

The Disciples

One of the most critical steps in discipleship is knowing whom to disciple. In any Christian fellowship, there are members of varying commitments, motives and purposes. The same was true with Jesus' followers as well. Yet, He was able to select those whom He wanted from the crowd. Observe how Jesus accomplished this.

- 12 It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray,
and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.
- 13 And when day came,
He called His disciples to Him
and chose twelve of them,
whom He also named as apostles:
- 14 Simon, whom He also named Peter, and
Andrew his brother; and
James and
John; and
Philip and
Bartholomew; and
- 15 Matthew and
Thomas;
James *the son* of Alphaeus, and
Simon who was called the Zealot;
- 16 Judas *the son* of James, and
Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.
- 17 Jesus came down with them and stood on a level place;
and *there was* a large crowd of His disciples,
and a great throng of people
from all Judea and Jerusalem
and the coastal region of Tyre and Sidon,
- 18 who had come to hear Him and to be healed of their diseases;
and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were being cured.

Luke 6:12-18


- ✓ Underline when Jesus went off to the mountain. (v 12)
- ✓ Circle what He did there. (v 12)
- ✓ Circle how long He spent praying. (v 12)
- ✓ Underline the first thing He did 'when day came'. (v 13)
- ✓ Circle what He did with His disciples. (v 13)
- ✓ Circle what He named the 'twelve'. (v 13)
- ✓ Observe the names of the twelve whom Jesus chose. (vs 14-16)
- ✓ Underline two groups of people waiting at the bottom of the mountain. (v 17)
- ✓ Underline why the 'throng' had come. (v 18)

Three Qualifications

The staff of Campus Crusade for Christ looks for the following qualities in determining which students to disciple:

1. A Heart for God
2. Availability
3. A Teachable Attitude

The presence of these qualities indicates a person who is filled with the Holy Spirit. The lack of even one of these qualities may affect the person's faithfulness and your expectations of them to disciple others.

 Matthew 10:1-4
Mark 3:16-19
Acts 1:13

► List the names of the twelve disciples found in the three passages listed above alongside each other and compare them with the list found in Luke 6:14-16. Note any patterns in the order of the names. What does the pattern imply?

1. According to the prior context (vs 6-11) why did Jesus spend an entire night in prayer followed by the selection of the Twelve?

2. What is significant about the amount of time spent in prayer?

3. Why do you think Jesus chose a group of Twelve from His 'disciples'?

4. What is significant about naming them 'apostles'? _____

5. What is the difference between 'His disciples' and the 'throng of people'?

Immediately prior to selecting the Twelve, Jesus had an encounter with the religious leaders that ended on an ominous note. They were 'filled with rage' and began to plot His demise. Knowing that His time on earth would be short, Jesus communed with His Father and altered His ministry to prepare for the inevitable.

By selecting twelve disciples and naming them apostles, or 'sent ones', Jesus focused on replicating His life in them, and in so doing, prepared them for the future continuance of His ministry.

Principles for Selecting Disciples

1. Let God to Make the Choice. Jesus consulted God in much prayer before selecting the Twelve. The reason is obvious. As in the choice of David as Israel's next King, God did not look at the 'outward appearance' as we are prone to do, but at the 'heart' of a person (1 Samuel 16:6-13). God also determines the roles people will play in His Sovereign Plan to establish His Kingdom.

How might judging people by their outward appearance result in wrong decisions?

What do you think God was looking for? _____

How might God's perspective of Judas Iscariot differ from ours? _____

2. Recognize That All Disciples are Not the Same. You will notice in the above passage the separation of Jesus' followers into different groups. These are the 'apostles', the disciples He 'called', 'a large crowd of His disciples' and 'a great throng of people'. Today, even as in the days of Jesus, people follow Christ for various reasons, most often for what He will provide them. These provisions will vary from physical needs, as was the case of the 'throng' in this passage, to being a part of His eternal Kingdom, as was the case with Peter and most of the Twelve (John 6:60-71).

Ask God to open your eyes in order to discern the motives of those you seek to disciple and select those with a deep love and passion for God. In the end, they will endure and carry on the ministry more than the superficial.

What are some reasons people follow Christ today? _____

3. Focus On Quality, Not Quantity. Jesus chose a Biblically complete 'twelve' apostles. The decision to pour His life into a small group of disciples would prove pivotal to the continuation of His work in spreading the Gospel to the entire world. He named them 'apostles' for that very reason! It is one thing to follow Jesus (disciples) and a completely different thing to 'go and make disciples of all nations' (apostles). By their very definition, apostles are sent out into the world to fulfill the ministry of Jesus by 'winning, building and sending' others for Christ, which is the only way we will ever reach the entire world with the Gospel.

Ask God to keep you from judging your ministry by the amount of people you have gathered, but by the number of people you have sent to 'win build and send' still others. It never ceases to amaze me that Jesus was not enamored by the crowds as we too often are today. He did not hesitate to challenge the crowds that followed in His wake to consider the cost of following Him (Luke 14:25-35) and did not dilute His message even if some chose to leave (John 6:60-66). It was not the size of His following, but their faith that concerned Him. But He did allow one earthly minded disciple into His apostolic core for the sole purpose of triggering His destiny at the appointed time.

How can Christians of all commitment levels become involved in discipleship?

How does sending others for Christ develop their faith in Him? _____

Local churches are made up of people with varying commitment levels, ranging from none to deep. Many come simply for social reasons. Some to receive the sympathy and care of others. Still others come to serve and use their God given gifts to help others grow in their faith. What is your reason?

Jesus gave us a clue in the beginning of His Great Sermon (Luke 6:20-22) as to what He looked for in choosing the Twelve. He sought those who were spiritually 'poor', 'hungry' and 'persecuted'. He knew they would be most willing to give up earthly riches, fulfillment and praise, and endure the pain and suffering that can come with utmost dedication to Christ in this world.

To help develop more committed Christians, examine yourself first and ensure your commitment is worth duplicating in others. Then download and study the lessons on 'Practical Discipleship', 'Church Discipleship' and 'Spiritual Revival' available free at:

BibleStudyCD.com

to learn how you can help others 'win, build and send' others for Christ.

No matter our commitment, we can all be involved in winning this world to Christ by praying for and giving to ministries and missionaries who are spreading the Gospel! Let's Do It!

The Disciples

List key Truths and Principles you learned from this study:

- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____

In light of what you have learned, list what you will do.

- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____
- ✓ _____

Memorize 

*"Do not look at his appearance
or at the height of his stature,
... for God sees not as man sees,
for man looks at the outward appearance,
but the LORD looks at the heart."*

1 Samuel 16:7