

Twelve Ordinary Men
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•The Master Who Called Them

•*Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world's eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important. As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God. (1 Cor 1:26-29)*

•Another Look

- If Jesus walked by the spot where you are seated right now, what three things would you observe about Him almost immediately?
- As you consider the Twelve, which one do you already identify with most closely? Why?
- Quote from page xiii – What observations about Jesus occur to you based on the way He chose His apostles?

•Their Teacher:

- What are the primary characteristics about Jesus' relationship with His disciples (the group) and His apostles (the Twelve)? pp.14-21.
- The difference between a student and an apostle.
- He knew that His earthly end was near, His impending death, resurrection and ascension.
- At this time, His focus changed from the multitudes to the Twelve.
- Top priority would be given to the ones He would leave behind to carry on the work.

•Their Uncommon Calling:

- Notice the chapter title. Why is Jesus' call an *uncommon calling*?
 - They founded the church; They provide vital leadership; They are the channels for the N.T.
 - They were the only source for doctrine (Acts 2:42).
 - They were given to edify the church (Eph 4:11-12).
 - They were examples of virtue (Eph 3:5).
 - They had power to perform miracles to confirm their message (Heb 2:3-4).

•Quote from page 14

•Matthew 17:1-9 (ordinary men and extraordinary opportunities given to them).

- How does this passage illustrate the degree to which Jesus revealed Himself to His apostles?
 - He was with Moses (Law) and Elijah (Prophets).
 - They witnessed His glory (as from the beginning).
 - They heard the voice of the Father.

- They were not able to remain there, they had a task.
- They were told to remain quiet about this.
- The event did not really have a lasting effect upon His disciples, until much later.
- 1 Corinthians 1:26-29
 - What does this passage tell you about God and His purposes?
 - We do not need to be wise, powerful or wealthy.
 - God uses those the world considers foolish.
 - God uses the powerless to bring about His purpose.
 - No one then can boast in the presence of God.
- Apparent contradiction of callings?
 - What four “phases” does MacArthur use to explain the different texts (pp. 3-5)?
 - Calling to conversion (Jn 1:23-51); not yet into full time discipleship, remained in their jobs.
 - Calling to ministry (Lk 5:3-11); The timing was wrong, The place was wrong, Peter was exhausted.
 - Calling to apostleship (Matt 10:1-4, Lk 6:12-16); sort of internship, 2 X 2.
 - Calling to martyrdom (after the resurrection).
 - The first chapter deals mainly with phase three.
- Spending all night in prayer?
 - How does MacArthur describe the phrase, He “continued all night in prayer to God” (Lk 6:12)? (page 15)
 - Enduring a task through the night, remaining awake, immense weight upon Him (10-12 hours).
 - The whole night in the “prayer of God” in inter-Trinitarian communion.
 - Praying not for clarity on whom to choose; omniscience issue.
 - Praying for the men He would appoint; the absolute wisdom of His choice; acting as Mediator of their behalf.
- Cleansing of the Temple (Jn 2:13-16)
 - How did this event define the relationship with the religious establishment in Israel (p. 8)?
 - A devastating blow to institutionalized Judaism.
 - Religious nobility as thieves and hypocrites.
 - Condemned them for spiritual bankruptcy.
 - According to John, Jesus began His ministry in an all-out assault on the Jewish establishment.
 - Choosing the Twelve was also a judgment on institutionalized Judaism; common men rather than a Pharisee, Scribe or Sadducee.
 - What similarities do you see between the conditions in the early Temple and the present state of the church?

- Unconventional Wisdom?
 - Jesus violated modern conventional wisdom many times in His ministry. How did He do that (p. 2)?
 - He could have played off His popularity more.
 - Perhaps He could have exploited His fame.
 - He chose feeble men rather than advance His agenda through mob force, military might, personal popularity or a public relations campaign.
- Instruments in God's hands?
 - “Those men were instruments in God's hands – just as you and I can be God's instruments today.” (p. xv).
 - How would you explain that claim to a brand new believer who wonders where he or she fits in the church?
- Questions from John 1:47-49
 - Who brought Nathaniel to Jesus?
 - What was Nathaniel's reaction to Jesus' background?
 - What did Jesus' comment to Nathaniel reveal about the Savior's insight?
 - How did Nathaniel respond to Him?
 - How would you have responded?
 - It the fact of Jesus' complete knowledge of you a source of comfort or concern to you?
- Questions from Luke 6:12-16
 - What did Jesus do all night on the mountain?
 - What clue do you see in these verses that not all who follow Jesus will do so in the same way?
 - What are the main differences between how Jesus prayed and how you pray?
 - What keeps you from praying like Jesus?
 - If you were one of the Twelve, how would you want Luke to describe you?
 - Jesus spent the night interceding for the Twelve, how does this make you feel about His intercessory role in your life?
- Questions from Luke 5:17-39
 - What kind of response is Jesus receiving from those who observed His ministry?
 - Who were His opponents?
 - For what was Jesus criticized?
 - What is the motive behind the criticism?
 - Why did this recruitment come on the heels of this building opposition?
 - How can you learn from the way Jesus dealt with opposition that came His way?
- Questions from John 2:13-16
 - What did Jesus do upon entering the Temple?
 - How would you describe the place Jesus went to pray?
 - How were His actions received?
 - Does Jesus' behavior trouble you?

- When would it be appropriate to take such physical action to something or someone?
- If Jesus walked into your life today, what actions would He take to “clean house?”
- Questions from Luke 22:39-40
 - What was Jesus accustomed to doing?
 - How would you describe this place of prayer?
 - What did Jesus ask His disciples to pray about?
 - How did they respond to the request?
 - How would the place you regularly pray compare to the Mount of Olives?
 - Who might be observing your prayer routine?
 - What would happen if you invited them to join you?