

**Mark 3:7-19**  
**Revival and Apostles**

Our passage today seems to be a bit of summary review and housekeeping with the naming of the Twelve. It may look like a passage that we could easily skip over, but there are some points here that set the stage for the rest of the gospel narrative and the ministry of Jesus and his main disciples. The twelve who are called have been given a uniquely weighty mission as they will set the pace for the advance of the Gospel.

Which is why the list of names is so amazing. You might know the fictitious treatment of Jesus' team done in the style of a management consultant's analysis. I was not familiar with this. Perhaps you've heard it...

Memo. To Jesus of Nazareth. From the Jerusalem Management Consulting Firm.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for submitting the resumes of the twelve men you've picked for management positions in your new organization. All of them have now taken a series of tests and we have not only run the results through our computer, but we've also conducted an in-depth interview with each of them by our staff psychologist and vocational aptitude consultant.

The profiles of all tests are included, and you will want to study each of them carefully. It is the staff's opinion that most of your nominees are lacking in background education and vocational aptitude for the type of enterprise you are undertaking. They do not have the team concept, and we would highly recommend that you continue your search for people with more experience, higher qualifications, and greater managerial abilities.

Simon Peter is emotionally unstable and is given to fits of temper. Andrew simply has no qualities of leadership. The two brothers, James and John, the sons of Zebedee, place personal interests above company loyalty and are quite boisterous. Thomas demonstrates a questioning attitude that would tend to undermine morale among the ranks.

It is also our duty to inform you that the Better Business Bureau of Greater Jerusalem has received reports on Matthew regarding questionable business practices. James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddeus both have radical leanings, and both demonstrate attitude problems which could present difficulty in their dealings with the public.

However, one of your candidates shows great potential. He is a man of ability and resourcefulness, meets people well, has a keen business mind, and has contacts in high places. He is highly motivated, ambitious, responsible, and is not afraid to take the initiative. We recommend Judas Iscariot as the most qualified of all your prospective candidates.

Sincerely,

The Jerusalem Management Consulting Firm

**Least Likely to Succeed**

You get the point. These guys are not an obvious crop of candidates for the founding team of a global organization designed to overturn empires and change the world. Are they? Prideful, pompous, fearful, skeptical, greedy.

In today's passage we get an orderly summary that is short and concise of activity that was anything but orderly, i.e. the movement of the Holy Spirit through the preaching and miracle working of Jesus.

Across the denominational landscape churches make the mistake of thinking they can plan or orchestrate the movement of the Holy Spirit.

EX: Have you ever passed a church with a sign that said, "REVIVAL Sunday – Wed night"

HOW DO YOU KNOW? Can you book a revival in advance? The gospel narratives show that it just

doesn't work that way.

Revivals do happen. They do break out, but they can't be manipulated or manufactured. America has been punctuated by periods of revival. One of the earliest and most impactful was the Great Awakening of the 1740's.

In 1741, during the first Great Awakening, Jonathan Edwards wrote a book to defend the revival that broke out under his ministry. They really knew how to write titles back then. His book has a snappy and memorable title. It's called, "The Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit of God Applied to that Uncommon Operation that has Lately Appeared on the Minds of Many of the People of this Land with a Particular Consideration of the Extraordinary Circumstances with which this Work is Attended."

Pretty catchy, right? That title might apply to today's text. We'll pick up with Mark 3:7

7 Jesus withdrew to the sea with His disciples; and a great multitude from Galilee followed; and also from Judea, 8 and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and beyond the Jordan, and the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon, a great number of people heard of all that He was doing and came to Him. 9 And He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the crowd, so that they would not crowd Him; 10 for He had healed many, with the result that all those who had afflictions pressed around Him in order to touch Him. 11 Whenever the unclean spirits saw Him, they would fall down before Him and shout, "You are the Son of God!" 12 And He earnestly warned them not to tell who He was. 13 And He \*went up on the mountain and \*summoned those whom He Himself wanted, and they came to Him. 14 And He appointed twelve, so that they would be with Him and that He could send them out to preach, 15 and to have authority to cast out the demons. 16 And He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom He gave the name Peter), 17 and James, the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James (to them He gave the name Boanerges, which means, "Sons of Thunder"); 18 and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot; 19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Him.

**One true mark of revival is that Jesus IS EXALTED; He is the focus; His fame spreads**

V. 7-9 The fame of Jesus spreads

The cities or regions mentioned represent the north, south, east, and west of where Jesus was living and doing ministry.

There is a contrast with the previous verses where the healing in the synagogue resulted in a man being healed and a plot by the elites to kill Jesus.

Here is v. 7-9, Jesus returns to the sea of Galilee and is mobbed by a crowd coming from all directions.

**A SECOND mark of real revival is that lives are changed, not just emotions at the moment.**

Again, we get a glimpse of those coming for life-changing healing and those in need of spiritual deliverance. NOT everyone who comes to faith in Christ is in need of immediate physical healing or deliverance from unclean spirits, but ALL who come to Christ need to be changed. We all need forgiveness and freedom from the penalty and power of sin.

Let's not forget that the gospel is the power of God for salvation. It is a change agent. Sadly, it is all too easy to forget that when we've been 'in the church' for a while. It's easy to think that the gospel is just for 'those unbelievers' out there, and we forget that it is for our unbelief right here in our own hearts.

**A THIRD MARK of gospel revival is that we see how God deals with our body and our soul.**

The promises of the gospel include eternal life for our bodies and our souls. The spiritual world is important as is the physical world.

I think we all realize that we are created body and soul, and the two are interconnected. It is hard to

nourish our souls when our bodies hurt. It's all too easy to think that our souls are doing well when we are living without physical trials of health or other physical comforts. Sadly, there is a tendency to think that if someone is suffering physically there must be a spiritual cause for the suffering – i.e. the 'friends of JOB.'

Jesus taught, "What shall a man give in exchange for his soul? And what would it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his own soul?"

Contrary to the world's value system, Jesus teaches the care of our souls is the top priority for us as image bearers. Our physical bodies will decline, die, and decay, but our souls remain forever. Soul care is the biblical priority. Jesus does heal and deliver, but the focus is on the health of souls.

EX: that priority was established in the OT, when God established the tithe to support the ministry of the priests. Soul care was the chief concern of the divine structure of the tithe..

**A FOURTH mark of gospel revival is that we accept the authority of Jesus.**

v. 11-12 Jesus doesn't permit the unclean spirits to speak about Him. He has authority over them, and He silences them. Naming someone was significant in the scripture and the unclean spirits may have thought they would have a position of power by calling out Jesus' name or title – Son of God. Jesus silenced them. As we'll see later, when hell and heaven collide, heaven wins.

You may not have been delivered from an unclean spirit per se, but IF you are going to follow Christ, then you must recognize his authority over your life. If we take a pick and choose approach to obedience, then we're not walking as disciples of Christ.

There are some areas of scripture that are very EASY to understand but are Hard to obey. God's Word gets into the nitty gritty areas of life with some real clear instruction on our attitudes, forgiveness, our words, our money, our sexual morality, our relationships in the church and outside the church, the stewardship of our time, talent, and treasure, what we put into our minds and our hearts, etc.

The simplest definition of a disciple or follower of Christ comes in the Great Commission..."make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you..."

**A disciple is one who is committed to "observing all that Jesus commanded"** i.e. "to guard from loss or prevent from escaping" The idea is one of obeying what Christ has commanded. We do that by starting with the low hanging fruit of what is clear in scripture.

There are some things in scripture that are HARD to understand so we seek to grow in our understanding as we mature, but that shouldn't keep us from obeying that which is clear.

**v. 13-19 The calling of the Twelve**

Jesus goes up on the mountain and calls to Himself the ones he wants. The number expands from the five we've seen – Peter, Andrew, James, John, and Levi- to twelve. This includes Judas, who would betray him. Again, we see how Jesus differs in his approach compared to other rabbis. Jesus calls specific men to follow him. They normal pattern was for a student to apply to study with a rabbi.

It has been noted by scholars that Jesus appointed TWELVE men to be the core of his ministry group. WHY TWELVE?

It reflects the OT structure of the twelve tribes of Israel thus showing the symmetry between the church of the OT and the church of the NT.

The leaders of the twelve tribes were given prominence as were the twelve disciples who were called. Even Judas is listed among the twelve. He stands out as the one who would betray Jesus, in fulfillment of the

scripture (Act 1:16-20; Ps 69)

As with the Pharisees and Herodians who conspired to kill Jesus, we see that Judas also plays a part in the ultimate fulfillment of God's plan to save His bride. Even the agents of evil end up serving the plan of God.

\*\*\* That is NOT an excuse to sin on our part, but it is a message of hope for us that God can redeem our own failures and sins which are many. This is a reminder of Gen 50 – Man meant it for evil but God meant it for good” and Rom 8:28 – We know that all things together for good for those who love God and who are called according to His purpose.

The twelve were all were blessed by the experience of closer relationship and intimacy with Christ. They shared the role as Apostles because they were with Jesus from John's baptism to when Jesus was taken up.

They were the initial representatives of Christ to the world, and they were appointed to take the gospel of Christ to the ends of the earth. They were the first examples of Christian living and Christian discipleship. They set the pattern that a Christian is one who is living in relationship with Christ and is serving Him.

Just as Yahweh called Israel to be his people, i.e. “I will be their God and they will be my people”, Jesus calls His disciples to BE WITH HIM.

That is a good description of a disciple – one who spends time with Jesus and who follows him. That was true for the original twelve and it is good for us as well. Above all, we are called to Him, to be with Him, to learn of Him, and to follow Him.

EX: Ps 27:4 expresses this desire to seek and be with the Lord.

One thing I ask from the Lord,  
this only do I seek:  
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord  
all the days of my life,  
to gaze on the beauty of the Lord  
and to seek him in his temple.

Membership in the group of twelve was by the sovereign choice of Jesus, even as membership in the body of Christ, the church, is by the sovereign choice of God.

The word for church in Greek is 'ekklesia' – the called out ones.

The invisible ultimate church is made up of those whom God has called outwardly and inwardly by the Holy Spirit and has brought them to Himself.

While saving faith in Christ alone is an individual response, it's not a solitary response. When we are called by God and we respond to the gospel, we are brought into the 'ekklesia' – the body of those who are called out by God. The Christian life is a personal walk with God but it is not a strictly private walk of faith. The Lone Ranger Christian is not a concept found in scripture.

There is a mystical union of the believer with Christ and with one another. Jesus calls him to Himself AND He calls us to be together as a manifestation of His body in a specific locality.

We were outside and alienated from the promises of God until He called us and gave us new life and raised us up with or “in” Christ. So too, he joins His people together as a living temple for His glory.

This is what makes for the communion of the saints. We share a common past of alienation from God and a common future of the glory of God.

Col 1:13 For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins....

Paul explains the glorious riches of the mystery of the gospel is “Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

That is why Jesus called the Twelve and us .... To be with Him and to know the hope of glory In Him.

Like the twelve, we have a mission.

We who are called to be with Jesus and share in the hope of glory are also called to go and bear witness for Him.

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