

THE TWELVE (5)

Love the Truth about 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.

2. What do we learn from The Twelve about what it means to be disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ?

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

Simon Peter taught us that disciples of Jesus are changed by Jesus to be like Jesus.

B. Meet John

1. John along with his older brother James worked with Andrew and Simon as fishermen.

"These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John." (Matthew 10:2)

His father was Zebedee.

"And so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners." (Luke 5:10)

His mother was Salome, most likely was the daughter of a priest, and possibly the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

"Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome. In Galilee these women had followed him and cared for his needs." (Mark 15:40-41)

"When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body." (Mark 16:1)

"Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons." (Matthew 27:56)

"Simon Peter and another disciple were following Jesus. Because this disciple was known to the high priest, he went with Jesus into the high priest's courtyard." (John 18:15)

"Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother standing near by, he said to his mother, "Dear women, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home." (John 19:25-27)

2. John was a disciple of John the Baptist before he became a disciple of Jesus.

He, along with Andrew, heard John the Baptist announce that Jesus was the promised Messiah.

"The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus." (John 1:35-37)

He was called by Jesus to follow Him and was one of the Twelve chosen to be His apostles.

"When he had gone a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John in a boat, preparing their nets. Without delay he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him." (Mark 1:19-20)

"These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John." (Matthew 10:2)

He was known as the disciple Jesus loved.

"One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him." (John 13:23)

"So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved." (John 20:2)

"Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" (John 21:7)

"Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, "Lord, who is going to betray you?" When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?" (John 21:20-21)

He was asked by Jesus to take care of His mother.

"Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother standing near by, he said to his mother, "Dear women, here is your son," and to the disciple, "Here is your mother." From that time on, this disciple took her into his home." (John 19:25-27)

He was the first of The Twelve to see that the tomb was empty.

"So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in." (John 20:3-5)

"Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed." (John 20:8)

3. John was a companion of Peter in the early years of the church.

After Jesus ascended to heaven and the Spirit came at Pentecost, Peter and John travelled together in the early years of the church.

"One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer – at three in the afternoon." (Acts 3:1)

"On their release, Peter and John went back to their own people are reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them." (Acts 4:23)

"When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them." (Acts 8:14)

4. John wrote five books found in the New Testament.

He wrote the Gospel of John - he was the unnamed disciple whom Jesus loved.

"One of them, the disciple whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him." (John 13:23)

He wrote four letters – 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Revelation.

"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have looked at and our hands have touched – this we proclaim concerning the Word of life." (1 John 1:1)

"The elder, To the chosen lady and her children." (2 John 1)

"The elder, To my dear friend Gaius." (3 John 1)

"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John... Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea." (Revelation 1:1, 11)

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

Disciples of Jesus love the truth about Jesus.

C. John loved the truth about Jesus

1. John was interested in the truth about Jesus.

As a disciple of John the Baptist he wanted to know the truth.

"The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus." (John 1:35-37)

"I am convinced John leaned on Jesus' shoulder (John 13:23), not only because he enjoyed the pure love his Lord gave him, but also because he wanted to hear every word of truth that came out of the mouth of Christ." (John MacArthur)

2. John had a passion for the truth about Jesus.

Jesus gave him and his brother the nickname "Sons of Thunder".

"These are the twelve he appointed: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter), James son of Zebedee and his brother John (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means Sons of Thunder)." (Mark 3:16-17)

In his younger years, this concern for truth was lacking in love.

"Master," said John, "we saw a man driving out demons in your name and we tried to stop him, because he is not one of us." "Do not stop him," Jesus said, "for whoever is not against you is for you." (Luke 9:49-50)

"As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" But Jesus turned and rebuked them, and they went to another village." (Luke 9:51-56)

3. John was a witness to the truth about Jesus.

"This is the disciple who testifies to these things and who wrote them down. We know that his testimony is true." (John 21:24)

"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 4:19-20)

"The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ." (1 John 1:2-3)

4. John rejoiced when he heard about others who loved the truth about Jesus.

"It has given me great joy to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as the Father commanded us." (2 John 4)

"It gave me great joy to have some brothers come and tell about your faithfulness to the truth and how you continue to walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth." (3 John 3-4)

5. John was a defender of the truth about Jesus.

He was concerned that Christians test teaching to see whether it was true or not.

"Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. This is how you can recognise the Spirit of God. Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world." (1 John 4:1-3)

He was clear that false teaching should be opposed.

"Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. Anyone who welcomes him shares in his wicked work." (2 John 8-11)

6. John suffered for the truth about Jesus.

John died in his old age in Ephesus around AD98, but that did not mean he had not suffered for the truth.

"They seized Peter and John, and because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day." (Acts 4:3)

"I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus." (Revelation 1:9)

"How happy is its church [Rome's], on which apostles poured forth all their doctrine along with their blood; where Peter endures a passion like his Lord's; where Paul wins his crown in a death like John's [the Baptist]; where the Apostle John was first plunged, unhurt, into boiling oil, and thence remitted to his island-exile." (Tertullian)

7. Because he loved the One who is the Truth.

"Jesus answered, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." (John 14:6)

D. Disciples love the truth about Jesus because they love Jesus who is the Truth

1. Do we share John's passion and concern for the truth?

Are we interested in the truth about Jesus?

Do we rejoice when we hear of other people who love the truth about Jesus?

Are we willing to defend the truth about Jesus?

2. Are we willing to speak of the truth about Jesus... even if it brings suffering?