

Daily Bible Study

“Colossal Crowds, Chosen Company, Constraining Clan”

(Part 2)

Mark 3:7-21

November 22-28, 2009

THE LORD’S DAY – We return this week in our study of The Gospel According to Mark to our text, **Mark 3:7-21**. We are picking up with Part-2 of a lesson entitled “*Colossal Crowds, Chosen Company, Constraining Clan*”. If you remember back we left at the point where Jesus was going up on the mountain and He was about to make a reduction in the numbers of the *Colossal Crowd*. We will see in the text this week that Jesus appoints His twelve apostles which Scripture lists for us by name. We will take a brief look at these men with some short biographical material. After this Christ returns to dealing with the multitude as they again come to Him and we are told that He *could so much as eat bread*. He is actually approached by some who we are calling the **Constraining Clan** that would desire to take control of Him and bring them under their care as they think *He is out of His mind*. The work Jesus and His Apostles were about was in the eyes of *His own people* just too much. Christ, as usual was meeting needs of the people and preaching to them and willingly giving of His time and energy to the point that people thought He had gone crazy and needed help. Read **Mark 3:7-21**.

The Word Applied & A Suggestion for Prayer: *Prayerfully read the text then ask God to both teach you from His Word this week and then give you opportunity to practice what you learn.*

MONDAY – In **verse 13** we come to a transition in our text. Moving from the volatility of the scene of the multitudes that were following Jesus and pressing in on Him we now find Christ move *up on the mountain* and there Jesus narrows down the list of followers as *He called to Himself those He wanted*. As I mentioned a couple weeks ago, Jesus would employ the aid of some chosen men to help handle the work of proclaiming and demonstrating the Gospel of the Kingdom. **Luke 6:12** tells us that He continued all night in prayer before this next selection. It was an important moment in the ministry of Christ. The text tells us that Jesus *called to Him those He Himself wanted*. The pronoun in the original Greek used for the word Himself is *autos*. It means, “one’s own, self”. We find it in our word autobiography which is a history of a person’s life written or told by that person. The pronoun is used emphatically in the Greek and it stresses Jesus control and Sovereign authority in calling these men to Him. We see His Sovereign power in the fact that the next phrase in the text says, “*And they came to him*”. Jesus is in control of all things and He is the one doing the choosing. We understand this as a spiritual reality in what we call the Doctrine of Election. Sacred scripture is clear that it is God not us who does the choosing of His people. Read **John 15:16, Ephesians 1:3-6**.

The Word Applied: *Are you daily aware of God’s sovereign control of all things; including the very choice of you as an Elect child of His? It is His work and word that brought life to your dead soul.*

Suggestion for Prayer: *Father, thank You for choosing me in Christ before the world began.*

TUESDAY – We are now told that Jesus *appointed twelve...* The text is clear that He appointed them to a specific task which we will detail momentarily. We find He called them *to be with Him*, that He might *send them out to preach*, that they were given power *to heal sicknesses*, and also they were given power *to cast out demons*. These men gained their “education” if you will from being with Jesus (**Acts 4:13**). It was in time with Jesus where they observed Him and were taught by Him that they grew in their knowledge thus receiving their spiritual education. They were called to be heralds of the good news of the Kingdom, to go out and *preach* and proclaim it. Jesus gave these men power to *heal sickness* even reaching to the point of raising the dead (**Matthew 10:8**). They were also given real authority and privilege by Jesus to the extent that Jesus told them that when someone *receives you they receive Me* (**Matthew 10:40**). To verify they had been appointed and empowered by Christ Himself we see that Jesus gave the apostles power over the demons as well (**Luke 9:1**). These men had been called and equipped and sent out to their

mission. Once when they returned to Christ, seeing that the power He had given them was real, they were *joyful* and it is then that Jesus reminded them of what they should truly rejoice over. Read what that is from **Luke 10:17-20**.

The Word Applied: What makes you rejoice? Think about what really fills you with joy.

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, help me to really understand the reality of having my name written down in heaven. May this be a consuming joy in my soul and life. Forgive me for placing so many trivial “joys” on par with Your great salvation of my soul.

WEDNESDAY – As we now come to the 12 apostles we are going to give a brief biographical sketch of each of them in the order they are listed in Mark. **Simon Peter** (also called Simeon bar Jona, Cephas, Simon): He was from Bethsaida (**John 1:42-44**) and lived in Capernaum (**Matthew 8:5-14**). He was a fisherman (**Matthew 4:18**), brother of Andrew (**Matthew 4:18**), and partner with James and John (**Luke 5:10**). He was married (**Matthew 8:14**) and was one of the “pillars” of the Jerusalem church (**Galatians 2:9**). He was a bold preacher and he healed and ministered to both Jews and Gentiles after Pentecost (**Acts 2-12**). He was once imprisoned by Herod for preaching and was then rescued by an angel (**Acts 12:3-19**). He was an impulsive man (**Matthew 14:28**) yet also cowardly (**Matthew 26:69-74**). He had a temper (**John 18:10**) yet by God’s grace, a tender heart (**Matthew 26:75**). Peter left everything to follow Jesus (**Luke 5:11**), was one of the core group of Christ’s closest disciples (**Mark 5:37**), witnessed the transfiguration (**Mark 9:2-8**), and was personally charged and instructed by Jesus after His resurrection (**John 21:15-19**). Papias (2nd century) recorded that Mark served as Peter’s scribe in writing the gospel of Mark. Tradition states Peter was crucified upside down during Nero’s reign.

The Word Applied: As we observe the Apostles let us remember these were ordinary sinners, men like us but let us also be mindful what God through His power & Spirit can do through and in us.

Suggestion for Prayer: Father, thank You for saving and using such an unworthy sinner as I.

THURSDAY – **James the son of Zebedee** (called by Jesus one of the “Sons of Thunder”): He was a fisherman along with His brother John (**Matthew 4:18-22**). He was also one of the “pillars” of the Jerusalem church (**Galatians 2:9**). He was the first of the twelve to wear the Martyrs crown as He was put to death by the sword by Herod Agrippa I (**Acts 12:2**). He is the only one of the twelve who died for His faith in Christ that God recorded for us in Sacred Scripture. He was selfish and conceited (**Mark 10:35-37**) as well as vengeful and fiery (**Luke 9:54**) yet proved to be a genuine converted man ultimately dying for loyalty and love to Jesus. **John** (Brother of James, Son of Thunder, and The Beloved Disciple): John was also a fisherman with his brother James. Like Peter and James was considered a pillar of the church in Jerusalem. He is referred to in Scripture as “the disciple whom Jesus loved”. Like his brother was selfish (**Mark 10:35-37**), and judgmental (**Mark 9:38**) but also was changed by God’s grace into a loving, bold, compassionate preacher and Elder after Pentecost (**Acts 4:13, 1 John 4**). This John is assumed by the majority of scholarship to be the writer of the Revelation of Jesus Christ who was exiled to the Island of Patmos for *the Word of God and testimony of Christ*. **Andrew**: Andrew is known as the *protokletos* (first called), the first to follow Jesus (**John 1:35-37**). He was Simon Peter’s brother (**Matthew 4:18**) and was also a disciple of John the Baptist (**John 1:35-42**). He was enthusiastic about Jesus who informed Christ about several Greeks who wanted to see Him (**John 12:20-22**). He also told Christ about the boy who had the 5 loaves and 2 fish that Christ would use to feed the multitude (**John 6:8-9**). A 7th Century story says that Andrew was crucified on an x-shaped cross which has been taken as a symbol for this Apostle. **Philip**: Philip was also from Bethsaida and was a man well versed in the Scripture (**John 1:45-46**). He along with Andrew helped bring some Greek individuals to see Jesus (**John 12:20-21**). He was the third disciple called (**John 1:43**) who also brought Nathaniel to Jesus (**John 1:45-46**). Philip asked the infamous question of Jesus to *show us the Father* (**John 14:8-9**). It is said that he died by crucifixion on a tall cross at Hierapolis of Phrygia (Turkey).

The Word Applied: Notice Jesus used men of so many differing temperaments for His purpose.

Suggestion for Prayer: *Father, use me, change me, and help me not make excuses for my apathy.*

FRIDAY& SATURDAY – Bartholomew (also called Nathaniel): He was born or raised in Cana of Galilee (**John 21:2**). He was a skeptical man who was also honest and faithful (**John 1:46-49**). Jesus told him when He called Him that He had seen Him under the fig tree and said he was an *Israelite indeed in whom was no deceit* (**John 1:47-48**). Most of our information concerning him comes from **John 1:46-51**. It is taught that he ministered in Asia Minor and India and tradition says that he was flayed alive and then beheaded in Armenia. **Matthew** (also called Levi, Son of Alphaeus): Matthew was from Capernaum (**Mark 2:1-17**) and was a tax collector (**Matthew 9:9**). He was called from his tax booth to follow the Lord and Jesus dined at his house (**Matthew 9:9-10**). He was a man who truly left everything to follow Christ (**Luke 5:27-28**). Different traditions place his missionary work and possible martyrdom in Ethiopia or Persia. **Thomas** (also called Didymos or twin, Doubting Thomas): He was as his name suggests a twin (**John 20:24**). Thomas was inquisitive (**John 14:5**) and doubtful (**John 20:24-25**). In spite of these things he also displayed courage (**John 11:16**) and gave one of the greatest affirmations of Jesus as God recorded in Scripture in **John 20:28**. Traditions link him with India. Indian Christians from the west coast area claim they were evangelized by Thomas, who was later speared to death near Madras on the east coast. Mount St. Thomas, close to Madras is associated with his name. **James the Son of Alphaeus** (also called James the less, or younger): James is a possible brother of Matthew also known as Son of Alphaeus (**Mark 2:14**). Not a lot of information is given on him in Scripture. Tradition has him eventually facing martyrdom. **Thaddaeus** (also called Lebbaeus, Judas, and son of James [**Luke 6:16**]): He asked Jesus how He would reveal Himself to the world in **John 14:22**. Some suggest he may have preached in Assyria (eastern Iraq) and Persia (Iran), before joining with Simon the Zealot and being killed with him in Persia. **Simon the Cananite** (also called Simon the Zealot): His name is derived from an Aramaic word meaning “zealous one” hence he is called the zealot (**Matthew 10:4**). Some suggest he was a missionary to Persia where he was killed with Thaddaeus. **Judas Iscariot** (also called the Betrayer): Judas was the treasurer for the disciples and Jesus and was a thief (**John 12:5-6, 13:29**). He betrayed Jesus as Satan entered him (**John 13:2**) and then after Jesus’ arrest he felt a remorse and returned the money which he was paid and threw it on the floor of the Temple before going out and hanging himself (**Matthew 27:3-10**). We understand that it was not true repentance as Jesus had made it clear Judas was not a true believer even saying of him that it would have been better for him not to even have been born (**Matthew 26:24**). After Jesus calls the disciples Mark abruptly moves to the next scene of **verses 20-21**. Mark keeps the pace up as he moves along now showing us the Man of Sorrows not only is finding resistance from His enemies but even those *of His own people* are now making things difficult. Jesus returns home and can’t even *eat bread* due to the crowded mob at the house. His *own people* have come *to lay hold of Him* as they specifically think He needs to come to His senses and it appears they are there to “help” make that happen.

The Word Applied: *Notice that there was an imposter, a fake, even among Jesus own disciples.*

Suggestion for Prayer: *God, help me be a genuine follower of Jesus, willing to die for Him.*