

IN THE STEPS OF JESUS

Matthew 9:36-38

INTRODUCTION

- A. An Old Story...
 - 1. Jesus had ascended back into heaven.
 - 2. Telling angels all he had accomplished on earth.
 - 3. Explained how he had left the entire project to 12 ordinary men.
 - 4. The angels were astonished!
 - 5. How could such a tremendous achievement as salvation be left to a handful of ordinary men?
 - 6. “But, what if they fail?”
 - 7. Jesus replied, “I have made no other provision.”
- B. A Remarkable Truth...
 - 1. The ministry of Jesus Christ – the Son of God.
 - 2. He did it all and then left it in the hands of 12 imperfect men.
 - 3. They were with Him for only 3 years (4 to 6 years req. for college degree).
- C. What Does It Mean to Be A Disciple?
 - 1. The twelve sometimes called “apostles.”
 - a. “*Apostolos*” – lit. “*one chosen and sent out.*”
 - b. “Disciples” – one who is a “learner” or a “follower.”
 - 2. Technically, every Christian is a disciple.
 - a. Baptizing and teaching, Mt. 28:19-20.
 - b. Disciples called Christians, Acts 11:26.
 - c. “*Leaving you an example for you to “follow” in His steps,*” 1 Pet. 2:21.

I. SELECTING THE TWELVE.

- A. The Number “Twelve” Significant.
 - 1. The number “12” in Hebrew thought, suggesting religious completeness.
 - a. Twelve patriarchs.
 - b. Twelve tribes of Israel.
 - 2. They had no particular capabilities, worthiness or faithfulness.
 - 3. Chosen in accordance with the Lord’s sovereign will and purpose (night of prayer).
 - 4. They lacked spiritual understanding, humility, faith, commitment, and power.
 - 5. Much in common, but different temperaments and dispositions.
- B. A Brief Listing:
 - a. Simon (Peter) – always listed first.
 - b. Andrew, Peter’s brother – fisherman. One of the first to follow, Jn. 1.
 - c. James, the son of Zebedee – fisherman.
 - d. John, the brother of James – fisherman.
 - e. Philip, originally from Bethsaida (Town of fish or Fisher town).
 - i. Jesus found Philip, Jn. 1:43.
 - i. Philip brought Nathanael to Jesus.
 - f. Bartholomew (same as Nathanael?).
 - g. Thomas, Didymus – means twin. A pessimist.
 - h. Matthew, the tax collector.

- i. James, son of Alphaeus – distinguish from James son of Zebedee.
- j. Thaddaeus, perhaps the same person as “Judas the son of James.”
- k. Simon, the Zealot. Enemy of the Romans (and Matthew?).
- l. Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus.

II. PRINCIPLES OF DISCIPLESHIP.

- A. Imitation, Mt. 10:1, 7-8.
 - 1. Doing exactly as Jesus had done, compare to Mt. 4:23-24.
 - 2. Discipleship is first of all based on imitating in our own lives the life of Jesus.
 - 3. The goal should be to become like Jesus in all we do or say, Galatians 2:20.
 - a. His devotion to God.
 - b. His love.
 - c. His self-giving spirit.
 - d. Habit of doing good to others.
- B. Commission [Limited], Mt. 10:5-7.
 - 1. Proclaim to the lost sheep of Israel – the kingdom of heaven is at hand.
 - 2. Today, we live under the Great Commission, Mt. 28:19-20.
 - 3. We don't follow Jesus to be something, but to do something!
- C. Service, Mt. 10:8.
 - 1. *“Freely you received, freely give.”*
 - 2. Matthew 20:26-28 – argument of the greatest.
 - 3. Followers of Jesus will always be seeking ways to serve, Mt. 9:36-38.
- D. Renunciation, Mt. 10:9-10.
 - 1. Not to take money or extra provisions.
 - 2. Reliance upon God – Israelites gathering manna (Sabbath).
 - 3. 1 Timothy 6:6-11
 - 4. *“No one can serve two masters...”* Mt. 6:24, 33.
- E. Blessing, Mt. 10:11-15.
 - 1. Express purpose to bring blessings of the kingdom to Israel.
 - 2. Disciples today are to be a blessing to those around us.
 - a. Telling others about salvation in Jesus Christ.
 - b. Showing what the kingdom is all about.
 - i. 1 Peter 2:9, *“...you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out...”*
 - ii. Mt. 5:14-16 – letting our lights shine.
 - c. A life in Christ – peace, joy, love, hope.

CLOSING

- A. We are the body of Christ – disciples, Romans 12:4-8..
 - 1. We are all different in our own way.
 - 2. But because we are all a part of the body, we all work together as one.
- B. But, Are We?
 - 1. Are you a part of the body of Christ – born into the family of God?
 - 2. Are you living for Jesus – walking in His steps?