

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!” — *Luke 2:14, NKJV*

Let the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be glorified. Today, let’s reflect on an often-overlooked truth: Jesus chose His apostles not based on human merit, status, or moral perfection — but based on divine purpose and grace.

□ Jesus Prayed Before Choosing

Before selecting His twelve apostles, Jesus spent an entire night in prayer:

“Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the

mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles.”
— *Luke 6:12-13, NKJV*

This reveals something deeply theological: divine calling precedes human qualification. Jesus didn't consult resumes — He consulted the Father.

1. Simon the Zealot — The Revolutionary

The name “Zealot” refers to a radical Jewish nationalist group determined to overthrow Roman rule. They were known for violent rebellion and would be considered religious extremists by today's standards. Simon, one of them, would have been seen as a terrorist by the Romans.

Yet Jesus called him.

This teaches us that no ideology is too extreme to be redeemed by Christ. Even a man of violence can be

transformed into a man of peace.

2. Matthew the Tax Collector — The Collaborator

Tax collectors were viewed as traitors and thieves, working for the oppressive Roman Empire and profiting from their own people. In Jewish society, they were outcasts.

“As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, ‘Follow Me.’ So he arose and followed Him.” — *Matthew 9:9, NKJV*

What’s astonishing is that Jesus united Simon (the anti-Rome extremist) with Matthew (a Rome-employed tax collector) in the same ministry team. This shows the power of the gospel to reconcile enemies and break down societal barriers (see Ephesians 2:14–16).

3. Judas Iscariot — The Greedy Opportunist

Judas was not just a traitor; he was motivated by greed and possibly disillusioned with Jesus' peaceful, non-political mission. He stole from the ministry funds (John 12:6) and ultimately betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26:14–16).

Jesus knew Judas's heart — and still gave him the opportunity to change.

“Have I not chosen you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?” — *John 6:70, NKJV*

God's grace allows even the most flawed people to walk closely with truth — but it does not override personal choice. Judas tragically squandered his calling.

4. The Fishermen — The Uneducated and Ordinary

Peter, Andrew, James, and John were fishermen — a trade often looked down upon. They were uneducated by rabbinic standards (Acts 4:13), yet Jesus called them to be fishers of men.

“Then He said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.’” — *Matthew 4:19, NKJV*

Peter was passionate, sometimes violent (John 18:10), and yet he became a pillar of the early Church (Galatians 2:9).

James and John once asked Jesus to destroy a Samaritan village with fire from heaven — echoing Elijah’s Old Testament judgment (Luke 9:54). Jesus rebuked them:

“You do not know what manner of spirit you are of.” — *Luke 9:55, NKJV*

This rebuke reminds us that zeal without love is not the Spirit of Christ.

† What Does This Teach Us?

Theologically, this tells us that:

- God does not call the qualified; He qualifies the called (1 Corinthians 1:26–29).
- Redemption is for everyone — the rebel, the traitor, the hypocrite, the thief, the outcast.
- The church is made up of people from every background, united not by past performance, but by grace (Romans 5:8).
- Transformation is the evidence of true calling (2 Corinthians 5:17).

□ What About You?

Maybe you're corrupt, addicted, proud, broken, violent, or deeply ashamed of your past. Maybe you've made choices that hurt

others. Maybe society has rejected you. Jesus is still calling you.

“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” — *Matthew 11:28, NKJV*

You may be a politician, a businessperson, a street vendor, or even a fraudster. Regardless of your background, Jesus calls you the same way He called Peter, Matthew, and Simon the Zealot.

What matters isn't where you begin — it's how you finish.

“For many are called, but few are chosen.” — *Matthew 22:14, NKJV*

All of the apostles, except Judas, were transformed. They became bold, faithful, Spirit-filled witnesses, willing to die for the gospel. Judas alone rejected that transformation.

Don't let that be your story.

□ A Final Word

Wherever you are today, start afresh with Jesus. He accepts you just as you are — but He loves you too much to leave you there. He wants to make you His chosen one, just as He did with His apostles.

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.” — *2 Corinthians 5:17, NKJV*

May the Lord bless you and guide you as you respond to His call.

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