

Weaving the Word

The Unappointed Apostle

Part 16 – November 2, 2014

Welcome to a place where we count the cost to follow the One who paid the price!



Don't you hate it when Jesus disappoints you?

He disappoints people a *lot!* **He's very disappointing ... because His ways are *perfect* and He's stubbornly opposed to compromising our eternal best for temporary relief.**

Whenever His ways conflict with our expectations: disappointment. I wanted to hold my new grandson, but Jesus wouldn't heal my cold! *Very disappointing.*

But then, **we couldn't learn to trust without disappointment.**



The religious leaders are *so disappointed* when Jesus allows His disciples to pluck heads of grain on the Sabbath, and then heals the man with a withered hand on the Sabbath, that they begin to plot Jesus' *murder!*

So Jesus retreats to the lake, is overwhelmed by the crowd, and teaches from the boat.

But, ***why were His disciples plucking wheat on the Sabbath?***

They were *starving!*

No food. No money. No miraculous feedings with a few loaves and fish ... *yet.*



Sea of Galilee from Mt of Beatitudes

That's why Peter, Andrew, James, and John exhaust themselves fishing when they should be assisting.

They catch *nothing.* And, Jesus reminds 'em to trust Him by giving 'em a miraculous catch.

Which they then leave, for the crowd to consume, and follow Him to a hillside where He appoints twelve disciples to be apostles (to teach and heal and deliver in His name).

Why were those religious leaders worried to the point of murder?! I mean, you heal a hand, pluck some grain, what's the big deal?

Well, how many disciples do you picture plucking that grain? Because, when Luke describes the choosing of the twelve, he says:

One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, **he called his disciples** to him and **chose twelve of them**, whom he also designated apostles: [If He chose twelve of *them*, how many "them" are there? Here's the twelve:] Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot, Judas son of James, [Everyone's like, "Phew! For a second there I thought He was gonna say Judas *Is*cariot!"] and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor. He went down with them and stood on a level place. A **large crowd of his disciples** was there and a **great number of people** from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coast of Tyre and Sidon ... – Luke 6:12-17 NIV

How big is "a large crowd of disciples"?

The Greek word, "ochlos" is also translated as multitude.

How big is "a great number of people"?

We get a headcount of men when He returns to the lake and feeds the 5,000 which, accounting for women and children, is somewhere around 20,000!

So, I'm guessing a large crowd of disciples is in the hundreds.

In the grain field, **picture hundreds of hungry disciples plucking and eating**, and **then surrounding the showdown in the synagogue** where Jesus defiantly heals the man with a withered hand. **See why the religious leaders suddenly felt so threatened?**

Jesus has a small army of disciples (as well as a great number of followers), and He's not playing by their religious rules.

So, He retreats to the lake. Heals. Teaches. Miraculous catch. Then up the hillside to appoint the twelve apostles.

Why do you think He "spent the night praying to God"? That's some serious praying! But then, this is some serious decision-making! **Hundreds of men to consider. Heart. Passion. Devotion.**

Would you have been chosen? Heart? Passion? Devotion?

All night He prayerfully considers His large crowd of disciples for those who'll carry on after He's gone.

Heart. Passion. Devotion.



The Synagogue of Capernaum

And most importantly, **those who'll continue to follow when He sorely disappoints 'em** and they realize He's not going to overthrow the Romans or reinstate the Jewish Nation, as they *all assumed* the Messiah would do.

He needs eleven who'll continue to follow *despite disappointment*.

And *one* who *won't*.

A year later, in the synagogue of Capernaum, Jesus confronts His large crowd of disciples and doesn't mince His disappointing words.

Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you." ... On hearing it, many of his [large crowd of] disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?" ... Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. ... From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. "You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve. Simon Peter [every bit as disappointed as the rest, nonetheless] answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God." Then Jesus [as proud as a parent] replied, "Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!" (He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.) – John 6:53, 60-71 NIV

It's all about expectations versus aspirations.

It's good to aspire to achieve or accomplish or produce something; it's not so good to expect it to come about or turn out the way you expect (especially true with people).

Aspirations can rise above disappointment; expectations just die.

Jesus chose eleven men with aspirations, *one* with *expectations*.

What are your current expectations of Jesus?



Do you know the biggest difference between aspirations and expectations? White knuckles. Anxiety. Holding on too tight.

Make your knuckles white and look at 'em.

Know what you can't do with white knuckles?

Open up and receive.

So, stop expecting. Start aspiring.

Heart. Passion. Devotion.

There was one who was left out on that hillside. Un-appointed. Disappointed. *So left out*, in fact, he's not even *mentioned*. But, **there's a hidden story:** The un-appointed apostle who *deserved* to be among the twelve, *far more than Judas*.



Judas was a *jerk*. He scolded a woman for anointing Jesus!

... Judas Iscariot, who was later to betray him, objected, “Why wasn’t this perfume sold and the money given to the poor? It was worth a year’s wages.” He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was **[a jerk!]** a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself ... – John 12:4b-6a NIV

You can’t mask that kind of selfishness. So, **imagine the second guessing and whispering on that hillside when Jesus chose Judas!**

The disappointed disciple waited in vain to hear his name, and “*didn’t get a rose*”; but, **he stayed true without knowing he’s the one specifically, prophetically, referred to in Psalm 109:8.**

And, when Jesus asked the Twelve if they were going to leave Him as well, and they reaffirmed their commitment, back in the shadows, a humble man named **Matthias quietly said, “Count me in, too.”**

And Matthias remained faithful to the end. *Through* the end. Beyond the betrayal, and death, and even the resurrection. Past the Gospels and clear into the book of Acts! After explaining how a betrayer had to be chosen to fulfill scripture, Peter directs the disciples by quoting from the Psalms.

“For,” said Peter, “it is written in the book of Psalms, **[69:25]** “‘May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it,’ and, **[109:8]** ‘**May another take his place of leadership.**’ Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.” So they proposed two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.” Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles. **[And that’s how Matthias became the 12th man!]** – Acts 1:20-26 NIV

And, I’m sure the Lord whispered in his heart, “**Matthias, you were *always* my true choice. I wrote it in the Psalms long before that hillside. Because, I saw your heart, your passion, and your devotion, and I knew that *you* could take the disappointment.**”

Jesus *will* disappoint you, because His ways are greater than ours.

We must each decide if we’ll aspire to faithfulness in spite of unmet expectations, and open up and receive whatever the Lord has in store for your story, with heart and passion and devotion.