

THE COMMON DENOMINATOR

“When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them whom he also designated apostles.” —LUKE 6:13

The Church of Jesus Christ was built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone. For the apostles, that would have meant a lifetime commitment; one that rejoiced with every new convert, but also a life that came with the tremendous cost of persecution and hardship.

The disciples Jesus chose were either going to turn the world upside down with the Gospel in that first generation, or would cause the movement to fizzle out in one generation. It's understandable to assume Jesus would be looking for extraordinary people; spiritual supermen - swift, intelligent, confident and strong. But the reality is He called a group of extremely ordinary people with all their failures and weaknesses.

Peter was outspoken and impulsive. His brother, Andrew, was quiet and inconspicuous. James and John, also brothers, were fishermen in partnership with Peter and Andrew. Jesus gave James and John the name 'Boaneges', which means 'Sons of Thunder', most likely because they were somewhat aggressive and proud, not only in ministry, but they believed Jesus would overthrow the Roman government and wanted to reign on either side of Him. Philip is probably the first disciple of Jesus and he only speaks twice in all four Gospels, both times appearing a little slow in catching on. Matthew is the tax collector, considered the worst of the worst; Judas Iscariot, the money man who betrayed Jesus;

Simon the Zealot a political activist, Thomas the doubting one, and James, the son of Alphaeus, young and impressionable.

There were other disciples of whom we know little, but the point is that they came with varying backgrounds, professions, beliefs and opinions. These were everyday ordinary people, and the marvelous thing is that Jesus takes ordinary men and women and calls them to extraordinary tasks. What is the key? What is the extra in the ordinary that makes the ordinary extraordinary? The common denominator in all these people was Jesus Christ, Himself. It was His resurrected life, living in them, that was their empowerment in turning the world upside down with the Gospel.

These were people who willingly exchanged their weaknesses for Christ's strengths, their folly for His wisdom and their failure for His victory. That is still Christ's agenda today. We need no credentials, qualifications or experience, simply a willingness to be available to Him and a heart to serve Him.

PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, I pray that your Holy Spirit take complete charge of every aspect of my life so that I may be the means of leading others to You. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Am I led by the indwelling Spirit of Christ to witness for Him?