

Twelve Ordinary Men
Scott Chafee
King's Grant Baptist Church
Discipleship Ministry

- The Men Jesus Called
- Another look:
 - These men were perfectly ordinary. What examples did MacArthur give? (p. xii)
 - None was renowned for scholarship.
 - No track record as theologians.
 - No outstanding abilities or intellect.
 - “One of the main things that motivated Tyndale to translate the Scriptures into the common language was a survey of English clergy.” What did that survey reveal? (p. 9)
 - Most did not know who the Twelve were!
 - Only a few could name four or five of the leaders.
 - “It’s not amazing that He drew so many disciples. What is amazing is that anyone rejected Him.” (p. 17) How does MacArthur explain why the masses quit following Jesus?
 - The message was more than they could bear.
 - They were following Him for the wrong reasons.
 - Explain what MacArthur says is the significance of the number twelve. (p. 19)
 - Symbolic importance – 12 tribes in Israel.
 - But Israel was apostate.
 - In choosing 12, he sought new leadership for a new covenant.
- Biblical connections:
 - Take a look at 2 Cor 2:16 as an observable strategy for God to use people (p. xiv). How does that text relate to the individuals Jesus chose as disciples? To what does this text ultimately point?
 - God uses weak vessels to accomplish His plans.
 - Zech 4:6 explains why Jesus chose a ragtag team of imperfect individuals instead of relying on a slick PR campaign or brute force. What does this verse suggest is more important than might or power? (pp. 2-3)
 - The third phase of the calling was to apostleship, when they were sent out 2x2 (Mk 6:7). Perhaps they were not ready to go it alone. What are four benefits of companionship (Ecc 4:9-12)?
 - Results in good reward for one’s work.
 - If one falls the other can help him up.
 - They will warm each other.
 - There is strength in numbers.

- Compare the qualities of leadership recorded in 1 Tim 3:2-7 and Titus 1:6-9.
 - What are the common elements?
 - Above reproach, temperate, self-controlled, respectable.
 - Husband of one wife, hospitable, teachable.
 - Not given to drunkenness, or lovers of money.
 - Manages one's own house.
 - Based on what you know of the Twelve, are ordinary individuals capable of these qualities?
 - They proved that you can be ideal without being perfect!
- According to Mark 3:14, what was the two-step process used in commissioning the Twelve?
 - To be with Him – being vs. doing; living in our strength or His? producing vs. abiding?
 - To be sent out to preach.
- Lesson highlights:
 - In what practical ways did the Twelve assist Jesus' growing ministry? (pp. xiv-xv)
 - Administrative assistance.
 - Division of labor.
 - Ministered to Jesus' daily needs.
 - Why did Jesus not choose the Twelve from the religious establishment? What elements of hypocrisy and hierarchy do you see today?
 - The leaders repudiated everything Jesus stood for.
 - They hated Him and His message.
 - He was a threat to their power.
 - The Twelve were Galileans. What conclusions may be drawn from that characterization? (p. 10)
 - Looked down upon them.
 - Unfair discrimination.
 - If Jesus chose Galileans today, from what people group in our culture might He draw?
 - The fact that Jesus chose these twelve from possibly hundreds of followers underscores what theological doctrine?
 - Divine sovereignty.
 - Why is election helpful to describe this reality? Or is it helpful?
 - In an election the person is free to choose whom they want.
 - That is the way it is with God. Under no obligation, He freely chooses who he wants.

- What four roles comprised their apostolic task? (pp. 22-23)
 - To be an ambassador – *Shaliah*, having authority; first preachers of the New Covenant & church leaders.
 - To edify the church – the foundation stones of the church, inspired by the Spirit to write God’s word.
 - To be examples of virtue (Eph 3:5 – holy apostles).
 - To perform miracles to confirm their message.
- Have you ever sensed that you were being used by God as an “instrument in His hands?”
- William Tyndale’s survey of 16th-century clergy revealed that few knew who the Twelve were. How many can you name without looking them up? (*Mt. and Mk. are different from Lk and Acts*)
 - Peter, Andrew, James and John.
 - Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew.
 - James (son of Alpheus), Thaddeus.
 - Simon (the zealot), Judas (Iscariot)
 - Judas (son of James – *is in Luke/Acts, no Thaddeus*)
- The apostles did not measure up in what five areas? (pp.25-26)
 - They lacked spiritual understanding (Matt 15:16-17, Lk 24:25).
 - They lacked humility (they were self-absorbed – Matt 20:20-28, Mk 9:33-37, Lk 9:46).
 - They lacked faith (four times, “O you of little faith” – Matt 6:30, 8:26, 14:31, 16:8).
 - They lacked commitment (with Him when the crowds cheered, but fleeing when it got tough – Mk 14:50).
 - They lacked power (like unable to cast a demon, but Pentecost was on the way – Acts 1:8).
- Questions from 1 Cor 1:26-29
 - What does this text reveal about the kind of people God uses to do His work?
 - Identify the categories that are listed.
 - How do the Twelve qualify as foolish and weak?
 - Who comes to mind when you think of unlikely people God has used in your life?
 - What parallel “lack of qualification” similar to the Twelve do you see in your life?
 - Based on His track record with the Twelve and others, how does Jesus view your abilities and lack thereof?

•Questions from Matt 4:18-20

- What are the circumstance surrounding this encounter with Jesus?
- What did Jesus say to them? How might have Jesus tweaked his invitation to you?
- What thoughts are going through your head as you consider the invitation?
- What would have been your response?
- Describe the moment when you decided to “follow” Jesus?
- What caused you to respond the way you did?

•Questions from 1 Tim 3:2-7

- List the qualifications for a bishop or overseer.
- Circle those that the Twelve would not been good at when Jesus first chose them.
- How can you reconcile that God can choose nobodies but also has high expectations?
- Which qualifications in this passage are easy for you? Which are more difficult?
- What was the means by which the apostles grew in their grasp of these qualities?
- In what ways are you following through as a potential leader in the church?

•Questions from John 15:16

- Based on this verse, who deserves credit for your being in the family of God?
- For what purpose did Jesus choose you?
- Who bears the responsibility for accomplishing this purpose?
- What fruit does God want to grow in your life?
- Looking back on your life, what fruit has remained and what is no longer observable?
- What actions might God take with you so that you will bear more or much fruit?

•Questions from Acts 4:13

- What is it that stood out about the apostles?
- What two words describe their ordinariness?
- Besides the dialect, what else was apparent to the observers?
- How did “being with Jesus” affect the Twelve?
- What would it take for people to notice today that we have been with Jesus?
- How important is spiritual maturity in gauging personal effectiveness?
- What would it take to make maturity your most important measurement of progress?