

GOD'S CALLING IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Lesson Four

IN THE GOSPELS: The Twelve Apostles

Burden to Impart:

Twelve disciples were chosen by the Lord to be His Apostles. They were especially trained by Him so they could be His helpers.

Memory Verse: "...He called His disciples to Him; and He chose from them twelve, whom He also named apostles" (Luke 6:13).

Facts to Teach:

1. Many people followed the Lord Jesus: some out of curiosity (John 2:23-24), some to be healed or fed (John 6:26), and some out of love and faith. A small number followed the Lord closely and learned of His teachings and way of life. These became His "disciples" (Matt. 5:1).
2. As the Lord's ministry grew, He needed some fellow-workers to help Him speak to the people and share the burdens with Him (Matt. 9:36-38). The Lord was so burdened that He spent the whole night in prayer to God before He chose any helpers. Then, out of many disciples, the Lord chose twelve to be His "apostles" (Luke 6:12-17a). An "apostle" is "one who is sent" to fulfill some purpose.
3. These twelve were chosen and appointed by the Lord so that they might "be with Him" in a special way, and that He might "send them to preach" His Word (Mark 3:14). They followed the Lord wherever He traveled. They went with Him by foot and by boat. They watched His way of life and learned of Him (Matt. 11:29). They also suffered hardships and persecutions with the Lord. The Lord told them, "You are those who have remained with Me in My trials." For this reason they will also be rewarded with His kingdom and will "sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel" in the kingdom (Luke 22:28-30).
4. The twelve apostles not only learned from the Lord by His example and life, they also were trained by Him in many ways. Sometimes He would correct them for their mistakes (Mark 9:38-39) and rebuke them for their lack of understanding (Mark 8:33) and faith (Luke 8:25). He also trained them by waking them up at times to pray (Matt. 26:40).
5. They listened daily to His teaching. He taught the multitudes in parables, but He spoke to His Apostles plainly so that they would understand every word (Matt. 13:9-11). The Lord Jesus did not write a book of His teachings and give it to His Apostles. He taught them by speaking to them all the words that His Father had given to Him (John 17:8). They needed to know His Word and teaching well, for it was up to them to teach all of His disciples the things He had commanded them after He ascended.
6. Having been especially trained by the Lord in their way of life and in His teaching, the Lord could send out the Apostles to do His work and to preach God's Word. He gave them authority over unclean spirits and the power to heal every disease (Matt. 10:1-8).