

BEING CHALLENGED WITH THE TWELVE

Introduction

- 1) **Luke 6:12-16** – From His disciples, Jesus chose **twelve men** to be His **apostles**
 - a) *Apostolos* (Gk) = a messenger, one who is sent on a mission
- 2) Why twelve? **Twelve** is an important Bible number signifying completeness, perfection, especially in government or rule; used 187 times in the Bible, 22 times in the book of Revelation
 - a) Twelve tribes of Israel, twelve pieces of temple bread, twelve gates of pearl in holy city of God
- 3) Twelve men with different backgrounds, skills, and temperaments – how coexist and cooperate?
 - a) Jesus would patiently teach, guide, discipline, and prepare all these men for kingdom work
 - b) Taught them to not only use their talents, but to step out of their “comfort zones” (Matt. 4:18-22)
- 4) Part of their instruction included facing challenging questions asked by their Master
 - a) We examine three of these questions of Jesus that we may also be challenged with the Twelve

I) **“But Who Do You Say That I Am?” (Matthew 16:13-18)**

- A) Jesus first asked His disciples, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?” (v. 13)
 - 1) They give several answers about people’s opinions (v. 14)
- B) Jesus then challenges His disciples to answer the same question (v. 15)
 - 1) Many will gladly tell you what everyone else is saying about an important issue, but will avoid telling you what they believe on the issue (cf. Matt. 21:25-27)
 - 2) Jesus expects us to answer forthrightly about our own faith (cf. 1 Pet. 3:15)
- C) Peter answers correctly, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God” (vv. 16-17)
 - 1) This confession about Jesus must come from each disciple of Jesus (Matt. 10:32)
 - 2) Our faith and salvation are based in who Jesus is (v. 18; Jn. 8:24; Acts 2:36; 4:12)
 - 3) Must be ready at all times to demonstrate our faith in Jesus with our words and lives

II) **“Where Is Your Faith?” (Luke 8:22-25)**

- A) Jesus got into a boat with His disciples to cross the Sea of Galilee (v. 22)
- B) Storm descends upon them, boat began filling with water, and they were in danger (v. 23)
- C) They awaken Jesus in fear, and He rebukes the wind and waves calming the sea (v. 24)
- D) Jesus then challenges his fearful disciples concerning their faith – *where is it?*
 - 1) Our faith needs to be greater than our fear, even in the face of death itself (Lk. 12:4-5; Heb. 2:14-15)
 - 2) Do we proudly proclaim our faith until we are put in a fearful and uncomfortable situation? Do we have only “fair-weather” faith that goes missing in the storms of life? (Lk. 22:33)

III) **“Do You Also Want To Go Away?” (John 6:63-69)**

- A) Jesus fed the five thousand and then identified Himself as the “bread of life” (vv. 1-59)
- B) Many of His disciples grumbled, did not believe, and eventually left Him (vv. 60-66)
 - 1) Jesus forces no one to commit to Him – only those who are willing to hear and learn from the Father [through the Word of God] comes to Jesus and follows Him (vv. 65, 44-45)
- C) Jesus challenged the twelve to decide if they also wanted to go away
 - 1) It can be tempting to follow the “many” – majority action usually seen as best choice
 - 2) If they are to stay, they must go against the majority based on their own faith in Jesus
- D) Peter answered, “To whom shall we go?” (v. 68)
 - 1) The faith to follow Jesus is based on who He is (v. 69) and His words of life (v. 63, 68)
 - 2) It is foolish to go away because there is nowhere else to go – Jesus provides all we need!

Conclusion

The twelve apostles learned important lessons about faith – have we learned these same lessons?