

Luke 6:12-16. Christ Chooses His Twelve Apostles.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

Favell Lee Mortimer emphasizes the importance of fervent prayer and the significance of Jesus' choice of the twelve apostles, including the lessons learned from Judas Iscariot's betrayal.

Scripture: Psalm 41:9, Matthew 26:41, Mark 3:14, Luke 10:2, 1 Corinthians 10:12, 2 Timothy 4:3, Hebrews 3:12, James 5:16, 1 John 4:1

Topics: "Effective Prayer", "Apostolic Ministry"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer emphasizes the importance of fervent and sincere prayer, reflecting on Jesus' own prayer life and the blessings that come from earnestly seeking God. Mortimer challenges the congregation to examine their prayer habits and to pray more fervently, believing in God's promises and not neglecting the power of prayer. The sermon delves into the significance of praying for laborers in God's harvest and the need for holy ministers to lead His people. Mortimer also highlights the selection of the twelve apostles by Jesus, including the solemn example of Judas Iscariot, to remind believers of the importance of true faith and obedience even in the midst of religious activities.

Transcript

We must remember, that though Jesus was God, yet that he was clothed in a body like our own, and was subject to all our feelings of fatigue. What ardor of love must have filled his bosom to have driven sleep from his eyelids, and to have sustained him in prayer for a whole night! How long do we pass in prayer? Half an hour? perhaps not five minutes morning and evening; perhaps the greater part even of that time our thoughts are wandering to the ends of the earth. Or do we never pray in spirit, with hearty desires after God? Do we feel our prayers a burdensome task; and do we never pour out our souls, as a child pours out his feelings into his father's bosom? If this be the case, how dreadful is our condition!

But even if we do know what it is to pray to God, yet we must feel that we do not pray as much, or as earnestly as we ought.

What blessings we should receive if we prayed to God more fervently, and entreated him and implored him to fulfill his promises! Why are we so apt to make excuses, and to think that we are too busy, or too much fatigued to pray! Is it because we do not believe that God hears us? or is it because we think that He will give us blessings without our asking for them? Let us beware lest we provoke God, by our negligence,

to withdraw the blessings he has already bestowed.

We may conclude what was the subject of our Savior's prayer that night, when we observe what was his employment the next morning. Then he chose twelve from among his disciples to be apostles. Was he not praying in the night for them, and for the success of their ministry? What blessings have been poured down upon thousands in answer to those midnight prayers!

But even we, unworthy as we are, might assist our Redeemer's cause by joining in his petitions; for he once said, "The harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few; pray therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest."

Yes, even we may entreat God to choose holy men, and to make them his ministers. Human creatures may build churches, but they cannot place in them holy ministers, unless God prepare men for the ministry. And what is a church without a man of God in it! False teachers ruin men's souls; they are not the ministers of Christ. Let us pray that God may send us pastors after his own heart to feed us with good knowledge, and understanding, and that he may send his shepherds forth to the ends of the earth to bring in his lost sheep into his fold.

These twelve apostles were not to become ministers immediately. If you refer to Mark 3:14, you will find that Jesus ordained them that they should first be with him, and then go forth and preach. All who teach others must be with Jesus to be taught by him.

Who were the men whom Jesus chose to be his apostles or messengers? (for apostle means "person sent forth.")

Some were fishermen; Matthew was a tax-collector; and probably none were great in this world.

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, were called Boanerges, or sons of thunder; and it is supposed that they afterwards preached with great power, for though John is famous for writing about love, he wrote terrible warnings to sinners, and no doubt uttered them also, even as Jesus his gentle master did.

The last mentioned is Judas Iscariot, or the man of Carioth, the traitor! And why did Jesus choose such a man, when from the beginning he knew he would betray him, and once said, "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" Why then did he choose him? No doubt one reason was to fulfill the prophecy in Ps. 41--"My own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who ate of my bread, has lifted up his heel against me." Might he not also have intended to teach us a solemn lesson by the example of Judas? It is possible to be with Jesus, to hear him night and day; it is possible to appear religious and to preach holy doctrines, and yet to perish everlastingly. There are too many instances of people who have appeared to have been born of God, who have died in sin.

Baxter relates that in his youthful days he had a friend who seemed more earnest than himself, who prayed with him and exhorted him, and who finally fell away, and made shipwreck of his faith. Can we hear of such instances without lifting up our hearts to God to keep us from falling?

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