

Pentwater Bible Church

Gospel of Mark

Message 9

May 25, 2014



The Apostles Receive their Mission by Jean Fouquet Cir 1420

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Pentwater Bible Church

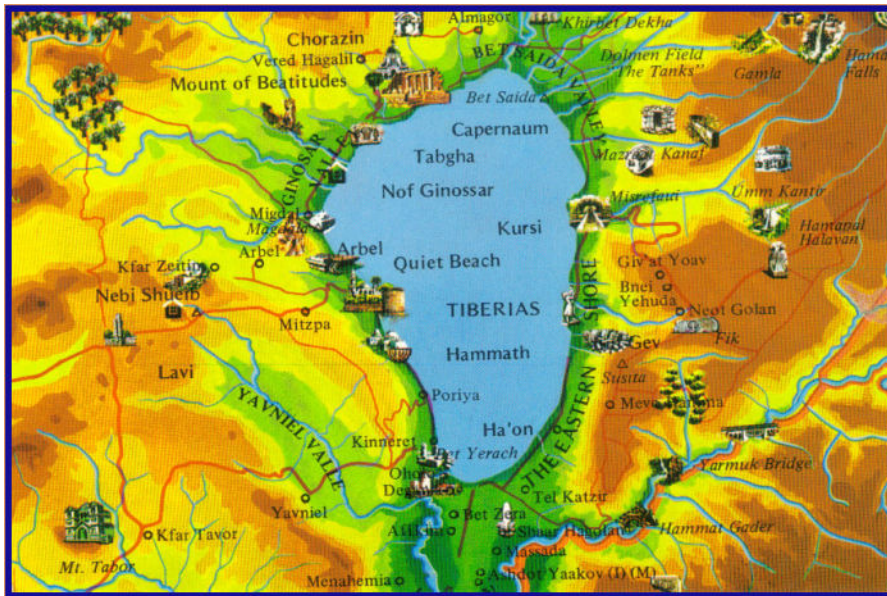
The Book of Mark
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JESUS SELECTS HIS APOSTLES

THE INNER CIRCLE COME IN FIRST

Mark 1:16-21

¹⁶ Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. ¹⁷ And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men. ¹⁸ And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him. ¹⁹ And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets. ²⁰ And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him. ²¹ And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the Sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught (KJV).



Map from evenatthedoors.com

The Sea of Galilee is a warm water lake about seven miles wide and thirteen miles long. Its water surface is about 685 feet below sea level. In biblical times it had a robust fishing industry. This is the region of Israel where Jesus was raised and where He started His ministry. Today it is simply called by the Israelites “Ha Galeel” or The Galilee. This is

the spot where He selected the fishermen for the first men who would become the first evangelizers promoting the story of God who entered time and space in the body of Jesus of Nazareth. The term apostle means sent forth. This is a Greek word *apostolos* from a Hebrew verb, *salach* to send which was used at the time of Jesus. It would designate those who carried about letters from their rulers to constituents. As a noun designating Jesus Himself (Hebrews 3:1) and the men He sent out. The word appears seventy-nine times in the New Testament (ten in the Gospels; twenty-eight in Acts; thirty-eight in the Epistles; and three in Revelation). Most are found in Luke-Acts (thirty-four) and in Paul's epistles (thirty-four), and refer to those appointed by Christ for a special function in the church. Their unique place is based not only on having witnessed the resurrection, but also on having been commissioned and empowered by the resurrected Lord to proclaim the gospel to all nations. Jesus so named them, as emissaries who would bring the good news to the world. These twelve men formed the nucleus of the early Church before the appointment of Paul. Of the twelve four were selected to be inner circle. They were Peter, James, John and Andrew who were chosen first. Jesus had them at some of His most special occasions. They were at the raising of Jairus' daughter from the dead (Mark 5:21-43), the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-9, Mark 9:2-8, Luke 9:28-36) describe it, and 2 Peter 1:16-18) and the Garden of Gethsemane. They would also be the four who would hear His Olivet Discourse regarding the end of the age and the ushering in of the Millennial Kingdom (Matthew 34-25, Luke 21, and Mark 13).

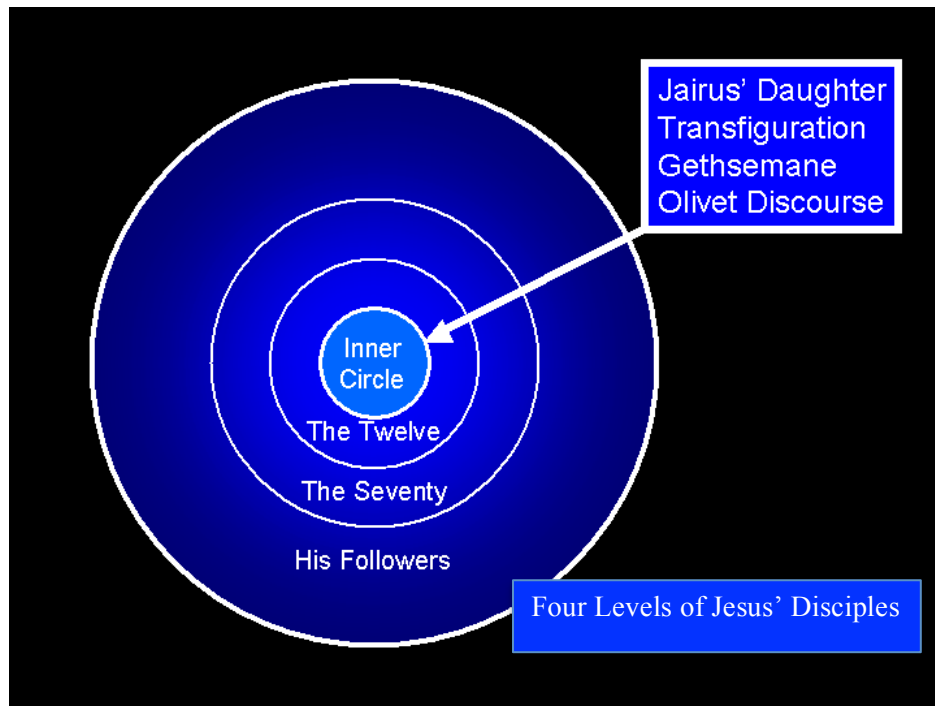


Chart from Chuck Missler's Olivet Discourse (text added)

Most of them would all ultimately die martyrs deaths refusing to stop telling the world about the king who had arrived. Matthew's gospel gives a more complete account of the selection of them and the powers Jesus gave them to start the Church.

Matthew 10:1-8

¹And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. ²Now 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; ³Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him. ⁵These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: ⁶But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ⁷And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. ⁸Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give. (KJV).

In addition to the inner circle that were His most trusted and closes confidants he had an additional eight who were called apostles. They were:

1. Philip
2. Bartholomew
3. Thomas
4. Matthew
5. James, the son of Alphaeus
6. Lebbaeus who was surnamed Thaddaeus
7. Simon
8. Judas Iscariot

This group was given special miraculous privileges to exercise *power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.* They could also *cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils:* In anointing them he made it clear that they got these gifts in abundance from Him therefore as He said, *freely ye have received, freely give.* This group was sent to the Jews only. As Jesus said, *“Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: ⁶But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”*

This message they were to disperse was the same about the Kingdom that John the Baptist (Matthew 3:1) and Jesus Himself (Matthew 4:17) proclaimed. By telling them to only go to the lost sheep of the House of Israel He was saying that they were the people who had received the covenants of God therefore the message should go to them first. The apostle Paul paralleled this command regarding the order of how the Gospel was to go out (Romans 1:16).

THE SEVENTY

Jesus had another group Luke calls the seventy. In Luke 10:1-24 they have the following experiences:

1. He sent them out in pairs
2. They went to prepare His way in every city and place He would go.
3. He told them the harvest of souls is great, but the workers are few.
4. They were to pray for their success.
5. He described them as lambs (disciples) going forth among dangerous wolves (the culture) and it required them to be hasty.
6. Through hospitality people would show whether they believed or not.
7. The message was the Messiah was coming and He could bring the Kingdom.
8. Stay only in houses, which accept you. Leave those who do not.
9. The cities that reject you/Me will be judged more severely judged than pagan cities, such as Tyre and Sidon, which did not have the benefit of the Lord's miraculous works and words.
10. The message they had was directly from Him.
11. The seventy experienced control over the demonic world.
12. Jesus affirmed His power over Satan stating He saw him fall as lightning. Jesus meant that Satan's power had been broken and even he was subject to Jesus' authority.
13. They had a special anointing which protected them from any harm. Even snakes and scorpions would not harm them.
14. Their names were to be written in Heaven.
15. Only the trusting followers of His saw His true nature, which was revealed to them by God the Father.
16. The worldly wise did not see Jesus divinity and power.
17. The seventy saw and did things that prophets of old desired to know which is the day of the Messiah's appearance in the world.

THE OTHER FOLLOWERS

In addition to the seventy He had a large number of loosely dedicated followers. When the way of following Jesus and its resultant persecution was eminent many left Him.

John 6:52-69

⁵² The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? ⁵³ Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. ⁵⁴ Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. ⁵⁶ He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ As the living Father hath sent me,

and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. ⁵⁸ This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever. ⁵⁹ These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. ⁶⁰ Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? ⁶¹ When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you? ⁶² What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? ⁶³ It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. ⁶⁴ But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. ⁶⁵ And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. ⁶⁶ From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. ⁶⁷ Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? ⁶⁸ Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. ⁷⁰ Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? ⁷¹ He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve (KJV).

Jesus' general followers were upset and dismayed to hear Him speak of eating flesh and drinking blood. He was not speaking of communion here because he did not implement that until later when He met with the twelve in the upper room for the last supper. Drinking His blood was a figure of speech. The Jews knew the Mosaic Law, which prohibited drinking animal's blood, "You must not eat . . . any blood" (Leviticus 3:17, 17:10–14). Blood was the means of atonement. It is the blood that makes atonement for life (Leviticus 17:11). Jesus was speaking of His making atonement by His death and giving life to those who personally receive Him (John 6:63). Faith in Christ's death brings eternal life and bodily resurrection. In the same way physical food sustains life, Jesus' spiritual food and drink, sustains His followers spiritually. His flesh and blood give eternal life to those who receive Him. One who partakes of Christ enjoys a mutual abiding relationship with Christ. He remains in Christ, and Christ remains in him.

Jesus gave this message in one of the synagogues where others could stand up and speak. Their services were not formal like most churches today. Jesus ended the message based on the manna incident from Exodus 16, and He repeats the major themes: Moses' bread did not give lasting life (salvation does not come by the Law); God has given the genuine life-giving Bread . . . from heaven; those who trust Jesus have eternal life.

As the people began to understand His teaching, they found it to be totally unacceptable. Besides the hostile Jewish leaders, many of the Galilean disciples turned away from Him. The popular enthusiasm for Jesus as a political Messiah was then over. They saw that He was not going to deliver them from Rome. He might be a great Healer, but His words were a hard (difficult) teaching. Who could accept it, that is, obey it? How could they personally appropriate Him?

Jesus knew His audience was grumbling. He asked what was so offensive to them. Paul wrote that the crucified Messiah was a “stumbling block” (*skandalon*) to the Jews (1 Corinthians 1:23). The Ascension of the Son of Man is also an offense to many even today. But His resurrection to glory is His vindication. He was crucified in weakness but He was raised in power (1 Corinthians 15:43).

Though the crowds assessed Jesus’ words as “hard” (John 6:60). From the start Jesus knew which followers were believers and which ones were unbelievers. This is another evidence of His supernatural knowledge (John 1:47; 2:24–25; 6:15). Jesus had taught that divine enablement was necessary for people to come to faith. The apostasy here should not be surprising. Believers who remain with Jesus demonstrate the internal work of the Holy Spirit. The unbelieving crowds are evidence that “the flesh counts for nothing.” His rejecting their desire to make Him their political king; His demand for personal faith; His teaching on atonement; His stress on total human inability and on salvation as a work of God—all these proved to be unpalatable for many people. They gave up being His disciples (Followers not the apostles). In fact He asked the apostles if they wanted to leave too? This question was designed to bolster their weak faith.

The Twelve were affected by the apostasy of the general followers, and Jesus used that occasion to reestablish their faith. They did not fully understand His words either and would not until after the Resurrection but they were faithful. Jesus knew that when He chose them.

Peter spoke up quickly professing his faith. He knew the difficulties in following Jesus, but he was convinced that Jesus’ words lead to life. No one else has the gift of eternal life. “We have believed and have known.” Peter was confident of the apostles’ commitment to Jesus as the Holy One of God. This title is unusual (a demon addressed Jesus that way; Mark 1:24). It suggests Jesus’ transcendence (“the Holy One”) and His representation of the Father (“of God”); therefore it is another way of confessing Him as Messiah. Peter knew this because God had revealed it to him (Matthew 16:17).

Jesus then asked, have I not chosen you, the Twelve? This choice was not election to salvation, but was Jesus’ call to them to serve Him. Yet, He said, one of you is a devil! Satan’s working in Judas was the same as Judas being the devil. Later in the Upper Room, Jesus again said one of the Twelve would betray Him. John called Judas “the traitor.” The disciples later could reflect on this prophecy of His and be strengthened in their faith. Judas was a very tragic figure, led by Satan; but he was still responsible for his own evil choices.

NEXT WEEK: MARK THE CALLING OF HIS APOSTLES

Please call or e-mail with any questions or comments

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