


The Gospel of Mark
Part 12
The Naming of the Twelve

TALKINGPOINTS WALKINGPOINTS

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A publication of , the adult discipleship ministry of Triangle Community Church.

Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Triangle Community Church aims to be a “transforming church”. We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God's will for his people. But transformation does not happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent action. 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs you to “discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” Since “Talking Points, Walking Points” is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don't linger there. Be sure to “dive deep” too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled “Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time”, are perfect for private reflection.

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

- What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you? ...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?
- Read Mark 3:7-10 and 4:1. Jesus **loved** the people—why did he want distance **from** them?
Why do you think Jesus used a boat? Why didn't he just walk out into the deep water, **stand there on the water**, and preach to the people? Why not just do that? (He **could** have—see Mark 6:48!)
- Read Mark 3:13-19. How do you think you would have felt if you had been chosen by Jesus for his special inner group? What would have excited you about that? What would have terrified you? How do you think you would have felt around those who were not selected by Jesus?
Read Matthew 26:36-37; Mark 9:1-2; and Luke 8:49-51. What phenomenon do you see taking place? How do you think these three felt? How do you think the other nine felt? What do you think Jesus was doing?
- Read John 6:54-56 and 66-69. Peter certainly found the idea of cannibalism equally distasteful, so why do you think he and the Twelve were able to respond differently than Jesus' other disciples?
What role do stable leaders play in any movement?
How have you seen present-day church leaders display stability in the midst of changing times?
What challenges does the church face today? Who do you know who has been disturbed by that? How does the ancient wisdom of the Apostles (ie, the New Testament) speak to those issues?

Sermon Summary **Key Text: Mark 3:6-19**

We are working our way through the Gospel of Mark and his fascinating portrayal of the life of Jesus. In today's passage, Jesus has alienated the Jewish ruling class—yet with the common people he is at the height of popularity. People are coming to him from everywhere, and the crowds are dangerously dense and huge. People were pressing in and crowding Jesus. It was a potentially dangerously crushing crowd that caused him to change his ministry strategy. He decentralized his ministry by deputizing twelve disciples as spokesmen. Crowds were coming from all over. Jesus had made such an impression through his teachings, healings, and exorcisms that people started coming from surrounding areas to see him. Jesus “withdrew” (v. 7) from the Sabbath controversies and the hostility of the Jewish leadership who were out to destroy him (v. 6). But Jesus withdrew from one problem only to encounter another: crowds. In order to maintain a safe distance, Jesus eventually began preaching from a boat (v. 9 cf. 4:1). Jesus' miracles were meant to point people to his true identity as the Son of God come to die for them, but all most of the wanted was a miracle worker and military leader. Things haven't changed that much in twenty centuries: people today likewise want a religion that is custom designed for them, a religion that doesn't challenge their autonomy nor their beliefs. Even demons were adding to the disorder (v. 11-12). Jesus did not want his popularity to get in the way of his mission, but that's exactly what was beginning to happen. Jesus was always on mission—on *his* mission. He had a plan, and he executed it. Jesus wasn't enamored by crowds (see John 6:66-69).

So Jesus now begins laying the foundation for the work of the ministry that will be fulfilled by the twelve after the cross. They will reap the fruit of Jesus' public ministry of fulfilling Old Testament messianic prophecy and correcting the wrong expectations people had about him. Jesus' goal is not to attract a crowd, but to make disciples. Can you say, “I am a devoted, disciplined disciple”? This problem of the crowds leads Jesus to appoint twelve to a select ministry (v. 13-19 and Luke 6:12 tell us that Jesus spent the entire night in prayer before choosing his apostles).

The twelve were a unique group, sometimes referred to as “the twelve disciples,” sometimes as just “the twelve,” and sometimes as “the Apostles.” (After Judas betrayed Jesus and killed himself, the other eleven appointed Matthias to replace him; Acts 1:26). To qualify to be an Apostle one had to be an eyewitness of Jesus, from his baptism through his resurrection and ascension (Acts 1:21–22). (Paul was later appointed by Jesus to also be an apostle. He was an exception.) The Apostles were a select group chosen by Jesus to fulfill very specific, time-limited roles. Jesus appointed them that they would be with him and that He could send them out to preach and have authority over demons. We are not them; the instructions they received are not necessarily for us. But we can learn from their examples; we too can be trained to minister.

As a traveling teacher, Jesus travelled from one village to another, often delivering the same content, while making adjustments for questions asked by his audience. Imagine how many times the Apostles heard him repeat the same stories in different forms. They also observed him as he reacted to various situations: opposition by the Pharisees, the grief of a parent, or

the cluelessness of one of their fellow disciples. They saw Jesus' facial expressions, they saw how he responded—always with truth and grace. It's important to have models, not just teachers. It's important for us to have people we can attach ourselves to and observe and learn from. Having trained disciples helped solve the problem of the crowds: through his disciples, Jesus multiplied his ministry. More people can hear the message because there are more messengers! Jesus trained the twelve to be extensions of himself. Jesus sent them out two by two to various villages. That's six groups, six different locations at one time, taking the teaching they had heard from Jesus, and repeating it. Jesus multiplied his ministry. This is how Jesus trained them. The Apostles played a critical role as the guarantors of Jesus' teachings, accurately preserving them in written form for generations to come.

The New Testament has four lists of the twelve Apostles but the names differ in some places. Let's talk about that for a moment. Each list has three sub-groups of four names, and in each sub-group the same man is named first. Peter heads up the first sub-group of four, Phillip heads up the second, and James the Son of Alphaeus heads up the final. (The order of the rest of the names in each sub-group varies. Judas Iscariot, Jesus' betrayer, is always the last Apostle mentioned. Then there's Thaddaeus...or is his name Judas (*a different Judas!*)? Here's a solution to that puzzle: Judas is a Jewish name, while Thaddeus is a Greek name. It was very common in the first century for a Jew to have two names, their given Jewish name and a Greek or Roman name. I think there's a good reason for him to prefer going by Thaddaeus—his given name, "Judas", carried a bit of baggage after Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus! There's another possible discrepancy in the names of the twelve. John's gospel includes a guy named Nathaniel as a member of the Twelve. Without going into all the details, I think that this is a reference to Bartholomew. Same person, two names. "The Twelve" was a special group who founded the church (Ephesians 2:20). They all gave their lives to proclaiming the risen Savior. For them, Jesus' resurrection wasn't hearsay, it was their personal eyewitness experience; testimony that changed the world! All of them died so that we might hear the gospel and live. By their lives and work, as well as by their writings, the Apostles are still making disciples.

	Matthew 10:2-4	Mark 3:16-19	Luke 6:14-16	Acts 1:13
1	Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Simon Peter	Peter
2	Andrew	James	Andrew	John
3	James	John	James	James
4	John	Andrew	John	Andrew
5	Phillip	Phillip	Phillip	Phillip
6	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Thomas
7	Thomas	Matthew	Matthew	Bartholomew
8	Matthew	Thomas	Thomas	Matthew
9	James, son of Alphaeus	James, son of Alphaeus	James, son of Alphaeus	James, son of Alphaeus
10	Thaddaeus	Thaddaeus	Judas, son or brother of James	Judas, son or brother of James
11	Simon the Cananaean	Simon the Cananaean	Simon the Zealot	Simon the Zealot
12	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see below) *is useful for studying any topic.*
Let's use it to explore the unique role the Apostles played in the Christian faith...

Monday—Study 1 Corinthians 15:3–8

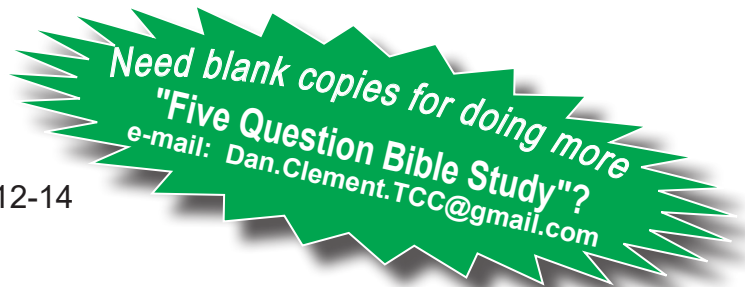
Tuesday—Study Ephesians 2:20

Wednesday—Study Ephesians 4:11-16

Thursday—Study John 14:26; 15:26-27; 16:12-14

Friday—Study Revelation 1:9-19

Saturday—Study 2 Corinthians 11:13 & 12:12



Five Question Bible Study

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]