

THE TWELVE (4)

Changed by Jesus

A. Introduction

1. Who were the Twelve?

The Twelve were men who were called to believe in Jesus and to follow Him.

The Twelve were men who were chosen from a larger group of disciples to be apostles and were given what they needed to do this role.

What do we learn from them about what it means to be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ?

2. Andrew taught us that disciples of Jesus introduce people to Jesus.

We need to be taught to do this.

We need to tell people directly about the Lord Jesus or take them to others who will.

We must never stop introducing people to Jesus.

B. Meet Simon

1. Simon was Andrew's brother.

He was a fisherman born in Bethsaida but now was living and working in Capernaum.

"Philip, like Andrew and Peter, was from the town of Bethsaida." (John 1:44)

"They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach... As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew." (Mark 1:21, 29)

"As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen." (Mark 1:16)

He was a faithful Jew.

"Surely not, Lord!" Peter replied, "I have never eaten anything impure or unclean." (Acts 10:14)

He was married.

"When Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever." (Matthew 8:14)

"Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the Lord's brothers and Cephas?" (1 Corinthians 9:5)

2. Simon was a follower of Jesus.

He was introduced to Jesus by his brother Andrew.

"Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah" (that is, the Christ). And he brought him to Jesus." (John 1:40-42)

He was called by Jesus to be a fisher of men.

"As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow

me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." At once they left their nets and followed him." (Matthew 4:18-20)

He was chosen by Jesus to be the rock on which the church was built.

"Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Then he warned his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ." (Matthew 16:17-20)

He was the first apostle to see Jesus alive.

"They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." (Luke 24:33-34)

"That he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve." (1 Corinthians 15:4-5)

He provided information for Mark to compile his Gospel about Jesus.

"Mark having become the interpreter of Peter, wrote down accurately whatsoever he remembered. It was not, however, in exact order that he related the sayings or deeds of Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor accompanied Him. But afterwards, as I said, he accompanied Peter, who accommodated his instructions to the necessities [of his hearers], but with no intention of giving a regular narrative of the Lord's sayings. Wherefore Mark made no mistake in thus writing some things as he remembered them. For of one thing he took especial care, not to omit anything he had heard, and not to put anything fictitious into the statements." (Papias, AD140)

He wrote two letters about what it means to be a disciple of Jesus.

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1:1)

"Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:1)

3. Simon was a natural leader.

His name appeared first on every list of the Twelve.

"He called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew." (Matthew 10:1-2)

He acted as spokesman for the Twelve.

"In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group number about a hundred and twenty)." (Acts 1:15)

He is mentioned apart from the rest of the group.

"But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'" (Mark 16:7)

He was given the specific responsibility of leading God's people.

"When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time. "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep." (John 21:13-17)

4. Simon was also called Peter.

His new name was given to him by Jesus.

“Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas” (which, when translated, is Peter).” (John 1:42)

His new name meant ‘a rock’.

His new name pointed to the kind of person he was to be.

“Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.” (Matthew 16:17-18)

5. What do we learn from Simon about what it means to be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Disciples of Jesus are changed by Jesus.

C. Changed from Simon to Peter

1. Simon is sometimes called “Simon” because he was acting like his old self.

He is unsure.

“He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.” Simon answered, “Master, we’ve worked hard all night and haven’t caught anything.” (Luke 5:3-5)

“He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.” (Mark 8:31-33)

He is unable.

“Then Jesus told them, “This very night you will all fall away on account of me, for it is written: “I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.’ But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee.” Peter replied, “Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will.” “I tell you the truth,” Jesus answered, “this very night, before the cock crows, you will disown me three times.” But Peter declared, “Even if I have to die with you, I will never disown you.” (Matthew 26:31-35)

“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers.” (Luke 22:31-32)

He is weak.

“Then he returned to his disciples and found them sleeping. “Simon,” he said to Peter, “are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the body is weak.” (Mark 14:37-38)

He is fearful.

“Now Peter was sitting out in the courtyard, and a servant girl came to him, “You also were with Jesus of Galilee,” she said. But he denied it before them all. “I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he said. Then he went out to the gateway, where another girl saw him and said to the people there, “This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth.” He denied it again, with an oath: “I don’t know the man!” After a little while, those standing there went up to Peter and said, “Surely you are one of them, for your accent gives you away.” Then he began to call down curses on himself

and he swore to them, "I don't know the man!" Immediately a cock crowed. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: "Before the cock crows, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly." (Matthew 26:69-75)

He is rash.

"Then Simon Peter, who had a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his right ear. (The servant's name was Malchus.) Jesus commanded Peter, "Put your sword away! Shall I not drink the cup the Father has given me?" (John 18:10-11)

2. Simon is called Peter as he is changed into man Jesus wanted him to be.

He is humble.

"But because you say so, I will let down the nets." (Luke 5:5)

"When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken." (Luke 5:8-9)

He is convinced.

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ." Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him." (Mark 8:29-30)

He is repentant.

"Just as he was speaking, the cock crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the cock crows today, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly." (Luke 22:60-62)

He is bold.

"Then they called them in again and commanded them not to speak or teach at all in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John replied, "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:18-20)

"Peter and other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!" (Acts 5:29)

3. The change from Simon to Peter was gradual.

Peter withdrew fellowship with some Gentile converts.

"When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group." (Galatians 2:11-12)

Peter responded to Paul's correction.

"After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: "Brothers, you know that some time ago God made a choice among you that the Gentiles might hear from my lips the message of the gospel and believe. God, who knows the heart, showed that he accepted them by giving the Holy Spirit to them, just as he did to us. He made no distinction between us and them, for he purified their hearts by faith." (Acts 15:7-9)

4. How did this change from Simon to Peter happen?

By spending time with Jesus.

D. Changed from Simon to Peter by Jesus

1. Peter wanted to be near to Jesus.

"During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear. But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water." "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came towards Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" (Matthew 14:25-30)

"Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus." (John 18:15)

2. Peter watched Jesus.

He saw His submission as Jesus paid the temple tax.

He saw His humility as Jesus washes His disciples feet.

He saw His self-control as Jesus allows Himself to be arrested in the Garden.

He saw His boldness as Jesus speaks to His enemies.

He saw His compassion as Jesus forgives.

3. Peter was changed by Jesus.

He wrote two letters that included some of the lessons he had learned.

"Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every authority instituted among men: whether to the king, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right." (1 Peter 2:13-14)

"To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly." (1 Peter 2:21-23)

"But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." (1 Peter 3:15)

"Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins." (1 Peter 4:8)

"Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility towards one another, because, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." (1 Peter 5:5-6)

4. Peter died like Jesus.

"I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!" (John 21:18-19)

"Peter was crucified at Rome with his head downwards, as he himself had desired to suffer." (Origen)

E. A disciple of Jesus is changed by Jesus

1. We need to change to be like Jesus.

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:8)

"You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." (Ephesians 4:22-24)

2. We are changed by the Holy Spirit as we look to Jesus through His Word.

"And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit." (2 Corinthians 3:18)