

# Jesus Called Twelve

“[Jesus] ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach” (Mark 3:14).

“Jesus had called His disciples that He might send them forth as His witnesses, to declare to the world what they had seen and heard of Him. Their office was the most important to which human beings had ever been called, and was second only to that of Christ Himself. They were to be workers together with God for the saving of the world.”—*The Review and Herald*, January 11, 1912.

**Suggested Reading:** *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 290–297.

## 1. Twelve Disciples

- a. What kind of people did Christ train to proclaim the message of salvation to the world? What were their names? Matthew 10:2–4.
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“Our Saviour . . . connected with Himself men who were faulty in character and granted them the benefits of His teachings and example, that they might have an opportunity to see their errors and correct them.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 43.

- a. Matthew 10:2-4 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The 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 publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

## 1. Twelve Disciples

- b. What statement of Christ shows that He knew the character of those men? John 6:70.
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“The Saviour knew the character of the men whom He had chosen; all their weaknesses and errors were open before Him.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 291.

“Among the twelve apostles was a traitor. Judas was accepted, not because of his defects of character, but notwithstanding them.”—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 43, 44.

- b. John 6:70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

## 2. Judas

### a. How and why did Christ accept Judas? Matthew 8:19, 20.

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“While Jesus was preparing the disciples for their ordination, one who had not been summoned urged his presence among them. It was Judas Iscariot, a man who professed to be a follower of Christ. He now came forward, soliciting a place in this inner circle of disciples. With great earnestness and apparent sincerity he declared, ‘Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest.’ Jesus neither repulsed nor welcomed him, but uttered only the mournful words: ‘The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head’ (Matthew 8:19, 20). . . .

“The disciples were anxious that Judas should become one of their number. He was of commanding appearance, a man of keen discernment and executive ability, and they commended him to Jesus as one who would greatly assist Him in His work. They were surprised that Jesus received him so coolly.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 293, 294.

a. Matthew 8:19-20 And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. 20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

## 2. Judas

- b. What choice was open before Judas, as it is for all of us? Deuteronomy 30:19.
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“If [Judas] would open his heart to Christ, divine grace would banish the demon of selfishness, and even Judas might become a subject of the kingdom of God. . . .

“Judas had the same opportunities as had the other disciples. He listened to the same precious lessons. But the practice of the truth, which Christ required, was at variance with the desires and purposes of Judas.”—*Ibid.*, pp. 294, 295.

- b. Deuteronomy 30:19 I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live:

## 2. Judas

- c. In what way alone could Judas have chosen life, and what would have such a choice involved on his part? John 1:12, 13; 1 Peter 1:22, 23.
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“[Judas] was connected with the disciples, that, through the instruction and example of Christ, he might learn what constitutes Christian character, and thus be led to see his errors, to repent, and, by the aid of divine grace, to purify his soul ‘in obeying the truth’ (1 Peter 1:22).”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 44.

c. John 1:12-13 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

1 Peter 1:22-23 Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: 23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

### 3. "Learn Of Me"

- a. How does the apostle Paul describe the simplicity of the men and women called to work for God? 1 Corinthians 1:26–28.
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“God takes men as they are, with the human elements in their character, and trains them for His service, if they will be disciplined and learn of Him. They are not chosen because they are perfect, but notwithstanding their imperfections, that through the knowledge and practice of the truth, through the grace of Christ, they may become transformed into His image.”—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 294.

“In the common walks of life there is many a toiler patiently treading the round of his daily tasks, unconscious of latent powers that, roused to action, would place him among the world’s great leaders. The touch of a skillful hand is needed to arouse and develop those dormant faculties.”—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 511.

- a. 1 Corinthians 1:26-28 For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: 27 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are:

### 3. "Learn Of Me"

- b. What did the call to service for Christ mean for those first disciples? Luke 14:27, 33; Ephesians 4:20–24.
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“All the disciples had serious faults when Jesus called them to His service. Even John, who came into closest association with the meek and lowly One, was not himself naturally meek and yielding. He and his brother were called ‘the sons of thunder.’ . . . [But] by beholding Christ, they became transformed in character.”—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 295, 296.

b. Luke 14:27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

Ephesians 4:20-24 But ye have not so learned Christ; 21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

### 3. "Learn Of Me"

- c. Of whom did the disciples need to learn in order to fulfill their calling? Upon what principle was their education based? Matthew 11:29; John 17:26.
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“A life devoted to God should not be a life of ignorance. Many speak against education because Jesus chose uneducated fishermen to preach the gospel. They assert that He showed preference for the uneducated. But there were many learned and honorable men who believed the teaching of Christ. Had these fearlessly obeyed the convictions of their consciences, they would have followed Him.”—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 511.

c. Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

John 17:26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

## 4. Making Our Calling Sure

- a. What does the apostle Paul mean when he says that he was always praying for the believers in Thessalonica “that our God would count you worthy of this calling”? 2 Thessalonians 1:11.
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a. 2 Thessalonians 1:11 Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power:

## 4. Making Our Calling Sure

- b. How are the “partakers of the heavenly calling” (Hebrews 3:1) instructed to make their calling sure? 2 Peter 1:2–11.
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“You are not to think that you must wait until you have perfected one grace before cultivating another. No; they are to grow up together, fed continually from the fountain of charity; every day that you live, you can be perfecting the blessed attributes fully revealed in the character of Christ; and when you do this, you will bring light, love, peace, and joy into your homes.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary* [E.G. White Comments], vol. 7, p. 943.

b. Hebrews 3:1 Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;  
2 Peter 1:2-11 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, 3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: 4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. 5 And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; 6 And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; 7 And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. 8 For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. 10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: 11 For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

## 5. JESUS STILL CALLS MEN AND WOMEN

- a. In this time of the end, what scriptures should we bear in mind with regard to the finishing of God's work on earth? Matthew 24:14; 9:37, 38; 2 Corinthians 4:7.
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"He who called the fishermen of Galilee is still calling men to His service. And He is just as willing to manifest His power through us as through the first disciples. However imperfect and sinful we may be, the Lord holds out to us the offer of partnership with Himself, of apprenticeship to Christ. He invites us to come under the divine instruction, that, uniting with Christ, we may work the works of God. . . .

"[2 Corinthians 4:7, RV quoted.] This is why the preaching of the gospel was committed to erring men rather than to the angels. It is manifest that the power which works through the weakness of humanity is the power of God. . . . Having been in peril themselves, they are acquainted with the dangers and difficulties of the way, and for this reason are called to reach out for others in like peril. There are souls perplexed with doubt, burdened with infirmities, weak in faith, and unable to grasp the Unseen; but a friend whom they can see, coming to them in Christ's stead, can be a connecting link to fasten their trembling faith upon Christ.

"We are to be laborers together with the heavenly angels in presenting Jesus to the world. With almost impatient eagerness the angels wait for our cooperation; for man must be the channel to communicate with man. And when we give ourselves to Christ in whole-hearted devotion, angels rejoice that they may speak through our voices to reveal God's love."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 297.

- a. Matthew 24:14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

Matthew 9:37-38 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; 38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

2 Corinthians 4:7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

## PERSONAL REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Although Jesus knew that Judas would betray Him, why and how did He accept Judas?
2. How can we avoid the tragic mistakes of Judas?
3. Explain some key aims and requirements in collaborating with Christ.
4. What is the real secret of successful evangelism?
5. How are we instructed to make our calling sure?