

The Twelve: Walk A Mile in Their Shoes **James the Less, Simon the Rebel & Judas the Humble** Various Texts

“Yes, LORD, walking in the way of your laws, we wait for you; your name & renown are the desire of our hearts.” **Isaiah 26:8 (NIV)**

Main Idea: For His Glory and My Good, God is Calling me Away from my Self-centered Focus so My Life can be All About Jesus and Not About Me.

Three Callings that Make it All About Jesus and Not About Me:

I. James was Called to Anonymity

“...James the younger...” **Mark 15:40b**

“If he ever wrote anything, it is lost to history. If he ever asked Jesus any questions, or did anything to stand out from the group, Scripture does not record it. He never attained any degree of fame or notoriety. He was not the kind of person who stands out. He was utterly obscure. He even had a common name.” **John MacArthur**

All We Know: His father was Alphaeus (Matt 10:3), his mother was Mary (Mark 15:40) his brother was Joses (Matt 27:56, Mark 15:47). Even his name implies obscurity; *James the Younger* (*mikros* = little, less, small in stature).

“...some were tortured, refusing to accept release, so that they might rise again to a better life. Others suffered mocking & flogging, & even chains & imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword. They went about in skins of sheep & goats, destitute, afflicted, mistreated – of whom the world was not worthy – wandering about in deserts & mountains, & in dens & caves of the earth.” **Hebrews 11:35b-38**

II. Simon was Called to a Higher Allegiance

“...Simon the Zealot.” **Luke 6:15b**

Zealots: This group of Jews hated the Romans. Convinced that only God had the right to rule over Israel, they believed they were commissioned by God to assassinate Roman soldiers, political leaders & anyone (including fellow Jews) who dared get in their way. They were extremists in every sense of the word, being militant, violent outlaws. They were red-hot patriots ready to die in an instant for what they believed in. Rebellions were always crushed by the mighty Roman military, but the Zealots would just go back underground to continue their secret, guerilla-style assassinations. The destruction of the temple in 70A.D. was largely due to the Zealots inciting the Romans.

“In the end, they became spiritual brethren, working side-by-side for the same cause –the spread of the gospel– and worshipping the same Lord.”

John MacArthur

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” **2 Corinthians 5:17**

III. Judas was Called to Patience

“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while & the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, & you in me, & I in you. Whoever has my commandments & keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, & I will love him & manifest myself to him.’ Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, & not to the world?’ Jesus answered him, ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, & my Father will love him, & we will come to him & make our home with him.’” **John 14:18-23**

Thomas: ‘Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?’” **John 14:5b**

Phillip: “Lord, show us the Father, & it is enough for us.” **John 14:8b**

Judas: “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, & not to the world?” **John 14:22b**

“Jesus answered him, ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, & my Father will love him, & we will come to him, & make our home with him.’” **John 14:23**

“And Peter said, ‘See, we have left our homes & followed you.’” **Luke 18:28**

Calling To Jesus: Each of these disciples, just like every one of us, is being called away from something. But that is not all! Jesus is calling us away from selfishness, our petty preferences and our agendas, but more importantly and more compellingly, Jesus is calling us to himself!

“To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” **2 Thessalonians 2:14**

In baseball, the name on the front of the jersey is more important than the name on the back! In following Jesus, his name will always be more important than my name; it’s all about Jesus and not about me.

Sources and Further Reading Opportunities:

- *Bible Exposition Commentary* – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- *New Bible Commentary* – D.A. Carson (1994)
- *New American Commentary Series* – Craig Bloomberg (1992)
- *Daily Study Bible Series* – William Barclay (1976)
- *Word Pictures in the New Testament* – A.T. Robertson (1933)
- *MacArthur New Testament Commentary* - John MacArthur (1987)
- *Tony Evans Book of Illustrations* – Tony Evans (2009)
- *Matthew Henry’s Commentary* – Matthew Henry (1994)
- *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* – W.A. Elwell (2001)
- *Twelve Ordinary Men* – John MacArthur (2002)