

ST JOHN’S LUTHERAN CHURCH

Red Bud, Illinois

Adult Bible Class

“Jesus’ 12 Apostles: Up Close and Personal”

Introduction

Teachers of religion in the Jewish faith of the 1st century AD were called “rabbis.” Men who wanted to study religion would pick the rabbis they wanted as their teachers. Jesus did just the opposite in His earthly ministry. He was a teacher who picked the ones that He wanted to be His students. When Jesus chose His disciples, He did not go to the Concordia University schools of their day and select the pre-seminary students. Instead, Jesus went to the boat docks, the toll booths and the computer stores (not really).

As God did with His Old Testament spokesmen, Jesus did not choose those who were equipped, but He equipped those whom He chose. They became missionaries of a Man and a message that changed the world. All but one gave up their earthly lives as martyrs for the One who gave them (all but one) eternal life. These ordinary men with their extraordinary calling influenced the world in a way no other group ever has.

Name the Twelve Apostles: (same number as the Old Testament tribes of Israel)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

An apostle is one who is sent with a specific mission. While it seems that many followed Jesus as His students (including women), Jesus chose 12 of them whom He specifically appointed as apostles. Lists where these men are named are in Matthew 12:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16 and Acts 1:13.

What did Jesus do before He selected 12 of His disciples for the special work of an apostle? _____

Luke 6:12-13 In these days He went out to the mountain to pray, and all night He continued in prayer to God. And when day came, He called His disciples and chose from them twelve, whom He named apostles.

What do we learn from the description of Peter and John here that could apply to all the apostles?

Acts 4:13 Now when they (Jewish leaders) saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated, common men, they were astonished. And they recognized that they had been with Jesus.

I. Simon Peter

What do we learn about Simon Peter from these passages?

John 1:40-42 Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. ⁴¹The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). ⁴²And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas" (which, when translated, is Peter^[a]). Footnotes: a) John 1:42 Both Cephas (Aramaic) and Peter (Greek) mean "rock."

Mark 1:16-18 ¹⁶As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷"Come, follow Me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." ¹⁸At once they left their nets and followed Him.

Mark 1:21, 29-31 They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach... ²⁹As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. ³⁰Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they told Jesus about her. ³¹So He went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them.

See Luke 5:1-11. What do we learn about Simon in verse 3? _____
Verse 5: How did Simon react to Jesus' command? _____
Verse 8: How does Simon describe himself? _____
Verse 10: What do we learn about Simon here? _____

See Matthew 17:24-27. Every Jewish male over the age of twenty had to pay this yearly tax for the support of the temple in Jerusalem. The "St. Peter's fish" found in the Lake of Galilee today is quite capable of holding such a coin in its mouth.

What do we learn about Peter here? _____

The Highs and the Lows of Simon Peter:

See Matthew 16:13-20. How does Peter answer Jesus' question? _____
What does Jesus say about this answer? _____

See Matthew 16:21-24. What does Jesus tell His followers? _____
How does Peter react to this information? _____
What does Jesus call Peter? _____ Why? _____

See Matthew 17:1-8. What does Peter get to see? _____
What does he offer to do to maintain this experience? _____
(Luke offers this insight "He did not know what he was saying." Luke 9:33)
How do the disciples react to this sight and sound? _____

See Matthew 18:21-22. What does Peter offer to do for his brother (fellow believer)? _____
Jewish teaching of the time was that a Jew needed to forgive only a fellow Jew and do so only three times. Peter may have felt that his own offer of forgiveness (double that plus one) was very generous.
What does Jesus' response teach us about forgiving others? _____