

Agape House of Worship  
Mid-Week Bible Study  
Wednesday, September 11, 2024

Topic: Study of the Lives of the 12 Disciples  
Text: Matthew 10:1-4; Luke 6:12-16

Speaker: Pastor Genevieve Kumapley

*<sup>12</sup> One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. <sup>13</sup> When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles: <sup>14</sup> Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, <sup>15</sup> Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, <sup>16</sup> Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. Luke 6:12-16 NIV*

The calling of the 12 disciples shows how God uses ordinary people for extraordinary purposes. Our study of the lives of the disciples is intended to prompt us to examine and consider our own lives and how God might be calling us to serve him and complete our kingdom assignment in our own unique way. The overall objective is to understand the lives, roles, and impact of the 12 disciples of Jesus Christ, exploring their journey from ordinary individuals to foundational members of the early church. Jesus chose **12 disciples** (Matthew 10:1-4) to follow Him and to spread His teachings. The disciples were foundational to the early church, representing the authority and completeness of Jesus’ mission on earth. The bible notes that disciples (later referred to as apostles) are the foundation of the church. Ephesians 2:19-20

Overview of the disciples: Who were they, and what were their backgrounds?

Disciple	Key Points
<p>Peter- The Rock- “Bold” Matthew 16:13-19; John 21:15-19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Original name was Simon, but renamed Peter by Jesus</li> <li>• Peter's journey from fisherman to a leader of the apostles.</li> <li>• His boldness and moments of weakness (e.g., denying Jesus).</li> <li>• Peter is noted as “walking on water (Matt 14:29; part of the transfiguration with James and John (Luke 9:33)</li> <li>• Peter was so bold that he had the guts to pull Jesus aside to talk the Lord out of dying (Mt 16:22)</li> <li>• Peter plans to support Jesus to the bitter end. He’s willing to die for Jesus, and even cuts off a man’s ear in an attempt to defend the Lord (Mk 14:29, 31; John 18:10)</li> <li>• Despite all his bravado, Peter’s more famous for denying Jesus three times yet he was restored by Jesus (John 21:15-19)</li> <li>• When the holy Spirit is poured out over the disciples, Peter is the one who stands up and preaches the gospel to the masses (Acts 2:14; 3:14-15; 11:1-18)</li> <li>• Peter wrote 2 epistles, and it is suggested the gospel of Mark written by John Mark was based on the Peter’s account of Jesus’s ministry</li> </ul> <p><i>Consider times when you have both succeeded and failed in your faith. How does the life of Peter encourage you in your walk with Christ?</i></p>
<p>James the Greater and John – Sons of Thunder  Mark 3:17; Luke 9:51-56; Matthew 20:20-28</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jesus gave the 2 brothers (sons of Zebedee) James and John the name “Boanerges” which means “sons of thunder”. They left their family fishing business to follow Jesus (Mark 1:19-20)</li> <li>• Initially, noted for their zeal (Luke 9:54-55) and their desire for greatness (Mark 10:35-38; Matt 20:20-22). But underwent transformation from seeking power to serving others.</li> <li>• James is the first apostle to be martyred: Herod puts him to death with the sword in an attempt to please the Jewish community (Acts 12:1–2). John lived a longer life -60 years more after resurrection</li> <li>• John became the ‘beloved’ – Jesus entrusted his mother to John.</li> <li>• John’s contribution to the New Testament.(wrote gospel of John, 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> John and Revelation); his noted to have written more about love and the most quoted bible verse. John 3:16</li> <li>• John ministered in Ephesus, and is exiled to the Isle of Patmos for his faith.</li> <li>• John is remembered as a Son of Thunder, the apostle of love, and the one who has the vision of Jesus’ glorious return.</li> <li>• <i>How can we balance between zeal for God and humility in service. How can we be passionate yet servant-hearted in our faith?</i></li> </ul>

<p>Andrew – The First Called</p> <p>John 1:35-42; John 6:8-9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Andrew had a quiet yet impactful ministry; former disciple of John the Baptist; had a key role in introducing others to Jesus, including his brother Peter. (John 1:35-42)</li> <li>• “worked nets to networking”</li> <li>• He showed significance of small acts of faith (the boy with the loaves and fishes). John 6:8-9</li> <li>• Andrew even helps Philip bring some God-fearing Greeks to see Jesus (John 12:20-22)- It is postulated he died bound on x-shaped cross</li> <li>• <i>Reflect on the importance of sharing Jesus with others. How can we be more intentional in our evangelism?</i></li> </ul>
<p>Philip (The Inquisitive) and Bartholomew (Nathanael) – the Skeptic</p> <p>John 1:43-51; John 14:8-9</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When we first meet Philip, (not the same as Philip the evangelist in Acts 6:5; 8:5); he tells his friend Nathanael that he has found “Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote” (John 1:38–41).</li> <li>• Philip’s desire to understand and his questions to Jesus (John 14:8-9); questions how 5000 people can be fed (John 6:5-7)</li> <li>• According to history, Philip took the gospel to Greece, and was martyred in Hierapolis</li> <li>• Not much is written about Bartholomew/Nathanael’s except initial skepticism and later affirmation of faith. “Can anything good come out of Nazareth? John 1:47; Jesus says describes him as one without deceit. Nathanael refers to Jesus as son of God on the spot</li> <li>• The value of seeking truth and being open to Jesus’ revelations</li> <li>• <i>How can you balance skepticism with trust in God’s Word?</i></li> </ul>
<p>Matthew (Levi) – The Tax Collector</p> <p>Matthew 9:9-13; Luke 5:27-32; Mark 2:14-15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Matthew’s background as a tax collector and his immediate response to Jesus’ call. (Matt 9:9; Luke 5:27). He was transformed from a sinner (cheater) to a Gospel writer. (Luke 5:30-31)</li> <li>• Through his life, we see Jesus’ inclusivity and love for the outcasts.</li> <li>• <i>Reflect on your own conversion story. How can you reach out to those who feel like outsiders?</i></li> </ul>
<p>Thomas (Didymus) – The Doubter</p> <p>John 20:24-29; John 11:16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Known for his doubts and his need for physical evidence of Jesus’ resurrection.(John 20:24-26)</li> <li>• His declaration of faith, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28)</li> <li>• Can be considered as “brave Thomas” as he went with Jesus to Judea to visit Lazarus when others tried to deter Jesus from going due to the plot of the Jews to kill Jesus (John 11:16)</li> <li>• We learn from his life that there is a balance between doubt and faith in a believer's life.</li> <li>• <i>Discuss how doubt can lead to a stronger faith. What doubts do you struggle with, and how can you bring them to Jesus?</i></li> </ul>
<p>James the Less, Simon the Zealot, and Thaddeus – The Lesser-Known Disciples</p> <p>Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15-16</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little is known about James the Less (Mark 15:40),(intended to be different from James, brother of John) Simon the Zealot, and Thaddeus (Judas/Jude).</li> <li>• Father of James the Less was Alphaeus; (not clear if he and Matthew had the same father)</li> <li>• Simon the “Zealot” (may have a member of revolutionary party; led by a man called Judas or just hot tempered); according to traditions, may have been killed by a saw)</li> <li>• Thaddeus (had multiple nicknames, (Judas, Jude, (Luke 6:16/John 14:22) Labbaeus may his first name and Thaddeus is his last name</li> <li>• The importance of every disciple, regardless of their level of fame or recognition.</li> <li>• The role of quiet, faithful service in the Kingdom of God.</li> <li>• God values all His servants, even those who work in the background.</li> <li>• <i>How can we honor those in our communities who serve quietly?</i></li> </ul>
<p>Judas Iscariot – The Betrayer</p> <p>Matthew 26:14-16; John 13:21-30</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Served as treasurer of the twelve, and he regularly embezzled from the money box (John 12:5-6)</li> <li>• His betrayal of Jesus out of self-ambition and influenced by Satan; Luke 22:3.</li> <li>• The tension between free will and destiny in Judas’ actions. He died by suicide (Matt 27:3-5)</li> <li>• Lessons can be drawn from Judas’ life about the dangers of greed, disillusionment, and betrayal.</li> <li>• <i>Examine your heart for areas of compromise or betrayal. How can you guard against the temptation to turn away from Jesus?</i></li> </ul>

In summary, each of the disciple had attributes that Jesus identified and helped them to mature as they journeyed with him. After the resurrection, they walked the life of Christ taught them and sent them to accomplish. We can learn from their lives and commit to completing the work that they began by spreading the good news.