

Jesus Calls 12 Apostles

Matthew 10:1-4, **Mark 3:13-19**, Luke 6:12-16

And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons. He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter); James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder); Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him. (English Standard Version – ESV)

Background:

- Jesus “went up on the mountain” (Mark 3:13) to appoint 12 men as apostles. Godly people often ascended mountains to commune with God (e.g. experiences of Moses and Elijah).

- Israel consisted of twelve tribes, and if groups chose twelve leaders (as apparently those who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls did), they did so because they believed that their own group was the true, obedient remnant of Israel. “Apostles” (Mark 4:14) means commissioned representatives, the point here being that Jesus' authority to proclaim the kingdom and expel demons continues through his followers.

- Luke names “Judas son of James” in his gospel as one of the apostles, but Matthew and Mark name “Thaddeus” among the 12. Ancient business documents show that people were commonly known by several different names. Nicknames were also common, appearing even on tombs.

Questions:

- + Mark says that Jesus “called to him those whom he desired.” Why did Jesus desire them?
Why are the men Jesus appointed called apostles, and what mission did he call them to do?
What mission has God called you to do? How do you know, and what are you doing about it?