

Lesson 236

Jesus Chooses Twelve Apostles

Story Elements



- **Text:** Mark 3:7-19 (also Matt. 12:15-21; Luke 6:12-16)
- **Setting:** circa AD 28, probably in Galilee on the way back from Jerusalem
- **Characters:** God, Jesus, and the twelve apostles
- **Plot:** Having withdrawn to the Sea of Galilee, Jesus heals multitudes before praying all night regarding the choice of twelve men to become apostles.
- **Key word(s):** “_____” – This word literally means “sent ones.” Having selected these twelve men, Jesus’ ministry will begin to shift focus from preaching to the multitudes to training the twelve.
- **Climax:** **Luke 6:12** *And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.* In this pivotal verse we see that the doors of God’s will often swing on the hinges of prayer. It is no wonder that the next day Jesus made the very important choice of twelve men who would become the foundation of the church.

Review

1. Jewish leadership, enraged over Jesus’ proclaiming his divine right to work on the sabbath, *went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians¹ against him, how they might destroy him.* (Mark 3:6) *But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him...* (Matt. 3:12)

Healing Multitudes

2. (Matt. 12:17-21) Jesus withdrew to the Sea of Galilee, possibly Decapolis, which would’ve put him in mostly _____ territory. Matthew connects this scene with the prophecy in Isaiah 42, *And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.*
3. (Mark 3:7-12) Notice Mark’s description of the enormous crowd that followed Jesus:
 - (a) They were from all over the region: Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, Jordan, Tyre, and Sidon.
 - (b) They fervently desired to be healed by Jesus, thronging him so closely that a _____ was needed to prevent being pushed into the sea.
 - (c) The needs of the crowd were both physical (*plagues*) and spiritual (_____ *spirits*).
 - i. Jesus healed every sick person that came to him (Matt. 12:16).
 - ii. He cast out every unclean spirit, which *fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.*

APPLICATION → Matthew notes that Jesus *charged them that they should not make him known.* (Matt. 12:16) Again we see Jesus in his humility, restricting his fame (as much as could be) because his *hour was not yet come*, and he must perfectly follow the Father’s will. In this description of humble _____, we see the fulfillment of Isaiah’s Elect Servant, who *shall not cry, nor lift up, or cause his voice to be heard in the street.* (Isa 42:2)

Praying Alone

4. (Luke 6:12) After healing the multitudes, Jesus retires to the top of a mountain alone to pray. Notice the

¹ Herodians – “This secular, political party, which took its name from Herod Antipas and was strong in support for Rome, opposed the Pharisees on nearly every issue, but were willing to join forces with them because both desperately wanted to destroy Jesus.”

John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005) 1204.

value Jesus placed on prayer...

- (a) by praying when he would've been completely exhausted from a day of healing multitudes. Instead of sleeping, he prays. **Isaiah 40:31** they that _____ upon the Lord shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings as eagles; They shall run, and not be weary; And they shall walk, and not faint.
- (b) by praying all _____. "We have a great deal of **business** at the throne of grace, and we should take a great **delight** in communion with God, and by both these we may be kept sometimes long at prayer"²
- (c) by praying before he makes an important _____.

APPLICATION → Upon the hinge of prayer does the door close upon great deeds and open upon great decisions.

Choosing Twelve

- 5. (Luke 6:13) After praying all night, when the sun came up, Jesus chose twelve of his disciples to become his Apostles.

APPLICATION → J. C. Ryle, observing that this is the first _____ in the Church, said, "If we would have good ministers, we must remember our Lord's example, and pray for them...We do not ask God to raise up a constant supply of converted young men to fill our pulpits, and God chastises our neglect by withholding them."³

- 6. The table below contains a list of the apostles according to their corresponding passages. Though the lists don't match in their ordering, the 3 groups always have the same 4 men.

Mark 3:16ff	Matt. 10:2ff	Luke 6:14ff	Acts 1:13ff
Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Simon Peter
James	Andrew	Andrew	James
John	James	James	John
Andrew	John	John	Andrew
Philip	Philip	Philip	Philip
Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Thomas
Matthew	Thomas	Matthew	Bartholomew
Thomas	Matthew	Thomas	Matthew
James (son of Alphaeus)	James (son of Alphaeus)	James (son of Alphaeus)	James (son of Alphaeus)
Thaddeus	Thaddaeus	Simon the Zealot	Simon the Zealot
Simon the Canaanite	Simon the Cananaean	Judas (brother of James)	Judas (brother of James)
Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	

APPLICATION → These men were very different from each other, and yet they shared one very common trait: they were common men. "Church was not built by might, or by power, but by the Spirit of the living God. (Zech. 4:6.) ...A religion which turned the world upside down, while its first preachers were all poor men, must needs have been from heaven. ...With a doctrine most unpalatable to the natural heart--with nothing whatever to bribe or compel obedience--a few lowly Galileans shook the world and changed the face of the Roman empire. One thing only can account for this. The Gospel of Christ, which these men proclaimed, was the truth of God."⁴

Answer Key: Key word(s): "Apostles" • 2. Gentile • 3. b) boat; c) unclean; → restraint • 4. a) wait; b) night; c) decision • 5. → ordinations

² Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 1842.

³ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospel, VOLUME TWO, Luke* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books; 2007) 171.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 172.