

First Baptist Church Smiths Falls

Sunday, June 17, 2018

Scripture: Mark 3:16-19 New International Version (NIV)
16 These are the twelve he appointed: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter), 17 James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means “sons of thunder”), 18 Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot 19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.

Congregational Prayer: “Our Father”

Our Father, Which Art In Heaven, Hallowed Be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom Come. Thy Will Be Done, On Earth As It Is In Heaven. Give Us This Day, Our Daily Bread, And Forgive Us Our Trespases, As We Forgive Those Who Trespass Against Us. And Lead Us Not Into Temptation, But Deliver Us From Evil. For Thine Is The Kingdom, The Power And The Glory. Forever And Ever. Amen

Message: "The 3:16 Trail: Disciples"

Introduction:

- Okay, it's Trivia time. (Repeat) Let's start with the Canadian trivia: 1.

What Canadian city ranks as the most educated in Canada? Answer:

Ottawa Ontario. Question two: What city was home to North America's

first YMCA? Answer: Montréal Québec. Question three: What is

Canada's most purchased grocery item? Answer: Kraft Dinner. Question

4:80% of the world supply of this comes from Canada - what product?

Answer: maple syrup. Let's switch to Bible Trivia. Question one: Jesus

had 12 followers called His A_____s or D_____s.

Answer: apostles or disciples. Question two: All four of the Gospels

records a list of the disciples except for which [Matthew, Mark, Luke,

John]? Answer: John. Question three: Each list of the disciples,

including the list in Acts chapter 1, begins with which apostle? Answer:

Simon Peter. Question four: Each list of the disciples ends with the

same Apostle except for Acts chapter 1 - which disciple? Answer: Judas

Iscariot.

- Today, let's continue down the 3:16 Trail that we began after Easter, to see the disciples of Jesus, and to choose to be as they were to The Lord.

Part one: Apostles?

- We have been looking at chapters 3 and verse 16 of various passages in God's Holy Word, and we have been amazed to see God's plan of salvation and to see how we are to be in God's holy kingdom as followers of Jesus the Christ. Today's passage takes us to Mark 3:16-19 New International Version (NIV) which says: *"These are the twelve he appointed: Simon Peter.... Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him."*
- Let's start by talking about two words from today's trivia challenge: apostles and disciples. The word apostles comes from the Greek “apostolos,” a word that means "messenger." Indeed, the 12 disciples of Jesus had been sent out to deliver Christ's message to others, as we see in Mark chapter 6 verse 30 with the word apostle is used to describe the 12 who were sent out [Mark 6:7] to preach, cast out demons, and heal

sickness. An apostle is a person whom Jesus personally picked to do special jobs and to help spread the gospel. The list of apostles goes on a little bit further, from the 12 listed in the Gospels to the addition of Matthias in Acts chapter 1, and the addition of one more apostle, that being Paul [2 Timothy 1:1]. Matthias was chosen by God's divine lot, but had been picked by Jesus as a direct follower throughout all of the teaching of Jesus, while the apostle Paul was chosen by Christ when Jesus came to Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9). Paul too became a messenger for Jesus, an apostle. This is an important role, to speak the word of Christ into this world. This is a call and that we all must expect.

- The word disciple has the concept of discipline and it. The Bible admits that discipline is not something that we all enjoy: Hebrews 12:11 (New International Version) says: *"No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."* Discipline helps us to grow. Discipline helps us to become wise. Discipline helps to put us onto the right path, and keep us on that path in our lives, to the betterment of ourselves and to those around us. A disciple therefore is one who chooses to be under the discipline of a leader, a Master, a

teacher. In Hebrew, this is a Rabbouni, or a Rabbi. Disciples in the time of Jesus didn't just wander around after the teacher and do cleanup duty. Instead, a disciple was expected to act as a full representative of the Master. A disciple was expected to speak for the Master, listen for the Master, and be, as it were, the Master's hands and feet. As such, a disciple was expected to memorize all the words of the Master, and be able to repeat them back as if the Master Himself was speaking. Just to show you how tough this would be, let's see all your listening today: what was the first sentence that I spoke as I began this sermon today? Answer: "Okay, it's trivia time!" Now you have an idea of how intense it would be to be a disciple.

Part 2: How to become a disciple:

- Let me ask you this: What qualified the disciples of Jesus to become His apostles?
- 1. Was it wealth? Well, a few of the disciples owned (or were) a part of a business, such as those that were involved with doing fishing duty, and then there was Matthew who was a tax collector, and no doubt had some money. But, no, it is quite obvious that the disciples had little to no financial resources. Now think about how expensive it is to raise your

family, or even to live on your own. Now add Jesus and His 12 apostles and think about how much food it would take. Turn with me to Luke 8:1-3 *"After this, Jesus travelled about from one town and village to another, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. The Twelve were with him, 2and also some women who had been cured of evil spirits and diseases: Mary (called Magdalene) from whom seven demons had come out; 3Joanna the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household; Susanna; and many others. These women were helping to support them out of their own means."* Jesus had a lot of other people with Him, besides the disciples, some of whom financially supported Jesus and His disciples. Therefore, Jesus didn't choose His disciples because of wealth.

- 2. Were the disciples chosen because of their education? Again, none of the disciples were scholars, and none of the disciples were trained to be religious leaders. But all the disciples were chosen because they could speak, hear, and many, if not all, seemed to be able to read and write. Go to Acts 4:13, which says: *"When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realize that they are unschooled, ordinary man, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus."*

Ordinary, unschooled men. Sometimes it makes me wonder about churches sending pastors away for a long education, and while I value education and know why it is a big part of churches and our calling of pastors, there certainly is an argument to being taught by the Holy Spirit of God. God will use whatever you are taught for His glory.

- 3. Were the disciples chosen because of their spiritual leadership? The Book of Acts demonstrates the power of the disciples, but they did not start out that way. The disciples were, for the most part, meek, mild, and anything but spiritual giants until Jesus was finished with them, and the power of the Holy Spirit consumed them. Now, keep two things in mind: 1. There were a number of the followers of Jesus were first following John the Baptist and went directly from John to Jesus when John instructed them to follow the *"Lamb of God (John 1:29)."* Secondly, keep in mind that among this group of godly men there is one who was a betrayer. There is one who was a man intent on evil. There is Judas who was in charge of the money for the disciples (John 13:29 - he was the disciples' equivalent of our amazing church's Treasurer, Roger]. But, unlike our terrific Treasurer, John 12:6 tells us that Judas regularly stole from the money bag, helping *"...himself to what was put into it."*

Jesus had in his midst a man who was a deceiver, a thief, a selfish man, a man who spoke one thing of the one side of his face and believed and lived another thing out of the other.

- 4. Let me ask one more question about the calling of the disciples by Jesus: Were the disciples chosen because of their command over their words? From Nathaniel who said "*Can anything good come out of Nazareth?*" [John 1:46], to Peter's stumbling with his words often including at the Mount of Transfiguration ["*Should we set up three shelters?*" [Matthew 17:4], to the disciples almost angrily saying "*We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish*" [Matthew 14:17], the disciples did not seem to display a great command over their words. But, once the Holy Spirit has come upon them, their faltering words become powerful instruments in God's kingdom.

Part three: We His Disciples

- So what should we take one from this?
- First: God calls and directs wealthy Christians, but it's better if you just give your wealth away when you come before Christ. You're going to find that being a wealthy Christian will probably lead you into more turmoil than being a poor Christian. Why? Because we are to be living

on faith. You're going to find that if you believe that one of the qualifications for following Jesus is to be wealthy here on earth, that more than likely your wealth will be more of a stumbling block to your faith. Jesus didn't call the disciples because they are wealthy, Jesus called the disciples because he want to infuse in them His wealth, the wealth of knowing Him as the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, and the Priest of all Priests.

- Second: Getting an education, filling your head with knowledge, being a bookworm is a great help in your walk with Jesus, but it can also be a hindrance. If you achieve knowledge so that you can prove yourself to be better than other believers around you, then drop that pursuit. If you read books so that you can show others how much you have retained and can repeat from those books, remember that it's more important for you to live according to the standards of one book, and one book only - God's Holy Word, His Bible. Jesus didn't choose the disciples based upon their education, but He did choose the disciples because they were willing to grow, and to learn in Christ Jesus every day, every moment of their life. Are you ready to learn daily and become wise in God?
- Third: You might think that in order to come to Jesus you have to be

spiritually- minded - that your feet might still touch the ground, but your head is always in the heavens. While it is important for us to know that we are not of this Earth as believers in Jesus Christ, it is more important for us to remember, always, that we are here on earth with a purpose - and that purpose is to serve God and to serve His beloved people here on earth in the places that God has positioned us. You do not become a Christian and then get zapped in Heaven, you are called to be here in this Earth. And while are serving God here on earth, we must have our eyes fixed on Jesus, the "... *Author and perfecter of our faith...*"

[Hebrews 12:2]. We are to, primarily, allow the Lord Jesus Christ, through His Holy Spirit, mould our spirits so that we become the man or woman of God as He intended of us before creation. Jesus did not call the disciples because they were spiritually-minded, but that He could grow them into the greatest spiritual force ever..

- Fourth: You might not have the best command over your words; you might falter when it comes to remembering Bible verses; you might freeze up wondering what you just heard on the Christian radio show or here at Church or read in your Bible recently when you're talking to somebody who is needing to know Christ: you might think that you are

unworthy or unable compared to some other "super-Christians" that are sitting in the pew beside your, but you need to know this: none of that matters. What is truly worth knowing is that God will direct your words. Jesus said this to His disciples [Luke 12:11 - 12]: "*When you are brought before synagogues, rulers and authorities, do not worry about how you will defend yourselves or what you will say, 12 for the Holy Spirit will teach you at that time what you should say.*" Jesus did not choose His disciples because they had the greatest command over their words, instead, He chose them because He could use His words in them and through them for His glory. Are you willing/ready to do the same?

Conclusion:

- Please know this, especially you fathers on this Father's Day: you don't have to be perfect to know Christ. You don't have to be perfect to accept Jesus as your personal Lord and Saviour. You don't have to be the elite in Biblical knowledge or Church politics to be a Christian the way that God intended for you. You don't have to be the most eloquent person in the world to be able to stand before others and share the Good News as a disciple of Jesus. But, especially you fathers, know this: if you become the clay that God can mould, God will finish His good work in you.