

Jesus Wow! Series Part 14

Jesus Calls the Twelve

Pastor Andrew Neville 12/7/20

Mark 3: 13-19

Sermon Summary

The anecdote Pastor Andrew used to open his sermon concerned Gordon Tietjens, the former long-time coach of the All Black Sevens rugby team, who, on hearing his name **called** out to represent his country many years before his coaching career, considered that the finest moment of his life.

Then Andrew wondered what it would be like if he were a common fisherman and were **called** by Jesus to become his apostle.

But before focusing on the calling of the twelve, Pastor Andrew drew attention to a description of a typical Day in the Life of Jesus as recorded in Mark 3: 7-12. The crowds mentioned were just not local folk; those from Idumea would have had a walk of 200 kilometres to reach Capernaum. (That's equivalent of walking from Auckland to Tirau via Hamilton.) All these people of various nationalities had heard so much about Jesus that they just wanted to see him face to face. Once he needed a boat to separate himself from the crowd so that he could more easily preach to the people – since that was his prime purpose.

Verses 11 and 12 tell a pertinent fact. The demons within any person close to Jesus as he walked by **knew** precisely who Jesus was, and they caused their human hosts to fall down and cry out **“You are the Son of God.”** Jesus, not wanting this statement to become common knowledge, ordered them to remain silent, lest the ordinary people try to use Jesus as a leader to conquer the Romans. (God is sovereign over **ALL**. This includes demons. When Jesus told them to ‘shut up,’ they had to obey.)

We don't live in a yin yang world, a world where good v. evil is in some form of balance yet indivisible – Taoism metaphysics. No – evil bows (is subjected) to Jesus because God is omnipotent. People may not know the Son of God, but their demons certainly do!

The Selection

Verse 13 begins with Jesus going up into the hills. This he always did for prayer. The selection of the twelve was not a casual affair. In recording the same event, Luke 6:12-13 describes Jesus' spending the entire night in prayer before calling his disciples to come meet him. It is worth commenting that before every major decision in Jesus' life he prayed for wisdom in whatever was the immediate task. **And so, should we, if we want wisdom?**

The full list of the apostles occurs four times in the New Testament. Each time they vary slightly. Sometimes, an alternate name is used. But always in the list, the first name is Peter, and the last, Judas. The twelve can be divided into 3's – 4 in each group.

From Mark's list (3:16-19):

Group 1: Simon (Peter), James and John (sons of Zebedee), and Andrew.

Group 2: Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas.

Group 3: James (son of Alphaeus), Thaddeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot.

It is possible that 3 pairs were brothers, and Matthew and Simon Peter were complete opposites in character. Matthew, hated by the people because he was a tax-collector, and Simon a zealot, a revolutionist who hated the Romans and wanted nothing more than to destroy them.

All of them, for the sake of Christ, left their lives, hopes, work to follow Jesus. Then they changed; they all grew in wisdom and knowledge; all except Judas who never did. He had no true spiritual feelings for Jesus. There had to be one who would betray him to fulfill the scriptures. Was he both a willing but unwittingly used person for God's purpose? Andrew thinks Judas made his own choice. God knew he would and used him for his particular (infamous) purpose.

Mark 3: 14 explains the reason for the calling of the 12 apostles out of all the disciples who came out to the hills to hear him. He desired these 12 for two specific reasons:

1. He wanted them to be with him as permanent companions.
2. He wanted to be able to send them out to preach.

When Jesus died, they were to continue His work; they were no longer apprentices. They were disciple others.

They were 12 ordinary men with vastly differing personalities; they were not superstars in any shape or form, yet look at the fire those 12 lit.

These 12 representatives of Jesus are the model of the work that we ought to be doing in our time, whether it be right here in Auckland or overseas. We are Jesus' disciples. One of the great lessons from this teaching is that higher education is not a prerequisite to undertaking the work of Jesus. It is the power of the Holy Spirit that does the work.

Discussion Questions

1. **Read Mark 3:7-12.** The following is a map of Israel superimposed over New Zealand. At the time of Jerusalem's destruction by the Romans in AD70, the population of that city has been estimated from 60,000 to 600,000. Perhaps then, we may say that the original "Israel" may have had 1,000,000 as a total population. Modern-day Christchurch has about 400,000. Without modern means of transport and communications, how do you think word of Jesus spread so rapidly? And why did so many undertake the long journeys just to see Him?



2. Do evil spirits inhabit people today? Do you know of anybody who has been healed from demonic possession? If a demon is antagonistic to Jesus, why, if it is told by Jesus to "keep quiet" does it not open its mouth the moment Jesus has gone?
3. **Read Mark 3:13-19.** Jesus spent the entire night praying before selecting, from his disciples, the 12 who would become his apostles. How often and earnestly have you prayed for long periods? Say for 1 hour? What about 2 hours? What about 6 hours?
4. What do you understand about yin and yang, the Taoist idea that evil and good co-exist (indivisible) and so cannot be altered permanently no matter how hard you try? Yet demons (evil) are under the authority of Jesus. If so, then how now can we live lives separated from Satanic influence?
5. **Read Matthew 10:2-4, Mark 3: 16-19, Luke 6:14-16, Acts 1:13 and 26.** Compare and contrast the lists. Look for any other names. Who replaced Judas Iscariot? How was it done? **Read Acts 1:21-26.**
6. But what about Paul? How did he become an Apostle? **Read Galatians 1:1 and 1:11-12.** What distinguishes Paul from others down the ages who claim to have had special revelations from The Lord?

Suggested LG Prayer Points (to promote church wide prayer) Week starting Monday July 13

1. The Christian church in Hong Kong that it will continue to have freedoms and be salt and light to China.
2. Covid 19 - that more will come to know Jesus through social media... pray that freedoms will increase and the Gospel will be heard in 'closed' countries.
3. New Zealand Christians will find ways to minister/witness to the unemployed, those suffering financially and those struggling in their relationships. Pray that CAP (Christians Against Poverty) will have increased opportunity and be effective.
4. Northcross members will have opportunities to proclaim the gospel. That Paul's desire might be ours too (Col. 4): may we proclaim the gospel clearly... Being wise in the way we act toward outsiders; making the most of every opportunity. May our conversations be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that we may know how to answer everyone.