Twelve Ordinary Men
Scripture: Matthew 10
Code: BQ3111

Jesus summoned His twelve disciples (Matthew 10:1)

It is encouraging to realize that Jesus did not call those **twelve disciples** who became apostles on the basis of their innate worthiness or personal capabilities or faithfulness, but solely on the basis of what He could make of them by His own power working through them. It is a mark of authenticity and honesty that the gospel writers, like all the other Scripture writers, make no effort to mask the faults and shortcomings of God's people, including those of their most outstanding leaders. During the disciples' three years of training under Jesus, we see few signs of maturity and reliability but many signs of pettiness and inadequacy. It is a marvelous insight into the grace of God toward us to see Christ dealing so lovingly and patiently with men who are so weak and unresponsive.

Behind Jesus' training of the twelve are several foundational facts. First, these men were chosen sovereignly by God. None of the twelve initiated the idea of following Jesus and becoming His disciples, much less His apostles. It was entirely God's planning and doing. Mark tells us that Jesus "summoned those whom He Himself wanted" (3:13), and near the end of His earthly ministry Jesus reminded them, "You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you" (John 15:16). The men themselves were not consulted nor were any other men. Jesus' only consultation was with His heavenly Father. Like Abraham, Moses, David, Isaiah, and all the prophets, the **twelve disciples** were chosen by God's sovereign will and for His sovereign purpose, being foreordained to His service before the foundation of the world. That has always been God's way. He divinely chose Israel, He divinely chose His prophets and His apostles, and He divinely chooses those today who become the leaders of His own Body, the church. Acts 13:1–4 and 20:28 clearly teach that the Holy Spirit sovereignly places men in leadership in the church.

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