Judas Iscariot** was mentioned last. They said that he is the only one from the place of Judah. Although he loved money, Jesus appointed him as His disciple.

But God never fails. God replaced him with Matthias in Acts. Praise God!

* Personally I learned that our children and friends and family members are important in that James the greater, John, Matthew, and James the lesser are Jesus’ cousins. Andrew and Peter are brothers. Nathaniel was brought by Philip.
* May the Lord bless our coming Summer Bible conference, the theme of which is to love each other just as Jesus loved His disciples and us. Our heavenly fellowship can be promoted so that we may welcome our friends to Jesus more!

**Conclusion**

Jesus bore all of their weaknesses and raised them step by step. Like the disciples, we have obvious weaknesses and seem to be nobodies. But Jesus has hope for each of us to become somebody. If we see ourselves without Jesus’ hope we can despair, torture ourselves, and become useless. So we need to see ourselves with Jesus’ hope. We also need to see our children and Bible students with Jesus’ hope. Then we can bear all their weaknesses and raise them as disciples of Jesus. Thank God who called us to be Jesus’ disciples in this generation. May God raise many disciples of Jesus in our times.

**One word: Jesus chose the 12**