

Twelve Ordinary Men

How the Master Shaped His Disciples for Greatness
and What He Wants to Do with You.

by John MacArthur

Chapter One: Common Men, Uncommon Calling

Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world's eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important. As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God.

- 1 Corinthians 1:26-29

- I. Christ's calling of the Twelve was not what we might have _____.
 - a. Note the _____ in which they were chosen.
 - b. Christ's choice exemplified the character of the _____ itself.
- II. Christ's calling of the Twelve followed a definite _____.
 - a. Phase one was a call to _____ (John 1:35-51).
 - b. Phase two was a call to _____ (Luke 5).
 - c. Phase three was a call to _____ (Matthew 10:1-4).
 - d. Phase four was a call to _____.
- III. Some important things to understand about phase three.
 - a. The T_____. Luke 6:12 introduces the call to apostleship with the phrase "And it was at this time..." which refers back the preceding account of the plot to ____ Jesus. His decision to focus His teaching efforts now on the Twelve was a direct response to this rejection.
 - b. The T_____. The most striking thing about the twelve was that there really wasn't anything particularly _____ about them. They were not superhuman or even extraordinary. The only thing that set them apart and made them great leaders was that they were chosen by a great Teacher precisely because they were ordinary.

- c. The T_____. He considered this an important decision and spent an entire night _____ over it (Luke 6:12). The Greek is very striking here: it emphasizes that Jesus toiled through the whole night in communion with God. At this point Jesus was an itinerate preacher and rabbi and was calling them leave their everyday routines and live with him for a period of intensive training.
- d. The T_____. They were to be his delegates or representatives and witnesses to His resurrection after He returned to heaven (although they did not understand that at all at the point of their calling). They were to have a supernatural _____ ministry that was to be accompanied by _____. Keep in mind phase four of their calling!
- e. The _____. As noted above, they certainly had the best Instructor for this training, but it was still not an easy process. The difficulty was due to their lack of _____, _____, _____, _____, and _____.

The apostles' relatively brief time of training with Jesus bore eternal fruit. At first, it might have seemed that everything would be for naught. The night Jesus was betrayed, they were scattered like sheep whose shepherd had been smitten (Matthew 26:31). Even after the resurrection, they seemed timid, full of remorse over their failure and too aware of their own weaknesses to minister with confidence.

But after Jesus ascended to heaven, the Holy Spirit came, infused them with power, and enabled them to do what Christ had trained them to do. The book of Acts records how the church was launched and the rest is history. Those men, through the legacy of New Testament Scripture and the testimony they left, are still changing the world even today.