

# TWELVE WERE CHOSEN

A STUDY OF THE ORIGINAL APOSTLES

DAVID LATON, D.MIN.

## TEACHER'S GUIDE

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Created by David Laton, D.Min.  
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For more information on teaching adults, please visit:  
<https://bibletalk.tv/101/teaching>

# Overall Teaching Strategy

It is recommended that teachers use a combination of informal lecture and guided discussion to present these lessons. There are discussion questions associated with each lesson that teachers may use and/or supplement their own questions. A student note guide is also provided for each lesson.

Encourage students to read the scriptures, view the associated video and/or read the text for the lesson. This helps them come to the class ready to discuss the lesson and to formulate questions of their own. Teachers should begin the class with a review of key points from the video/text before starting the discussion.

Begin each lesson with appropriate introductory statements that help students focus on the lesson. Teachers should also provide a summary of the previous lesson and an overview of key points of the new lesson. This helps students see the ongoing narrative of scripture.

Conclude the lesson by summarizing, or having students summarize the information from their notes. It is also helpful to ask questions from the lesson to determine that students grasp the concepts. Asking questions in this manner also serves as an assessment to ensure objectives are met.

Challenge students with a call to action to apply this information to their lives to help them grow spiritually and help others to do so as well. This can be accomplished by asking questions of students as to how this information relates to their spiritual development at this time and moving forward.

## References:

- Heroes of Faith – A Study of Hebrews 11 Bill Rasco (2012) 21st Century Christian
- The Disciples, Emil G. Kraeling (1966) Rand McNally & Company
- The Master’s Men, Character Sketches of the Disciples, William Barclay (1959) Abingdon Press, Nashville
- The Thirteen Apostles, J. Ellsworth Kalas (2002) Abingdon Press, Nashville
- Twelve Ordinary Men, John MacArther (2002) W Publishing Group, Nashville

# Lesson #1 - Introduction to the Apostles

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is to introduce the series of the study of the original apostles. Of special note is a discussion of the difference between a disciple and an apostle, how Jesus prepared himself for selecting the twelve, their makeup and task. The lesson concludes with what the apostles had to overcome and how we learn from this.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Learn the characteristics of the apostles that enable us to influence others for Jesus.
- **Feel:** Value the apostles as role models in serving the Lord.
- **Do:** Apply the characteristics of the apostles in our life of faithful service to the Lord.

## Support

- Series – Twelve Were Chosen – Dave Laton, 2021
- Video – Lesson 1
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 1

## Body of the Lesson

- 1.0 Difference between disciple and apostle
- 2.0 Selecting the twelve
  - 2.1 Calling – Luke 6:12
  - 2.2 Makeup – similarities and differences
  - 2.3 The task
- 3.0 What the apostles had to overcome

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. What is the difference between a disciple of Christ and an apostle?**

A disciple is a follower of Christ. This person seeks to live by the teachings of Jesus. An apostle for Jesus is also a disciple but was specifically appointed by Jesus and given powers and gifts to fulfill their mission of proclaiming Him as the Son of God and Savior. A disciple is given salvation as a gift of the Holy Spirit upon baptism. A disciple does not possess miracles gifts. There are no more apostles today, but those who proclaim obedient faith in Jesus and are baptized by immersion in water become disciples and remain so as they live faithfully.

## **2. What is significant about Jesus praying before selecting the twelve disciples?**

Although we don't have the text of that prayer, we know Jesus prayed to the Father continually for the success of His ministry and for His disciples. We can see a similar prayer in John 17 as He prepared for His torture and death. A key element of that prayer was for the disciples, and for us as we become disciples. We learn from this example to pray for guidance as we live for our Lord.

## **3. What is significant about Jesus selecting twelve apostles?**

This number represents the twelve tribes of Israel and is symbolic of leaders in God's new Kingdom.

#### **4. What authority did the apostles have and how does that impact us today? (Matthew 16:19 and Matthew 18:18)**

Jesus gave the apostles the authority to act on His behalf. The expression of “binding” is a strong statement meaning God will use their decision as the standard. Because of this granted authority, today we follow the teachings of the apostles (Acts 2:42) as revealed in the New Testament. For example, we see God’s plan for our salvation stated by Peter in Acts 2:37-38 and the outcome of the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15. We further have examples throughout the New Testament of putting God’s will into practice as citizens in His Kingdom.

#### **5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Although we cannot become an apostle, we can and must become disciples. This means to commit to following Jesus on His terms and to commit to following His teachings. We do this by recognizing Him as the Son of God and confessing our need for His salvation. We then change the focus away from ourselves and onto Him. We follow this by being baptized by immersion in water symbolizing joining in His death, burial, and resurrection. Following that saving act, we commit to following His teachings as we grow spiritually to become more and more like Him.



# Lesson #2 – Peter: First Among the Twelve

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## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on biblical information on Peter. Of special note is how Peter became who God wanted him to become and what we learn from his example.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Learn the characteristics of the apostles that enable us to influence others for Jesus.
- **Feel:** Value the apostles as role models in serving the Lord.
- **Do:** Apply the characteristics of the apostles in our life of faithful service to the Lord.

## Support

- Series – Twelve Were Chosen – Dave Laton, 2021
- Video – Lesson 2 – Peter ~ First Among the Twelve
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 2

## Body of the Lesson

### 1.0 About Peter

#### 1.1 His name

#### 1.2 Key event of Peter from scripture

### 2.0 What we learn from Peter

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.



## **1. What was significant about Peter's response to Jesus in Matthew 16:13-20?**

Jesus asked the disciples who others say He was. He then asks specifically who they say He was. Peter's response identifies Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. The significance of this is that it began to solidify in the minds of the disciples Jesus' identity as divine with the mission to save humanity.

## **2. Why was Peter reinstated by Jesus after he had denied Him and how does this apply to us? (John 21:15)**

God is faithful to His promises. This event illustrates the fulfilment of the promise by Jesus to forgive as we repent and return to Him (1 John 5-10). Forgiveness and mercy are significant teachings by Jesus (see Matthew 6:7-15; 18:21-35). Peter recognized his sin in denying Jesus and sought to return. Note: The other apostles had also fled from Jesus as He was arrested. They too, except for Judas turned to Jesus and received forgiveness.

**Follow-on question:** Give examples of those who sought forgiveness or didn't seek forgiveness and the result. David received forgiveness for his sin with Bathsheba. Saul, the first King of Israel did not receive forgiveness.

### **3. In what ways was Peter a seeker and what is the example for us?**

Peter was always asking questions of Jesus seeking to know and do His will. Although he frequently answered Jesus incorrectly or failed to understand, Peter continued to seek understanding. NOT: Jesus always provided answers to the apostles as teachable moments.

This is an example for us. We should always seek to learn and apply God's will. As with Peter and the others, God provides insights into His will and helps us grow spiritually.

### **4. What is your favorite or most impactful event from Peter's life and how does it help you grow spiritually?**

Look for responses that show how Peter changed from who he was to what Jesus wanted him to be and how that is an example for us in our faith walk.

### **5. How can you use this lesson to grow spiritually and help others come into a relationship with Jesus?**

Peter goes through gaining faith, weakening faith, and regaining faith. In that we learn that our Lord's promise of forgiveness is there for us all if we will turn to Him. When we return we are fully forgiven and placed back into productive service for our Lord.



# Lesson #3 – Andrew: A Brother Among Brothers

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## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on Andrew, the brother of Peter. Of special note is how Andrew was called by our Lord and some observations about him. We also explore what we learn from Andrew to help us in our faith walk.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Learn the characteristics of the apostles that enable us to influence others for Jesus.
- **Feel:** Value the apostles as role models in serving the Lord.
- **Do:** Apply the characteristics of the apostles in our life of faithful service to the Lord.

## Support

- Series – Twelve Were Chosen – Dave Laton, 2021
- Video – Lesson 3 – Andrew ~ A Brother Among Brothers.
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 3

## Body of the Lesson

1.0 About Andrew

2.0 What we learn from Andrew

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. What was Andrew's action after spending time with Jesus and what can we learn from it?**

Andrew goes to Peter, his brother, and brings him to Jesus. We learn from that action that our natural response should be a willingness to bring others to Jesus, perhaps starting with those close to us.

In Acts 1:8, Jesus instructed the apostles to begin teaching in Jerusalem, then to move to Judea, Samaria, and to all the world. At a personal level one can say that those we know personally are in a symbolic way, our "Jerusalem". From there we begin to teach others we meet as we fulfil our personal mission to show Jesus to others.

## **2. What style of evangelism do we see with Andrew and why is this a successful method?**

Andrew focused on one-on-one or personal evangelism. This is powerful because it relies on the relationship we have or establish with others. It allows us to show to them our love for the Lord and them, as well as our concern to help them discover salvation through our Lord. Many times, in other forms of evangelism, although powerful in themselves, the person may not have the opportunity to fully learn God's will for their salvation or to reach for deeper understanding. Personal evangelism overcomes this shortcoming.

### **3. What would lead someone to think that Andrew was more thoughtful or withdrawn than Peter, John, and James, the other three of the group closest to Jesus, and how does this relate to many in the church today?**

We don't see Andrew rushing ahead into answering questions or taking the lead on activities. He obviously has a presence but it's not seen in the same dynamic way as the others.

There are many in the church today that bring a lot to the activities and success of the church. They serve in silent ways but still have a positive effect. Like Andrew, this less dynamic and outward personality give some confidence to approach that person.

Any successful effort, and congregation, uses a variety of personalities. Paul made a strong point of this in 1 Corinthians 12 as he compared the body to the church showing that just as the body has many parts that have different, yet important functions, so too does the body of Christ. The important thing is that we recognize our gifts and use them to the furtherance of the gospel and to the glory of God.

### **4. How does Andrew show the value of individuals?**

Andrew is always shown bringing someone to Jesus. He recognizes that although Jesus came to save humanity, it is done through one soul at a time. We don't see Andrew speaking before large groups, other than his presence with the other apostles at Pentecost in Acts 2. Yet it was Peter who is shown speaking to the larger groups. Andrew, like several of the other apostles, focuses on one-on-one interactions.

That's a great lesson for us. Whether we speak to large groups or individuals, we must always remember that God wants a relationship with us as individual souls so our efforts must always include going to the individual to introduce them to Jesus and to encourage faithfulness.

## **5. What gift(s) do you possess and how can you use these in service to our Lord?**

The intent of this question is for us to think about what we do, like to do, and can do with what and who we are. Each of us know someone who needs the gospel. Can we speak to that person, bring that person to another, or somehow encourage that person to seek our Lord?

Further, each of us have something we enjoy doing or have a talent for. How can we use that to show Jesus to others? We should always be looking for ways to show Jesus. That's the seed sowing effort we are tasked with.

# Lesson #4 - James and John: Sons of Thunder

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on the other set of brothers, James and John and how they changed from “Sons of Thunder” to faithful followers of Jesus. Of special note is biblical information about the two and what we learn from them.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Learn the characteristics of the apostles that enable us to influence others for Jesus.
- **Feel:** Value the apostles as role models in serving the Lord.
- **Do:** Apply the characteristics of the apostles in our life of faithful service to the Lord.

## Support

- Series – Twelve Were Chosen – Dave Laton, 2021
- Video – Lesson 4 - James and John ~ Sons of Thunder
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 4

## Body of the Lesson

### 1.0 What we know of James and John

- 1.1 Biblical information
- 1.2 Information on James
- 1.3 What we Learn from James

### 2.0 John

- 2.1 What we learn from John
- 2.2 John’s death

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.



## **1. Summarize what we know about James and John as brothers.**

- They were brothers, and the sons of Zebedee, a successful fisherman (Matthew 20:20)
- Their calling is recorded in Mathew, Mark, and Luke.
- We see them fishing with Peter and Andrew
- They were part of the inner circle along with Peter and Andrew and were with Jesus at significant times in His ministry.
- They were given the nickname “Sons-of-Thunder” by Jesus in Mark 3:17.
- James was the first apostle killed for his faith and John was the longest living apostle.

## **2. How was James killed and what can we learn from this?**

We read in Acts 12:1-2 that Herod had James killed, “by the sword” which indicates a typical Roman style killing. We don’t know if it was by stabbing or beheading.

The most significant lesson from this is that James served faithfully, even to the death. That is a lesson for us. We must learn to take an eternal view of life and dedicate our life to serving Jesus, no matter the consequences.

### **3. List some highlights of John's life as an apostle.**

- Was part of the inner circle and with Jesus at significant times.
- Known to the high priest (John 18:15) which allowed him to witness the trial of Jesus.
- Was the only apostle at the foot of the cross and was entrusted with the care of Mary, the mother of Jesus (John 19:26).
- Was the first apostle to arrive at the empty tomb (John 20:24).
- Authored 5 books of the New Testament (Gospel of John, 1, 2, 3 John, Revelation).
- Was active with Peter early in the beginning and growth of the Church.
- Was the longest living of the apostles.

#### **4. Why do you think John was reluctant to refer to himself in the first person?**

It is interesting to see John transform from one who wanted a key position in the Kingdom to one who desired to not even have his name mentioned, especially by himself. This shows us the transformational power of Jesus as we learn that we are the servant and He is the master. It's not about us, although God made it about us through Jesus.

John teaches us wonderful lessons of the kind of love God shows us and wants us to show others. It is the kind of love that seeks the better for others ahead of ourselves. John's attitude and actions as he matures spiritually show how he grew to understand this and make it his view, not only of himself, but as an active example for us.

#### **5. What is the greatest lesson you learn from John?**

Answers will vary but look for how to develop and apply the love John teaches us, humility, loyalty to Jesus, and a desire to follow Jesus as He wishes for us.

# Lesson #5 - Philip and Nathanael: Friends to All

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on biblical information about these two close friends and what we learn from them. Of special note is a demonstration of the importance and result of bringing someone to Jesus.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Learn the characteristics of the apostles that enable us to influence others for Jesus.
- **Feel:** Value the apostles as role models in serving the Lord.
- **Do:** Apply the characteristics of the apostles in our life of faithful service to the Lord.

## Support

- Series – Twelve Were Chosen – Dave Laton, 2021
- Video – Lesson 5 – Philip and Nathanael ~ Friends to All
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 5

## Body of the Lesson

### 1.0 Philip

- 1.1 Overview of biblical accounts
- 1.2 Not the Philip of Acts 8
- 1.3 What we learn from Philip

### 2.0 Nathanael

- 2.1 Calling
- 2.2 What we learn from Nathanael

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. Summarize what we know of Philip.**

- Philip was the fifth named apostle in each of the listings.
- Jesus calls Philip directly to follow him (John 1:43).
- Upon being called, Philip immediately tells his friend Nathanael about Jesus.
- Philip was “tested” by Jesus at the feeding of the 5,000 (John 6:5-6).
- Philip brings two foreigners (Greeks) to Andrew so they can meet Jesus (John 12:20-26).

## **2. How does Philip teach us to focus on Jesus and not self?**

Philip had to grow in his faith, just like everyone else. As he began his life as a disciple he immediately began to bring others to Jesus, thus placing the focus away from self and onto Jesus. He demonstrated a desire to know more of Jesus and how he could grow spiritually.

### **3. Summarize how Nathanael was brought to Jesus?**

In John 1 we read where Philip came to Nathanael to tell him about Jesus. Nathanael was sitting under a fig tree, which was the customary place for someone to study, meditate on God's word, and pray. Upon hearing Philip's statement that he had found the one spoken of in scripture, Jesus of Nazareth, he responds with doubt but goes with Philip. Jesus tells Nathanael he saw him under the fig tree, showing that he was aware of who Nathanael was and what he customarily did. Further, he identified Nathanael as an Israelite without deceit. Nathanael declares Jesus as, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel".

### **4. In what ways do we see Nathanael as a "seeker" and what can we learn from that?**

Nathanael was both types of seeker. He was seeking knowledge and wisdom about God before meeting Jesus (sitting under the fig tree studying scripture), and later, he became a seeker with specific purpose of showing Jesus to others and living by God's will.

We too have been, and are perhaps now, a seeker not sure of direction or purpose in our life. We find true direction and purpose through Jesus. When we become a disciple of Jesus our direction and purpose now transform into seeking to follow the will of our Lord and Master and to show Him to others.



# Lesson #6 - Matthew and Thomas: Two Men Transformed

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## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on biblical information about Matthew and Thomas. Of special note is how the life of these men was transformed by Jesus as they grew spiritually.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Learn the characteristics of the apostles that enable us to influence others for Jesus.
- **Feel:** Value the apostles as role models in serving the Lord.
- **Do:** Apply the characteristics of the apostles in our life of faithful service to the Lord.

## Support

- Series – Twelve Were Chosen – Dave Laton, 2021
- Video – Lesson 6 – Matthew and Thomas ~ Two Men Transformed
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 6

## Body of the Lesson

### 1.0 Matthew

- 1.1 Biblical information about Matthew
- 1.2 Matthew the tax collector
- 1.3 What we learn from Matthew

### 2.0 Thomas

- 2.1 Information
- 2.2 Lessons learned

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.



## **1. Summarize biblical information about Matthew.**

- Son of Alphaeus (Mark 2:14)
- Also known as Levi
- A Jewish tax collector at Capernaum.
- Author of the Gospel of Matthew
- While Matthew was manning his tax booth, Jesus calls him and he left immediately to follow Jesus.
- Held a banquet with his friends to introduce them to Jesus.

## **2. Why were tax collectors despised and how does this fit the type of individual Jesus could use in His ministry?**

Tax collectors were despised because they were official representatives of the Roman government. They also were known for overtaxing individuals, although there was never an indication of this in Matthew's case.

Jesus chose his followers from those that were not leaders, scholars, and otherwise influential in society. He chose instead those that needed Him and would offer their life to Him.

Humility is a key characteristic of disciples of Jesus. They either possess it or learn to become humble. At that time, their service to our Lord increases greatly. Matthew exhibits the character of humility in how he was willing to leave his former life without question and follow Jesus.

### **3. Summarize the “great” lessons Matthew recorded in his gospel and why these are important to us.**

#### **The Greatest Sermon – The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5, 6, 7)**

In this great sermon we learn the theology of Jesus. We learn expected attitudes and behaviors as citizens of God’s Kingdom.

#### **The Great Commitment (Matthew 10:37-39)**

Jesus teaches us that we must be willing to give up everything to follow Jesus. We cannot sustain our relationship with Jesus without great commitment to Him and our role as faithful servants. Therefore repentance, turning away from ourselves and turning to Jesus is such a critical element in our salvation.

#### **The Great Commandment (Matthew 22:27-40)**

Jesus teaches us that loving God with our complete self and loving others as ourself is the basis of judgment. This is consistent with the kind of love God shows us and expects from us. It is the love that puts others before self, God first, then others.

#### **The Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)**

Pointing others to Jesus and teaching them how to live faithfully is a core responsibility of disciples of Jesus. As Jesus expressed to those listening during the Sermon on the Mount, we are to be salt and light to the world. In doing so we bring the influence of Jesus and His salvation to others. We point the way to Jesus (Light) and add value to their lives (salt). We do this not of or through ourselves, but by Jesus working in our lives.

#### **4. Summarize why Thomas is referred to by so many as “Doubting Thomas” and what is the true nature of Thomas?**

In John 20:24-29 we read of the incident that earned him this dubious nickname. He was reluctant to embrace the news that Jesus had risen from the dead. He demanded physical proof before he would believe.

This is an unfortunate nickname because he was one of a group of doubters. All the apostles expressed doubt and had to have Jesus appear to them before believing. This is part of the reason Jesus did appear in bodily form, even taking food. Thomas however, was the one who specifically expressed doubt.

Upon seeing Jesus, Thomas no longer doubted. Instead he uttered a great statement of faith, “My Lord and my God.” (vs 28)

#### **5. What can we learn from Thomas?**

There are many things that learners might express. These were covered in the lesson:

We learn that Jesus forgives. Just as Jesus forgave Peter and the others for doubting, fleeing, and denying, Jesus forgave Thomas. This is evident in how Jesus praised Thomas for his statement after realizing that Jesus had indeed risen.

We learn to express our faith in our Lord. Thomas’ faith weakened by the extreme events that had occurred. But Thomas became willing to follow and serve our Lord even to his death.

#### **6. What lesson do you take away from the life of Matthew and Thomas?**

Answers will vary but look for the need to follow unhesitatingly, willingly, and faithfully no matter the cost. We put Jesus first in all things recognizing that He is indeed our Lord and God, our master, and our redeemer. It is in Him that we find rest from the loads of life we carry.

# Lesson #7 - James the Less, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Not Iscariot: Faces in the Crowd

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## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on biblical information about James the Less, Simon the Zealot, and Judas, Not Iscariot. Of special note is how the life of these men was transformed by Jesus as they grew spiritually. Although known only by their names, we learn valuable lessons in faithfulness and selflessness.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Learn the characteristics of the apostles that enable us to influence others for Jesus.
- **Feel:** Value the apostles as role models in serving the Lord.
- **Do:** Apply the characteristics of the apostles in our life of faithful service to the Lord.

## Support

- Series – Twelve Were Chosen – Dave Laton, 2021
- Video – Lesson 7 – James, Simon, and Judas, Not Iscariot
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 7

## Body of the Lesson

### 1.0 Biblical information

#### 1.1 James the Less

#### 1.2 Simon the Zealot

#### 1.3 Judas Not Iscariot

### 2.0 What we learn

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

## **1. Summarize biblical information about James the Less.**

- Named in each of the listings of the apostles and in mark 15:40
- Referred to as, James the Less or James the younger

## **2. Summarize biblical information about Simon.**

- 10<sup>th</sup> named apostle in Luke and 11<sup>th</sup> in Matthew and Mark
- Referred to as a Zealot and sometimes a Canaanite

## **3. Describe the zealots and how this would enable Simon to serve faithfully as an apostle, and how this characteristic helps in our role as disciples.**

Zealots were part of a political group sworn to overthrow Roman rule and to kill those who supported Rome. This would have included Matthew the tax collector. They were extremists who interpreted the Law literally and were thought of as violent outlaws. They were looking for the Messiah to overthrow Rome and establish the former glory of Israel.

Simon's passion and commitment would enable him to be faithful to Jesus as he faced challenges to being an apostle for Christ. We can learn from this to use our strengths to help us in our commitment to serve as disciples. We too face challenges that can destroy or weaken our faith.

#### **4. Summarize information about Judas (Not Iscariot).**

Judas is referred to by John as Judas, not Iscariot (John 14:22) and as Lebbaeus whose surname was Thaddeaus in Matthew 10:3

He is listed in each of the listing of the apostles and once more in John 14:21 as he asks a question of Jesus about showing Himself to the apostles but not the world.

#### **5. How do these men, with little reference in scripture, teach us in our service to Jesus?**

Look for answers that include how they show clearly that it is not about us, but about Jesus. He is the Lord and we are the servants. They demonstrated the greatest commandments of loving God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and our neighbor as ourselves.

We learn that God takes us from where we are and transforms us into what He wants us to be, like his son. Perhaps we see this most in Simon the Zealot as he learned humility, compassion, and love from Jesus.

We also learn that there is glory in the ordinary. They served quietly in the background, looking to learn and do what our Lord asks. They are a standard of excellence for the many silent saints serving faithfully. Their faith endured without having to be noticed and praised



# Lesson #8 - Judas Iscariot: A Life Wasted

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on how the life of Judas was wasted due to poor choices. Of special note is how Judas had every opportunity as the others to experience the spiritual growth our Lord offered. From this example of a life wasted we learn how to put our trust in the Lord and to gain forgiveness as we fail.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Learn the characteristics of the apostles that enable us to influence others for Jesus.
- **Feel:** Value the apostles as role models in serving the Lord.
- **Do:** Apply the characteristics of the apostles in our life of faithful service to the Lord.

## Support

- Series – Twelve Were Chosen – Dave Laton, 2021
- Video – Lesson 8 – Judas Iscariot ~ A Life Wasted
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 8

## Body of the Lesson

### 1.0 Judas

#### 1.1 Name and background

#### 1.2 Reconciling his choosing and his betrayal of Jesus

#### 1.3 Judas' death

### 2.0 Lessons from Judas

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.



## **1. Summarize information about Judas from scripture and why you feel he was willing to betray Jesus.**

Judas Iscariot was from the region of Kerioth, south of Judea. He did not have any obvious connections to the other apostles except for his discipleship to Jesus. As with the others, he was chosen by Jesus as an apostle. He is the last named apostle in all the listings. In the references from scripture, he is identified as dishonest, a betrayer, and greedy.

Answers will certainly vary as to why Judas chose to betray our Lord. We are not told in scripture specifically why. Some speculate he was trying to accelerate the coming of our Lord's Kingdom in a physical way. Others feel it was just greed. Regardless of the reason, Judas chose to betray our Lord, and chose to allow Satan to control him.

We learn from this that God has given us the ability to chose and we must chose to serve Him.

## **2. How do you reconcile that Jesus chose Judas and that Judas chose to betray our Lord?**

Scriptures tell us it was a conscious decision by Judas. Here are some of the references?

- Judas made a conscious choice to betray Jesus: Luke 22:48.
- He was a thief with greed in his heart: John 12:6.
- Jesus knew Judas' heart was set on evil and that he would not repent: John 6:70, John 17:12.
- Although Judas is not named specifically in prophecy as the betrayer, we do see that the act of betrayal was part of God's [sovereign](#) plan: Psalm 41:9, Zechariah 11:12-13, Matthew 20:18 and 26:20-25, Acts 1:16,20.

### **3. Using Matthew's account of the death of Judas and the reference from Acts 1:18-19, how do you see Judas' death portrayed.**

Matthew tells us of the manner of death following Judas' betrayal. Acts tells us what happened to the body once Judas took his life.

### **4. We know Judas experienced remorse for his actions. How does this differ from repentance, and what can we apply from this to our relationship with Jesus?**

Judas was sorrowful for his actions but he chose instead to go to the Chief Priest for absolution from his sin. That is not repentance. Repentance is turning from ourselves and toward our Lord. Judas did not turn to our Lord for forgiveness.

We all experience remorse. Jesus even considered it a blessing when we mourn (Matthew 5:4). The "mourn" referred to here is the remorse we feel for our sins. Jesus promises forgiveness to those who return to Him and demonstrated this with Peter and the other apostles, the thief on the cross, and many others listed in scripture as He pronounced forgiveness for sins. In our remorse, we must turn to Jesus for the promise of forgiveness.

### **5. How does Judas help us look at our own life as a disciple of Jesus?**

We recognize that as a faithful disciple, we focus on being and doing what the Master asks of us. Among this is to return to Him in repentance when we fail. In doing so, we will find forgiveness. The granting of forgiveness by our Lord demonstrates our humility, His love and compassion, and our acceptance of Him as Lord.



# Lesson #9 - Matthias and Paul: Transition to the Future

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## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on the choosing of Matthias and Paul as apostles. Of special note is how these men teach us about readiness and willingness to serve. We also look at Justus, the one not chosen for lessons in faithfulness.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Learn the characteristics of the apostles that enable us to influence others for Jesus.
- **Feel:** Value the apostles as role models in serving the Lord.
- **Do:** Apply the characteristics of the apostles in our life of faithful service to the Lord.

## Support

- Series – Twelve Were Chosen – Dave Laton, 2021
- Video – Lesson 9 – Matthias and Paul ~ Transition to the Future
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 9

## Body of the Lesson

### 1.0 Matthias

- 1.1 His choosing
- 1.2 What we learn
- 1.3 A bit about Justus – The one not chosen

### 2.0 Paul

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Lessons from Paul

## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

### **1. Summarize the selection of Matthias from Acts 1:12-26 to replace Judas and what we can learn from the event.**

Once Jesus had returned to heaven, the apostles returned to Jerusalem as instructed. As they waited for further events, Peter stands up with the other apostles and disciples and takes them through the process of selecting a replacement for Judas. In doing so, Peter references scripture regarding the need to replace Judas. Peter puts forth the requirement that the person must have been with Jesus from the baptism of John to the ascension. Matthias and Josheph (also known as Justus and Barsabbas) were selected as candidates. They prayed and cast lots to make the final selection. Matthias was selected.

We can learn from this that we must continue to seek our Lord’s will in our service. We must remain faithful and ready to serve in whatever capacity our Lord needs of us. We also must understand that we serve on our Lord’s time. Once again, we must be ready for the opportunity.

Note: Consider as a follow-on question if someone would share how they have had an opportunity to serve our Lord in a way in which they did not expect and how did it turn out?

## **2. What are some lessons we can learn from Joseph, the disciple not chosen to replace Judas?**

He teaches us that we must have a servant heart that is ready and faithful to serve the Lord. We also learn that we all have different capacities and roles for service and that not being chosen for a role does not disqualify us as a servant. God has different roles in mind for us. We must always be ready and willing to use our gifts to serve as God needs over our desires.

## **3. Summarize the conversion of Saul (Paul) and how this changed his life.**

We read of the conversion in Acts 9 and from Paul's statements in Acts 22. This event was a significant event that jarred him from his former life as a persecutor of Christians. He changed instead to one who championed Jesus and the gospel. Paul would spend the rest of his life as a faithful servant.

## **4. List some things we learn from Paul's conversion and life.**

Certainly, there is a lifetime of learning from Paul beginning with learning to submit to Jesus. We learn that even Paul was subject to sin, but he teaches us directly how to remain faithful by continuing to focus on Jesus. He learned humility and teaches it to us in many of the letters he writes, either directly or by example. Further, we learn from Paul how to live as faithful citizens in God's Kingdom including putting Jesus first in our life.



# Lesson #10 – Faith: A Matter of Choice

## Teaching Strategy

The focus of this lesson is on our gift of choice and how we must choose wisely to serve God faithfully. Of special note is the difference between Peter's faith walk and how he grew in faith and Judas' misdirected faith and ultimate loss of faith and the resulting hopelessness and death. As we compare the two, we learn how we must exercise choice wisely.

## Student Learning Outcomes

- **Know:** Learn the characteristics of the apostles that enable us to influence others for Jesus.
- **Feel:** Value the apostles as role models in serving the Lord.
- **Do:** Apply the characteristics of the apostles in our life of faithful service to the Lord.

## Support

- Series – Twelve Were Chosen – Dave Laton, 2021
- Video – Lesson 10 – Faith ~ A Matter of Choice
- Student Note Guide for Lesson 10

## Body of the Lesson

### 1.0 Faith Explained.

- 1.1 Faith defined
- 1.2 Illustrating the concept faith.

### 2.0 Peter – Faith gained, weakened, and regained.

- 2.1 Faith gained.
- 2.2 Faith weakened.
- 2.3 Faith regained (Luke 22:31-32).

### 3.0 Judas – Faith misdirected and lost.

- 3.1 Judas was one of the twelve chosen by Jesus as an apostle.
- 3.2 Judas' faith was misdirected onto self, not Jesus.

### 4.0 Choose this day...putting our faith into action.

- 4.1 A major gift and way in which we are created in the image of God is our ability to choose.
- 4.2 Choice has consequences, both positive and negative.



## Discussion Questions

Below are suggested questions to use during the guided discussion portion of the lesson. There are also suggested responses to questions to help students grasp the various concepts. These are provided to assist the discussion and are not considered as a “right or wrong” response.

### **1. Explain the interaction of the three elements of faith: Knowing God, Trusting God, Obeying God.**

Knowledge of God comes from studying His word and applying it in our lives. As we come to know more of God it leads to a greater trust as we see His love and faithfulness to us as His faithful children. From this knowledge and trust there is a willingness and even compulsion to obey Him in all areas of our life.

### **2. How did the apostles demonstrate the three elements of faith in their journey to becoming more faithful and how does this apply to us?**

The apostles heard the words of Christ and began to go beyond basic knowledge, eventually internalizing it as they become more Christlike. They possessed a level of knowledge of God’s word but Jesus taught them the true application of it. With the exception of Judas Iscariot, they accepted this and continued to dedicate their lives to our Lord. The more they learned, trusted, and obeyed, the more they grew in faith.

We too go through a similar process with the added benefit of having the complete word of God, including the recorded teachings of Jesus and the others in the New Testament. As we learn, trust, and obey, we too will grow in our faith.

### **3. Explain how Peter gained, weakened, and regained his faith, and how does this mirror our faith walk?**

Use the calling, key events, denial, and reinstatement of Peter to answer this question.

Peter was introduced to Jesus by his brother Andrew. From this Peter had his relationship solidified by Jesus through many personal interactions. Peter grew to declare our Lord as the Son of God and that he was willing to even die for Him. Sadly, when tested, Peter's faith weakened (along with the others) but never abandoned. Then our Lord fully reinstated Peter as not only an apostle, but the one to reveal the mystery of God's plan for our salvation.

### **4. Explain how Judas' faith was misdirected and lost and what is the warning for us?**

Judas knew Jesus, even following Him throughout His ministry. Yet Judas never internalized the teachings of Jesus. Instead of coming to truly know our Lord and thus be able to trust and obey Him, Judas sought to apply his faith in himself and others. Then when he attempted to find forgiveness, he went to the wrong source. Instead of going to our Lord, Judas sought forgiveness from the Chief Priest. Unable to find it, Judas sadly took his life.

The lesson for us is that when we sin and fail in our faith, we return to our Lord and will receive forgiveness and reinstatement. That is the promise from our Lord that we can always receive. (See Matthew 11:28-30; 1 John 1:5-10).

## **5. Explain how the ability to choose is a gift from God and how we should use it to put our faith in action?**

God created us with the ability to choose to obey Him. In doing so, we not only express our love for Him, but also our faith in Him. God could have made us as instinctive animals with no real choice but instead made us in His image with that gift among other gifts.

When we chose to be faithful it has the consequence of continually receiving forgiveness for our sins and weaknesses. When we chose to not be faithful, we suffer the negative consequences of death and separation from God.

Like Peter and so many others have done, we chose to return to our Lord and always find forgiveness and reinstatement in the family.

Faith brings us to God and keeps us in that relationship as we live as God wishes for us.



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