

MODELS *of* EXCELLENCE



The Twelve Disciples

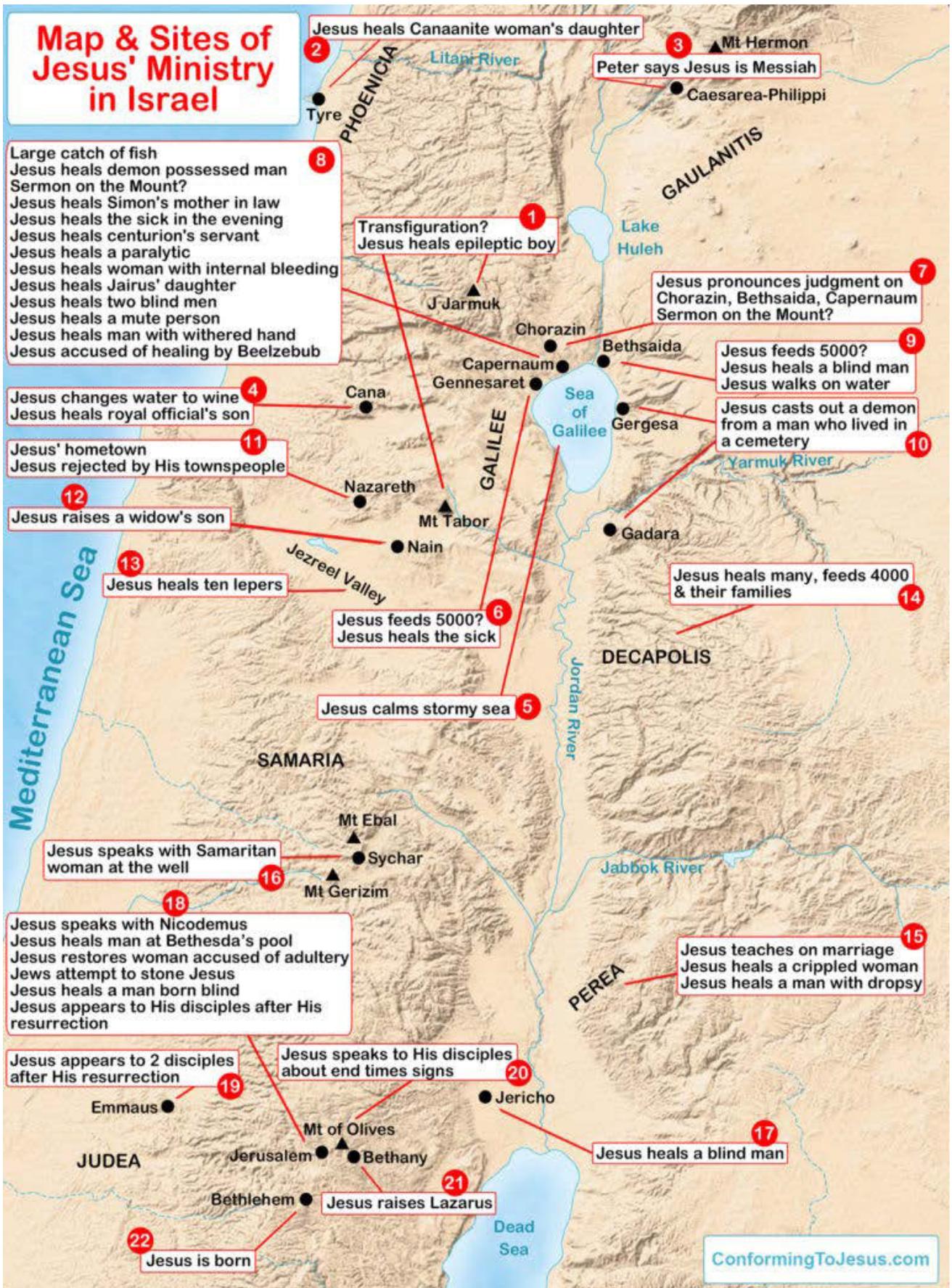
We must form perfect models in thought and look at them continually, or we shall never carve them out in grand and noble lives. Let unselfishness, goodness, mercy, justice, health, holiness, love — the kingdom of heaven — reign within us, and sin, disease, and death will diminish until they finally disappear.

Let us accept Science, relinquish all theories based on sense-testimony, give up imperfect models and illusive ideals; and so let us have one God, one Mind, and that one perfect, producing His own models of excellence.

from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, by
Mary Baker Eddy, pages 248 to 249

Painting on cover:

Pietro da Cortona (Italian Artist 1600's)





Jesus Fills Nets with Fish
By James Tissot,
French painter, 1886-1894

The Disciples

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations.” — Christ Jesus (1)

Christ Jesus, the great teacher and wayshower, began his public ministry in the towns and villages around the Sea of Galilee. “He had for thirty years been preparing to heal and teach divinely; but his three-years mission was a marvel of glory.” (2) Christ Jesus’ mission was to reveal to mankind the kingdom of heaven on earth. “He healed and taught by the wayside, in humble homes: ... explaining the Word of God.” (2) He even went to places others would not go. In Jesus’ day, the accepted teachers of Israel — called ‘Rabbis’ — taught the Scriptures in schools and synagogues. But these places were only open to Jewish men; all others were not welcome. God sent the Christ with a different mission: Jesus openly taught and healed everyone — men, women, children, Jew, Samaritan, Syrian, Roman ... anyone receptive to the Christ-power that worked through him!

From all these people, Jesus chose twelve disciples to stay with him at all times so they could become workers for God by understanding Christ Jesus’ teachings. His closest disciples gave up family, friends, homes, jobs, and all things familiar to answer Christ’s call. The disciples needed to change their thinking in order to love as Christ Jesus did,

and do the work unselfishly. The Truth he taught did change them, and they gladly obeyed, and went forth to teach and to heal. He also said, “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another” (3). Then he explained to them that they were to love. “As I have loved you, ye also [are to] love one another.” (3) His mission would be the salvation of His people and of all mankind. (4)

He taught his disciples to “Go not into the way of the Gentiles [meaning those who did not want to worship God], and into any city of the Samaritans [meaning any evil consciousness] enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel [meaning those who are trying to find the way].” (5)

These courageous disciples help us to understand what we may expect as followers of Christ. The twelve disciples were men of ordinary means, yet these men played an important part in spreading the Christ-message by healing as Jesus did, that is, by living lives of faithfulness (6), endurance (7), obedience (8), and sacrifice. (9) Also, by leaving written accounts of that first century of Christianity for all of us to read and take into our hearts two thousand years later.

As Christ Jesus, we are to be “forever about the Father’s business.” (2)

(1) Matthew 28 : 19

(2) Miscellaneous Writings, by Mary Baker Eddy, page 163

(3) John 13 : 34, 35

(4) Isaiah 49 : 6

(5) Matthew 10 : 5, 6

(6) Luke 18 : 8

(7) Matthew 24 : 13

(8) Matthew 7 : 21

(9) Galatians 2 : 20

Simon Peter

“And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;” — Christ Jesus” (10)

Simon, also know as Peter, had a home in

Bethsaida, a small town on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. One day, while at the shore cleaning and repairing fishing nets with Andrew, John, and James, Simon Peter saw Jesus for the first time while he was teaching a group of people near the shore. Jesus saw the fishermen with their boats at the water's edge, and he asked to use Simon Peter's boat to teach from, so the people could hear him better. Once Jesus finished speaking, he turned to Simon Peter and said, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." Now Simon Peter said, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." They caught so many fish that their nets began to break. John and James came to help lift the net. They filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw this he was so surprised that he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" (11) Then Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Don't be afraid;" "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." (12) Peter left everything and followed Christ Jesus.

Simon Peter was known to be quick to act and speak his thoughts. He often had to learn from his mistakes. But Peter truly wanted to be a good disciple, so he asked Christ Jesus many questions, such as how often must we forgive others. (13) Despite all this, he was one to first understand that Christ Jesus was the Son of the Living God. He also was one of the three disciples to witness events involving Christ Jesus, that the other nine disciples were not there to see.

One time, Peter made a big mistake. When Jesus was betrayed by Judas and arrested by the Pharisees, Peter pretended he did not know Jesus. Peter felt very bad for denying the Christ and learned a great lesson. He was forgiven by Christ Jesus. Peter went on to do great healing and teaching. He wrote the books of I Peter and II Peter in the Bible.

(10) Matthew 16 : 17

(11) Luke 5:8

(12) Matthew 4 : 19

(13) Matthew 18 : 21, 22

Andrew

"He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ." (14)

Andrew was the brother of Simon Peter, and they lived and worked closely together as fisherman for much of their lives. For a time, he was a disciple of John the Baptist, whose life mission was to announce the coming of the Messiah. One time John the Baptist was standing with Andrew and he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" Andrew and John went near to see Christ Jesus who turned and saw them following and said to them, "What are you seeking?" And they asked where he lived. Jesus said to them, "Come and you will see." So they went and stayed with him that day. This was how Andrew was called by Christ Jesus to be his first disciple.

Andrew then found his brother Simon Peter and said to him, "We have found the Messiah." After that, Andrew brought others to Christ Jesus, because he saw the importance of the Christ to that time, and all time. While John the Baptist's message had been, "The Messiah is coming," Andrew had a new message, "The Messiah has come!" Andrew was willing to share the gospel of Christ. Many different types of people came to Andrew wanting him to introduce them to Christ Jesus. Andrew went about quietly bringing many people to the Christ.

(14) John 1 : 41

Jesus Stills the Sea
by James Tissot,
French painter, 1886-1894



James

“He (Jesus) saw ..., James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.” (15)

James was from Galilee. Alongside his younger brother John, James fished the same waters as Simon Peter and Andrew. They all knew each other. The Bible calls him James, the son of Zebedee so people don't confuse him with many other people with the same first name in The Bible.

When James and his brother first began to follow Christ Jesus, they wanted to be the greatest of the disciples and have a special place at the side of Christ. Jesus taught that they did not come to be leaders, but servants of God. Later, when some people rejected Jesus, the sons of Zebedee wanted the Christ to bring fire down from heaven to punish them. Jesus strongly rebuked them for their attitude and said “the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.” They had to learn that they were not better than anyone, for we all are the children of God. Christ Jesus then nicknamed James and John the Sons of Thunder since they were both easily angered and quick to judge, for a time anyway.

It took the sons of Zebedee a while to fully understand this lesson, but with time, James was changed into a quiet worker in the early church. James was one of three disciples to witness to many miracles of Christ that the other nine disciples were not there to see.

(15) Matthew 4 : 21, 22

John

“And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.” (16)

John was James' younger brother, and they both were fisherman with their father, Zebedee. John, like Andrew, served for a time as a disciple to John the Baptist. He was also one of the three that Christ Jesus chose to witness certain events which the other nine disciples were not there to see. Christ Jesus taught John about divine Love and this changed him forever, as John, along with his brother James, were once known as the Sons of Thunder. Jesus even asked John to help take care of his own mother when he was arrested. Later, John wrote a lot about how we must all love one another.

John lived the longest of the twelve disciples and was an important part of the early church. The five books of the Bible that John wrote are filled with great love and spirituality, and his gospel is the only record of Jesus washing the disciples' feet, which showed he learned to be a servant of God. Toward the end of his life, while exiled on the island of Patmos, his spirituality enabled him to hear the Christ message that became the Book of Revelation.

(16) Matthew 17: 1, 2



Jesus Teaching
by James Tissot,
French painter, 1886-1894

Philip

“The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.” (17)

Philip was there when John the Baptist first pointed out Christ Jesus as the Lamb of God.

Philip also introduced Nathanael — occasionally called Bartholomew — to Jesus and among those attending the wedding at Cana. (18)

Philip was slow to fully recognize Christ Jesus. Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’”

At one point Jesus tests Philip (19) when he asks him how to feed the 5,000 people. Philip, instead of understanding God as the only source of supply, answers by adding up how much money it would cost to feed the people. Philip had many lessons to learn, but he stayed faithful to Jesus and shared the message of the Kingdom of God.

(17) John 1 : 43

(18) John 2 : 1

(19) John 6 : 6



Jesus Feeds 5000
by James Tissot,
French painter, 1886-1894

Nathanael

“Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!” — Christ Jesus (20)

Nathanael is taken to Jesus by his friend Phillip. He did not think that someone important could come from Nazereth because it was such a humanly unimportant town, but he goes with Phillip to see. Christ Jesus recognized Nathanael right away and sees he has an honest heart. Nathanael wanted to

know how Christ Jesus knew him already, to which Jesus said he saw him under a fig tree. Nathanael was so convinced that Jesus was the Christ that he said, “Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.” Christ Jesus told him that was nothing, but if Nathanael would follow him, he would see even greater things: “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.” (21)

(20) John 1 : 47

(21) John 1 : 51

Thomas

“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” (22)

Thomas sometimes is called “doubting Thomas” because he was at times slow to believe in Christ Jesus’ teachings. Thomas showed he was easily discouraged by the things Christ Jesus taught, but still loyally followed throughout his life. He saw numerous demonstrations of Jesus’ healing power, — including raising people from the dead. Thomas was known for being so focused on the details that Jesus had to help him to see the the big picture. Thomas was the disciple who refused to believe in resurrection and told the other disciples, “Unless I see the nail marks in his hands, I will not believe” (23).

Once he saw Christ Jesus for himself after the crucifixion, he felt very bad for his unbelief. Later, he went on to spread the word of Christ. “Doubting Thomas” is a term for anyone who needs physical proof of spiritual Truth before they will truly believe.

(22) John 20 : 29

(23) John 20 : 25

Matthew

“And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.” (24)

Despite being a Jewish man, as the rest of the twelve disciples were, Matthew was a tax collector for the Romans. Matthew was seen by other Jews as one of the worst sinners possible since, in their eyes he betrayed his own people, the Jews, who viewed themselves as God's chosen people. Matthew always refers to himself as 'Matthew the tax collector' even though he went on to follow the Christ. After meeting Christ Jesus, Matthew started to understand that his own God-given abilities could be used to help all mankind in more ways than the counting of money. The first Gospel in the Bible is 'Matthew' in which he uses abilities to leave a detailed account of the birth and life of Christ Jesus.

Immediately after Matthew became a disciple, he had a big dinner at his house for Christ Jesus and the other disciples. Many tax collectors and sinners came and ate with them as well. The Pharisees — who were always trying to trap Jesus — heard the noise from within the house and were very bothered by this. They asked his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" On hearing this, Jesus answered, "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.." (25)

Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners to demonstrate God's mercy to those treated as outsiders. By including Matthew among his disciples, Jesus showed that no one would be excluded from God's table. It was very brave and meek for Matthew to leave his job and follow Christ Jesus.

It was a big deal that Jesus asked Matthew to follow him and be one of his disciples. It shows how God wants us to work with all kinds of people — even those you'd least expect — to accomplish his purposes. Matthew changed and went on to help spread the Truth.

(24) Matthew 9 : 9

(25) Matthew 9 : 10-13

James

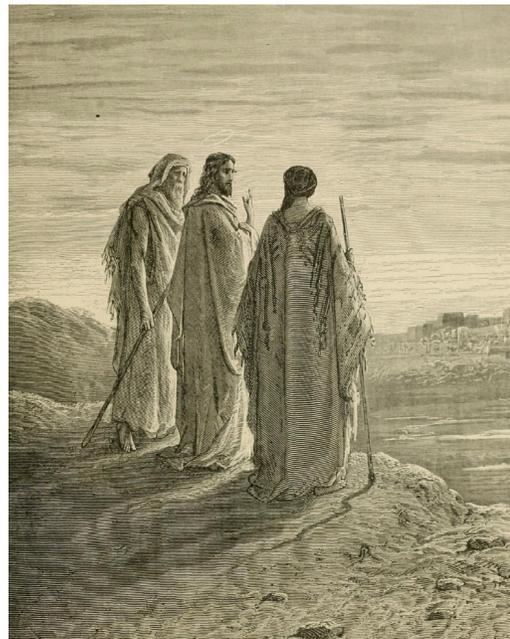
"And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of

Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him." (26)

James has several names such as 'James the lesser,' 'James the younger,' 'son of Alphaeus' and 'James the Just.' Born in Nazareth, James was the brother of the apostle Jude, and lived in Galilee. He may have been Jesus' cousin, and at times was called the "brother of the Lord." Known for not drinking alcohol or eating meat, James was quietly faithful to Christ Jesus, and wrote the book of James. He reminds us that God uses a different set of standards to choose His helpers.

(26) Mark 2 : 14

Emmaus
by **Gustave Doré**
French painter, 1832-1883



Thaddeus / Jude

"Judas not Iscariot, saith unto [Jesus], "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" Jesus answered and said unto him, "These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (27)

Thaddeus, also known as Judas. (not the betrayer)

Thaddeus was the brother of James the lesser. Judas was a popular name in New Testament times. It means, “Jehovah leads.” Thaddeus may have been a nickname given to him by family members. The name suggests that Thaddeus was a gentle soul with a tender, childlike heart. It was Thaddeus that asked a question about Jesus’ plans that revealed an important promise that the Comforter was coming. Over one thousand, eight hundred years later, Mary Baker Eddy discovered Christian Science — which she knew to be the Comforter — and wrote Science and Health which teaches us to heal as Christ Jesus healed.

We know that Thaddeus, like the other disciples, left his former life to follow and serve Jesus Christ faithfully, enduring hardship and persecution. After Pentecost — a day where many people were filled with the Holy Ghost, which Mrs. Eddy defines as ‘Divine Science’ (28) — Thaddeus took the Christ message north, where he performed miracles, preached, and founded a church in an area in modern Turkey.

(27) John 14 : 22-26

(28) Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, by Mary Baker Eddy, page 588

Simon the Canaanite

“And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles; Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes.”

Simon was a zealot. The Zealots were a group of fighters for Jewish independence from Roman rule. They wanted the people to fight against Rome, and were not friends of any Jews who supported, or even tolerated, the Roman occupation. When Jesus called Simon, he was a member of the Zealots’ political movement, but keeping the “nickname” of “the Zealot” may simply have been a way to distinguish him from the other Simon Peter in the group. The Zealots considered him an enemy once Simon answered the call to follow Christ Jesus.

Matthew the tax collector and Simon the Zealot were from humanly opposite lives, and in the world would have been enemies, but to God it was all wrong thinking that needed to be corrected. Because of their new-found allegiance to the Christ, they became brothers and co-workers, for the gospel which shows the power of the teachings they were given. Christ’s Christianity is beyond anything human, such as any job or political party.

(29) Luke 6 : 15

Judas Iscariot

“I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.” (30)

Judas Iscariot, the traitor, was the son of Simon who lived in Kerioth of Judah. He started as a chosen disciple but did not change his thinking while a student of Christ Jesus. Later, he was tempted by money and popularity, and finally betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. He was also know to have taken some of the money given to Christ Jesus and the disciples for food and supplies for himself. Judas Iscariot is often referred to as Judas the Betrayer.

When the Pharisees were looking for a way to arrest Jesus, Judas — being one of the twelve disciples — offered to provide them with a time and location to arrest Jesus.



Jesus Calls to Disciples
By Eugène Burnand
(1850 – 1921) Swiss painter

(31) Acts 1 : 22-26

And, to really show that he was the one disciple who did not understand that Christ Jesus was here to teach us all about divine Love, Judas used a kiss on Jesus' cheek to point him out. Jesus, being full of mercy and longsuffering for mankind, called him "friend."

Judas later felt horrible for what he had done, even trying to return the thirty pieces of silver to the Pharisees, but the betrayal could not be undone so easily. In the end, Judas failed to appreciate the love and compassion of Christ Jesus, and continued to look to human means to put an end to his guilt.

(30) John 13 : 18

Matthias — (replacement of Judas Iscariot)

"And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, ... And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." (31)

Matthias, short for the name Mattathias, means "gift of Yahweh." About 120 disciples gathered in Jerusalem to come together and for prayer. Peter declared that they must choose another to take the place of Judas Iscariot. Matthias and Joseph were selected as candidates for this ministry. Both had been faithful followers of Jesus. Peter and the others were familiar with these men, and their constant, faithful discipleship made them stand out as worthy candidates to "become a witness with [the apostles] of his resurrection. After praying together, the disciples cast lots to determine who the chosen man would be, and the lot fell to Matthias. Trusting that God's hand was in these proceedings, the other apostles received Matthias as the replacement for Judas (31). Nothing else is known of Matthias; he is not mentioned again in the Bible. Matthias was chosen by the remaining eleven disciples to replace the betrayer, Judas Iscariot before Jesus' resurrection. Matthias was present with Jesus Christ during his time on Earth as well as through his crucifixion.

What's The Difference Between A Disciple And An Apostle?

The twelve disciples are generally referred to as disciples during the time when Jesus walked the Earth and they are referred to as apostles after Jesus ascension. We know there were at least 72 other men, besides the Twelve, whom Christ had set up to spread the message and heal but most of them left no record. (32)

(32) Luke 10 : 1



Jesus Prepares Breakfast for Disciples
from freebibleimages.org

For citing the sources:

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