

God's Few – Pastor Anthony J. Shetley – Sunday, June 2, 2024

Jesus told us that many are called, but only few are chosen. Oh, but what God can do through a faithful few! Consider the apostles which Jesus called and chose for Himself. They were only twelve, however, God used them to change the world!

Jesus said, “How shall we picture the kingdom of God? *It is* like a mustard seed which is smaller than all the seeds that are upon the soil, yet when it is sown, it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and forms large branches; so that the birds of the air can nest under its shade.” **Mark 4:30–32**

So, one could conclude that out of every generation many are called but only a few are chosen. Maybe this is why many generations have passed and we're still waiting for the Lord's return. God is still working to populate His eternal kingdom with the few who are chosen from each generation. (It's just a thought.)

Consider Mt. 7:13-14 (The Narrow and the Broad Way)

Many are called means that many hear the gospel.

Romans 10:14,16,18 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher? ...However, they did not all heed the good news; for Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our report?” ...But I say, surely, they have never heard, have they? Indeed, they have; “Their voice has gone out into all the earth, And their words to the ends of the world.”

Isaiah foresaw a rejection of the message about salvation through the coming Christ and history has sustained prophecy.

1 Corinthians 1:23 We preach Christ crucified. To the Jews it's a stumbling block and to the Gentiles it's foolishness.

Soon and very soon, Jesus is coming back for God's few! One day, the few from each generation will be assembled around the throne of God praising and worshipping the king of kings and the Lord of Lords! Together, they will make up the throngs (the masses) of heaven!

Revelation 19:5–6 ⁵ And a voice came from the throne, saying, “**Give** praise to our God, all you His bondservants, you who fear Him, the small and the great.” ⁶ Then I heard *something* like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, “**Hallelujah!** For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.”

The question is, “Will you be in that number?”

The Narrowing of the Ranks:

Mark 8:35 “For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.”

To lose one's life is where many go away sorrowful. To lose one's life for the cause of Christ which is the gospel. The gospel is the ministry of the church.

Paul (an unlikely member of the church) urged his fellow church members to tie themselves to the altar and be offered up wholly as a burnt offering to God! Unlike the sacrifices offered under the law, we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice in worship and service unto to God - Romans 12:1.

God's few are servants! Yes, I say that the church's members are many, but the its laborers are few! In this generation – our generation – are you among the many or are you among the few?

The Parable of the Sower. Read with me: **Mark 4:3-9 > Mark 4:14-20**

Mark 4:15 “These are the ones who are beside the road where the word is sown; and when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word which has been sown in them.”

These aren't even paying attention. These aren't hungry for righteousness. Like a well beaten path, they have heard it so many times that it doesn't find any penetration into their mind or thoughts.

Mark 4:16–17 ¹⁶ “In a similar way these are the ones on whom seed was sown on the rocky *places*, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy; ¹⁷ and they have no *firm* root in themselves, but are *only* temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away.

These only want to hear about the blessings and promises of God. They're interested in the joys of God but not really looking to have to give up anything – sacrifice anything – or suffer anything. Therefore, when any of these things present themselves, they “fall away”.

Mark 4:18–19 ¹⁸ “And others are the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word, ¹⁹ but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

These are the ones who are just too busy and consumed with the here and now. They are too rapped up in this temporal world to worry with the spiritual kingdom of God. They are consumed with the deceitfulness of riches – believing that money, nice things, and comforts are what it's all about. It doesn't say that they are rich, only that they are deceived by riches. For this purpose, they aren't available to God nor the mission of the church. They are an unfruitful branch on the vine.

Mark 4:20 “And those are the ones on whom seed was sown on the good soil; and they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.”

God's few are able to produce 30x to 100x more than themselves. One of God's few may be able to do the work of 30 other men – one may be able to do the work of 60 other men – and some may be able to do the work of 100 other men. This is how God's kingdom prospers with only a few in each generation.

This is not about our works but God's work through us. God is able to do many, mighty, wonderful things through those who are willing to offer themselves wholly unto Him.

**MANY ARE CALLED BUT ONLY A FEW ARE CHOSEN OUT EVERY GENERATION.
THE CHOSEN ARE GOD'S FEW.**

Galatians 6:9; Hebrews 6:10 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name.