

2025-08-17

The Chosen

Mark 3:13-19

My growing up years happened in the suburbs of Los Angeles, CA and in Northern Virginia, just outside of Washington D.C. In both neighborhoods we lived in, there were lots of children. I grew up with four brothers. A sister came along when I was 10. Often times mom would send us boys outside to play. Often times we would join the other boys and girls in the neighbor to play. Kickball was one of our favorite games. We would divide up into teams. Two of the older boys would be the captains who did the picking for their team. We would all stand in a line and wave our hand crying out, “**pick me, pick me.**” The youngest kids were always chosen last because we were young and not that good at the game yet. We remember being the last one chosen. But everyone was picked. Things did change. We grew up and got faster and stronger. We were not the last one to be picked any longer. Over the years it became our turn to be the captain of the teams and pick those we wanted on our team.

In the Gospel of Mark, the choosing of these disciples marks a change in Jesus’ ministry in Galilee. When Jesus began His ministry in Galilee, He went from town to town “*preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel’*” (Mark 1:14-15). Jesus did all the ministry. He preached and healed many people in many towns and cast out many demons. Large crowds followed Jesus. The crowds supported Jesus. But the Jewish religious leaders opposed Him because He was a threat to their power and control over the people. Now with many people showing more interest in Jesus, He selects specific men that He will teach. Jesus begins a teaching ministry to His chosen and the crowds who continue to follow Him.

Mark 3:13 “*And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him.*” When Jesus chose His disciples, things happened a lot differently. Jesus was not picking people for a kickball game. Matthew (10:1-4) and Luke (6:12-16) also record this event. Luke records that before Jesus selected these disciples, He spent the night praying to God on the mountain. The selection took place in the morning outside of Capernaum in Galilee. Jesus was at the base of a mountain surrounded by a crowd of people that were following Him. Jesus was going to leave the crowd and go to the top of the mountain, where He was the night before, praying. Before He ascended the mountain, Jesus looked over the crowd and “*called to Him those He Himself wanted.*” Jesus was not listening to anyone crying out “pick me.” He did not allow anyone to offer themselves. **Jesus chose who He wanted.** He invited them to leave the crowd behind and follow Him up the mountain.

It was in the morning when God called Moses to come up the mountain and meet with Him (Exodus 19:16-20). Jesus called these 12 men to go up the mountain and meet with Him. They had no idea what their future would look like. The last night that Jesus was with these 12 men, before His arrest, He reminded these men, “*You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain*” (John 15:16). These 12 men are the original chosen by God. Yes, they chose to respond and go with Jesus. Yet, it was Jesus who chose these men because He knew who they were and that they would choose to go with Him. All those who have chosen to trust in and follow Jesus as Lord and Savior have also been chosen by God first. **He chose us who believe in Him because He knew we would choose to respond to His call and follow Him.** He chose each of us “*for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth*” (2 Thessalonians 2:13). We are also chosen to bear fruit, to worship the Lord, to be obedient to Him, to do good deeds, to love one another and to influence people for the kingdom of God. Jesus called these men to leave the crowd. They are leaving the world and its corruption so that they can learn from Jesus and follow His teachings (John 15:19). Just as these men are chosen by Jesus, so we are chosen by Him.

Verses 14-15 “*then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons.*” Jesus only chose 12 men to Him, probably showing some connection to the 12 tribes of Israel. Notice that not everyone was chosen. “*He appointed twelve.*” The Greek word for “*appointed*” is a word which means “to make.” Jesus is going to form these men individually and as a team to accomplish His will. He would appoint and prepare these men for a specific task, to preach the gospel. These men were called out of the world to be with Jesus. He would be with them in person for at least three years. But He would not leave them as orphans. He would always be with them. He would send the Holy Spirit to live in all those who trust in Jesus (John 14:15-18). Matthew and Luke both use the noun “*apostles*,” the sent ones, to refer to these 12 men. **Mark used the action word, the verb to describe what they were to do.** Jesus was going **to send** these men out into the world, not to get lost in the world again, but to preach to the world and influence them for the kingdom of God. Jesus would send these men out with credentials to accomplish a mission. He would send them with power, not the power of physical strength, but the power of authority, as though Jesus was speaking through them. When Jesus called the twelve, they were not all standing together in the crowd, nor were they all standing near the front. Some may have been surprised that Jesus called them by name. The 12 are listed by name.

Verse 16 “*Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter.*” Peter is always listed first. When Jesus first met him, He said, “*You are Simon the son of John. You shall be*

called Cephas” (John 1:42). Cephas is Aramaic for “stone.” Peter is Greek for “stone.” The man Simon would be changed from a man of weak faith to the man Peter, of strong faith, firm like a stone (Luke 22:31-32). He is often seen as the leader of the 12. Even though he denied knowing Jesus three times during the trials of Jesus, he is the first to stand up and preach on Pentecost (Acts 2:14).

Verse 17 “*James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, ‘Sons of Thunder.’*” These two brothers were fishermen along with Peter and Andrew. James and John were called the “*Sons of Thunder*” probably because they were loud and outspoken. Jesus had to rebuke these two brothers because they wanted to destroy a Samaritan village that would not receive Him. Jesus reminded them that He “*did not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them*” (Luke 9:56). James is the only one of the 12 whose death is recorded in scripture. King Herod had James killed with the sword (Acts 12:2). John is the only one of the 12 that is not murdered because of His faith in Jesus, that is, other than Judas Iscariot, who hung himself. Jesus entrusted His mother’s care to John.

Verse 18 “*Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananite.*” **Andrew** means “manly.” He is known for bringing people to Jesus. He brought his brother Peter (John 1:42). He brought a boy who had food to share (6:8-9). He also brought some Greeks to Jesus (12:20-22). **Philip** means “fond of horses.” He was from the same town as Peter and Andrew and probably their friend. Philip is remembered for asking Jesus to “*show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us*” (John 14:8). Jesus responded to Philip by saying, “*He who has seen Me has seen the Father*” (14:9). **Bartholomew is also Nathanael.** When Nathanael heard that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah, he did not think anything good could come out of Nazareth (John 1:46). Jesus responded to Nathanael by calling him an honest Israelite. **Matthew** was a tax collector who put aside his wealth and his desire to be wealthy to follow Jesus. **Thomas** was a twin. He is known for doubting that Jesus was resurrected from the dead. He would not believe it no matter who told him, unless he touched the body of Jesus to prove He was alive and real. So, Jesus appeared to him. He gave Thomas permission to put his finger into the wounds on His hands, and put his hand into the hole in His side. Whether Thomas touched Jesus or not, we do not know. What we do know is that Thomas made the great confession, calling Jesus “*My Lord and my God*” (John 20:28).

James, son of Alphaeus is possibly James the Less to distinguish him from James the son of Zebedee. He is not mentioned outside of these four lists of Apostles. It is possible his mother is mentioned at the crucifixion of Jesus (Matthew 27:56 / Mark 15:40). **Thaddaeus, also called Judas** is only mentioned one time apart from these

lists of apostles. He asked Jesus a question. “*Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, ‘Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’*” (John 14:22). It is a good question. Jesus had been talking about His departure, that is His death and His return, that is His resurrection. Jesus told His disciples, “*If you love Me, keep My commandments*” (14:15). Those who remain faithful to Jesus through love and obedience, in spite of what happens to Jesus, will experience God the Father’s love and God the Son’s love (14:21). Then Jesus said He will reveal Himself to those who are obedient to Him. **Why would Jesus only reveal Himself to His own? Why not reveal Himself to the world?** Doesn’t Jesus want all the world to be saved? Of course, He does (2 Peter 3:9). But God wants people to be convicted of their sin. **It is God’s divine decision.** God knows what is best and what is right. He will only give His Holy Spirit to those who love Him and keep His word. They are the ones God the Father and God the Son will make their home with (14:23).

Simon the Cananite is another apostle not mentioned in scripture other than in these lists. The word “*Cananite*” is not a location word. It is an Aramaic term that mean Zealot (Acts 1:13). Zealots saw themselves as agents of God’s righteous wrath against idolatry and other transgressions of the Jewish Law. They were convinced that Roman rule in Israel and Roman taxation on the Jews were a blasphemy against God. They rioted and were the terrorists of their day. Barabbas was one of their number (Mark 15:7). They felt justified in killing those who collaborated with the Romans.

Verse 19 “*And Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. And they went into a house.*” We all have heard of Judas Iscariot. He was the only one from Judea. All the rest were from Galilee. Why was he with this crowd in northern Galilee? Why was he interested in Jesus? He betrayed Jesus. Judas could see that Jesus was not going to overthrow the Romans and establish His kingdom on the earth. He could see that Jesus’ actions were going to lead to His death. So, Judas tried to force Jesus to do what Judas wanted Jesus to do. It did not work. Judas loved power more than Jesus. Judas wanted his way more than God’s way. He followed Satan and not God (Luke 22:3 / John 13:2). Who do you believe? Who do you follow? Are you one of God’s chosen? Christians, disciples of Jesus are to love God the Father and God the Son. We are to be obedient to Him, loving others, bearing fruit that remains.

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Our mission statement: **Spread the gospel of Jesus Christ;
Teach believers to worship God; Foster growth in the Christian faith**

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The Chosen

Mark 3:13-19

The 4 lists of the Apostles:

Matthew 10:2-4	Mark 3:16-19	Luke 6:14-16	Acts 1:13
1. Simon, Peter	Simon, Peter	Simon, Peter	Peter
2. Andrew	James	Andrew	James
3. James, son of Zebedee	John	James	John
4. John	Andrew	John	Andrew
5. Philip	Philip	Philip	Philip
6. Bartholomew, Nathanael	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Thomas
7. Thomas	Matthew	Matthew	Bartholomew
8. Matthew, Levi	Thomas	Thomas	Matthew
9. James, son of Alphaeus	James	James	James
10. Lebbaeus, Thaddaeus	Thaddaeus	Simon, Zealot	Simon
11. Simon the Zealot	Simon	Judas, Thaddaeus	Judas
12. Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot

Questions to ask yourself:

Have you been chosen by God?

What has God chosen you for?

Which disciple are you like?

Why would Jesus only manifest, reveal Himself to His own?

Were the Zealots motivated by God?

Are there people like the Zealots today?

Actions to take:

Love one another with a godly love (John 13:34-35)

Bear fruit that remains.

Obedience to Jesus and His teachings is important as well as loving Him so that He can reveal Himself to you by living in you (John 14:21, 23)

Next week: Mark 3:20-30

Who is Crazy Here?