

The Twelve Apostles: An Introduction

Main Idea: God can use very ordinary people to accomplish extraordinary things for Him.

I. The identity of the twelve Apostles

- A. Their names – Peter, James, John, Andrew, Philip, Nathanael (Bartholomew), Matthew, Thomas, James (The Less; Son of Alphaeus), Simon (The Zealot), Judas (Thaddaeus, Lebbeaus – Not Iscariot), Judas Iscariot
- B. Their occupations
- C. Their role

II. The calling of the twelve Apostles

- A. A call to belief in Christ (John 1:35-51)
- B. A call to service for Christ (Matthew 4:18-22; Luke 5:3-11)
- C. A call to be representatives of Christ (Matthew 10:1-15; Luke 6:12-16)

III. The training of the twelve Apostles

- A. What type of training did they receive?
 - 1. Personal instruction from Jesus
 - 2. Eye-witness experiences of the character and power of Jesus

- 3. On-the-job training (Matthew 10:1; 7-15)
- B. Why did they need training?
 - 1. They needed spiritual understanding (Matthew 15:15-18, 16:9; Luke 24:25).
 - 2. They needed humility (Luke 9:46).
 - 3. They needed faith (Matthew 8:26; Mark 4:40; 16:14).
 - 4. They needed spiritual power (Mark 9:28).

IV. The impact of the twelve Apostles

- A. The Apostles were the authoritative source of teaching in the early church (Acts 2:42).
- B. The Apostles were examples of character and integrity (Ephesians 3:5).
- C. The Apostles' influence resulted in the *world being turned upside down* (Acts 17:6).

Conclusion:

For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence (I Corinthians 1:26-29).

Sources: *Twelve Ordinary Men* by John MacArthur
Training of the Twelve by A.B. Bruce