

# The Mind of Christ

## Choosing the Twelve

### INTRODUCTION:

- I. It's been said that every great leader has men on whom he can rely to accept and carry out his plans – men he can always depend on to faithfully fulfill their assigned duties and responsibilities.
  - A. Before Jesus launched His campaign to become the Savior of the world, and the Redeemer of all mankind, there were certain specific things He needed to do.
    1. First, He needed to chose the best geographical area to begin – an area with which He was intimately familiar – Galilee.
    2. Second, He needed to chose the right time to begin – a time when the hearts of men and women everywhere were ready for a message of hope.
    3. And most importantly, Jesus needed to delay launching His campaign until His way had been prepared by John the Baptist – the messenger whom God had sent to announce the coming of the Savior.
  - B. However, in order for His campaign to be successful, in order for Jesus to reach the most people in the shortest amount of time, and certainly,

in order for His work to continue after His death – there is one more thing Jesus would need.

1. He needed an inner circle of men who would be dedicated to His cause, who would have the courage and the conviction to stand against every conceivable form of opposition, and who would eventually be willing to lay down their very lives to proclaim a message of hope to a lost and dying world.
- II. And so, the time finally came for Jesus to select that inner circle of men who would be so vital to the success of all He had come to accomplish.
- A. This is the reason Jesus chose twelve apostles – His work would never reach its full potential without them. In fact, there are really TWO reasons why Jesus chose these specific men.
    1. First, Jesus chose these men because His work had to GO ON.
      - a. The Lord never had any doubt that at the end of His road would be the cross. He knew that in the end He must die for the sins of the world.
      - b. In fact, there had ALREADY been ONE attempt on His life.
        - (1). After Jesus had won His battle over temptation with Satan while in the wilderness, we're told Jesus eventually returned to His home town of Nazareth.

(2). **Luke 4:16-22** – *So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. 17 And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: 18 "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; 19 to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD." 20 Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." 22 So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?"*

(3). **Luke 4:28-30** – *So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, 29 and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they*

*might throw Him down over the cliff. 30 Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.*

- c. Jesus knew the day would come when His enemies would finally put Him to death, therefore He needed an inner circle of men whom He could train to know Him, to understand Him (even if their understanding of Him would be incomplete).
  - d. And, He needed men who would be devoted to Him – men who would come to know His purpose, and who would carry it out after His life had been taken from them.
  - e. For Jesus, His men would be living books – men sent into the world to preach the message of a risen Savior. His message would not die with Him. It would live on in the lives of the apostles.
2. But, another reason Jesus chose these specific men was because His work had to GO OUT.
- a. Since Jesus, as God the Son, had chosen to take upon Himself the form of man, He was naturally limited as a man.
    - (1). He could be in only one place at a time – His voice could only reach a limited number of people.
    - (2). In ancient times, there were no forms of mass communication.

- (a). No special broadcast links with communication satellites to beam His message to millions of homes around the world.
  - (b). No Internet through which Jesus could gain access to millions of people in every nation – anywhere there was another computer.
  - (c). No print media where His message could be prepared on the printed page and then distributed to millions – all printed in the thousands of languages and dialects of the world.
- (3). In Jesus' day, if a message was to be taken to men, it had to be taken to them personally – it was taken TO men BY men.
- b. Therefore, Jesus needed men to go where He could not go, and speak where He could not speak.

**BODY:**

- I. There are three accounts of Jesus choosing the twelve – and each account will contribute in helping us understand the purpose of Jesus in choosing THESE particular men. These are found in Matthew, Mark and Luke.
  - A. Let's look at each account:

1. **Matthew 10:1-4** – *And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. 2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.*
2. **Mark 3:13-19** – *And He went up on the mountain and called to Him those He Himself wanted. And they came to Him. 14 Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach, 15 and to have power to heal sicknesses and to cast out demons: 16 Simon, to whom He gave the name Peter; 17 James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, "Sons of Thunder"; 18 Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Cananite; 19 and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him. And they went into a house.*
3. **Luke 6:13-16** – *Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to*

*God. 13 And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles: 14 Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; 15 Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot; 16 Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.*

B. There are several things we notice about the manner in which Jesus selected the twelve.

1. First, we notice that Jesus INVITED the twelve.

a. In **Mark 3:13** and **Luke 6:13**, both writers mention the fact that Jesus “*CALLED*” His disciples. However, the word for “call” is different in the two accounts.

(1). In **Mark**, the word means “to invite,” and in **Luke**, the word means “to summon.”

b. So then, Jesus began by doing two things:

(1). First, He began with an INVITATION – an invitation is something which we can either accept or reject. This is simply another way of saying Jesus wanted volunteers.

(2). Second, Jesus began with a CHALLENGE – He was NOT inviting them to honor and prestige, nor to ease and safety, nor to financial gain and material advancement. It

was a challenge to leave all – to take up the cross – and to follow Him.

2. The second thing we notice about this invitation of Jesus is the fact that Jesus also **CHOSE** the twelve.
    - a. In **Luke 6:13**, it says that Jesus “chose” twelve men from His disciples. This word implied a deliberate choice and selection (See: **John 15:19** – “I chose you out of the world”).
    - b. Jesus saw something in these twelve men that set them apart from the rest of His disciples. They would become close to Him, and assist Him in carrying out His task better than any of the others.
  3. The third thing we notice about this invitation and selection is that Jesus **APPOINTED** the twelve.
    - a. **Mark 3:14** says that Jesus “appointed” (“ordained”) the twelve. The word “appointed” or “ordained” suggests these men were set apart for a special service – an appointment for a special place in the plan and purpose of God.
- B. In addition to the **MANNER** in which Jesus selected the twelve, it is also important to understand **WHY** He selected these men.
1. First, the selection of these men was for **TWO** great purposes – in other words, they were selected to be with Him for **TWO** reasons:

- a. First, and perhaps most important, these men had to be with Jesus for THEIR SAKE.
  - (1). It has been said that no man can bring others to Jesus until he knows the Savior himself. These men had to be with Jesus to learn **FROM** Him the greatest message the world would ever hear, and to learn **THROUGH** Him the genuine heart of compassion and self-sacrifice that would make the message meaningful to all who heard it.
  - (2). We can't expect people to listen to us until we show to them we have a genuine love for them and for their souls – only then will they hear what we have to say because they know it will be spoken out of a deep love for their eternal welfare.
- b. And second, these men had to be with Jesus for HIS SAKE. Jesus needed close friends – a group of close friends to whom He could open His heart and to whom He could reveal His most intimate thoughts.
- c. **John 15:15** – *“No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.”*

2. But there's another reason why Jesus chose these specific men – namely, because He wanted men who would truly be DISCIPLES.
  - a. The word “disciple” in the Greek means “the learner.”
  - b. Jesus didn't simply need a bunch of followers – He needed men who would LEARN from Him all He had to teach them. These men would be the disciples AMONG the disciples. They would learn the REAL meaning, and gain the REAL insights of the Savior's teachings, and they would, in turn, pass them on to other disciples.
  - c. No man could claim to know more about the Lord than these men. After all, they would spend three years closely following Him, and learning from Him as no other man would.
3. Another reason why Jesus chose these twelve men is because Jesus needed APOSTLES.
  - a. The word “apostle” means “one who is sent out” – an “ambassador.”
  - b. Both **Matthew** and **Luke** actually call the twelve “the apostles” – meaning that these men were called to be with Christ so that they might be able to go forth as His ambassadors, sent by heaven to preach the gospel of a resurrected Christ to a lost and dying world – a world dying in sin.

c As “ambassadors,” they would have two main functions to perform – they were sent TO PREACH and TO HEAL **(Matthew 10:7-8; Mark 3:14-15).**

(1). In PREACHING, they would be heralds of the King – announcing that the King has arrived – and proclaiming the message of the King.

(a). In everything they DID or SAID, they would be representing Jesus Christ to the world around them.

(2). In HEALING, they would be demonstrating the power and the love of God – as they powerfully confirmed the truths they were preaching by the miracles they were performing.

II. Among all the phrases and words Jesus used to describe these men and the purposes for which they were selected, there is one phrase which seemed to fit them best – it was the special title He gave them when He told them He would make them “FISHERS OF MEN.”

A. Many of the twelve disciples were, in fact, fishermen by trade. And this title was a one-word summary of the kind of men they would need to be, and a description of the way they would need to approach their work.

1. The life and work of a fisherman compels him to LIVE CLOSE TO GOD.

- a. Men who make their living on the sea – especially the treacherous Sea of Galilee – were all well aware of the powerful forces of God in nature.

(1). The very fact that their life was on the water, with all the sudden storms and high waves that constantly posed a threat, made every fisherman deeply aware of God.

- b. Therefore, Jesus chose twelve men who, for the most part, were already familiar with the majesty and power of God.

2. Fishermen are also MEN OF COURAGE.

- a. In those days, the man who made his living on the sea, more than anyone else, was constantly placing his life in danger. They not only lived with danger, they also learned to cope with it.

- b. Therefore, Jesus chose men who were accustomed to taking risks – men who would be willing to launch out into the deep, facing all the dangers and challenges that would come with being FISHERS OF MEN. Jesus needed men of COURAGE.

3. Fishermen are also known as MEN OF PATIENCE AND PERSEVERANCE.

- a. Anyone who makes his living on the sea will face times of immense discouragement.

- (1). In the days of Jesus, fishermen didn't have all the modern conveniences of electronic equipment designed to spot and track large schools of fish beneath the water.
  - (2). They had to be patient – waiting for long periods of time for the catch. They also had to face the fact that all their waiting might be for nothing – and that they would come home empty-handed. That happened often.
- b. So, Jesus needed men who had learned to work and wait – and if necessary, men who could keep from becoming discouraged in the face of complete failure. He needed men who would NEVER GIVE UP.
4. Finally, fishermen are of necessity MEN OF JUDGMENT.
- a. They have a certain NATURAL WISDOM – knowing WHEN to fish, WHERE to fish, and HOW to fish (either by hook or by net) – either bringing in the catch in large quantities, or one at a time.
  - b. Likewise, Jesus chose men who would learn how to choose the right time, the right place, and the right method of bringing in the “catch” of lost souls.
    - (1). At times, it would be with a net – gathering up as many as possible (all varieties of fish) within in a short period of time.

- (2). On other occasions, it would be with one hook, fishing for only one fish.

## **CONCLUSION:**

- I. Jesus chose His apostles – His fishers of men – with great skill and wisdom.
  - A. These men would never be sent to a seminary, would never graduate from a college, and would never be given the formal religious training that most people would think essential for such a task as this.
    1. On the contrary, these men would be PERSONALLY trained by the Master Teacher Himself, Jesus Christ. He would PERSONALLY teach them through the many experiences they would witness during the next three years.
      - a. They would see all the SUCCESSES and all the FAILURES. They would come to know the REAL hearts of men and women when they are confronted with the message that the Messiah and Savior of the world has come.
      - b. And, they would see many turn TO the Lord, and they would also see many turn AWAY from the Lord.
    - B. Although these men would never have the kind of formal training most would expect for such an important task as theirs, the day would come when these men would have the full responsibility of taking the message of Jesus Christ to a world lost in sin.

1. They would have the responsibility of being sent out as Ambassadors of Jesus Christ – to turn the world away from sin, and turn the hearts of men and women everywhere to the God of heaven, and to the Christ that died for them.
- II. These men have come to you and me with the message about Jesus Christ.
- A. They haven't talked to us PERSONALLY about the risen Savior, but they have given us the message in their LETTERS and other writings found in what we call "The New Testament."
  - B. It's now up to you – will you receive their message or reject it?
  - C. Which will it be?