

THE TWELVE DISCIPLES / Mark 3

Jesus’ faithful disciples were ordinary men who became extraordinary because of Jesus Christ. Despite their confusion and lack of understanding during his lifetime, they became powerful witnesses to his resurrection. Their lives were transformed by God’s power. The story of Jesus’ disciples does not end with the Gospels. It continues in the book of Acts and many of the letters.

Name	Occupation	Outstanding Characteristics	Major Events in His Life
SIMON PETER (son of John)	Fisherman	Impulsive; later—bold in preaching about Jesus	One of three in core group of disciples; recognized Jesus as the Messiah; denied Christ and repented; preached Pentecost sermon; a leader of the Jerusalem church; baptized Gentiles; wrote 1 and 2 Peter.
JAMES (son of Zebedee), he and his brother, John, were called the “Sons of Thunder”	Fisherman	Ambitious, short-tempered, judgmental, deeply committed to Jesus	Also in core group; he and his brother, John, asked Jesus for places of honor in his Kingdom; wanted to call fire down to destroy a Samaritan village; first disciple to be martyred.
JOHN (son of Zebedee), James’s brother, and “the disciple whom Jesus loved”	Fisherman	Ambitious, judgmental, later—very loving	Third disciple in core group; asked Jesus for a place of honor in his Kingdom; wanted to call down fire on a Samaritan village; a leader of the Jerusalem church; wrote the Gospel of John and 1, 2, 3 John and Revelation.
ANDREW (Peter’s brother)	Fisherman	Eager to bring others to Jesus	Accepted John the Baptist’s testimony about Jesus; told Peter about Jesus; he and Philip told Jesus that Greeks wanted to see him.
PHILIP	Fisherman	Questioning attitude	Told Nathanael about Jesus; wondered how Jesus could feed the 5,000; asked Jesus to show his followers God the Father; he and Andrew told Jesus that Greeks wanted to see him.
BARTHOLOMEW (Nathanael)	Unknown	Honest and straightforward	Initially rejected Jesus because Jesus was from Nazareth but acknowledged him as the “Son of God” and “King of Israel” when they met.
MATTHEW (Levi)	Tax collector	Despised outcast because of his dishonest career	Abandoned his corrupt (and financially profitable) way of life to follow Jesus; invited Jesus to a party with his notorious friends; wrote the Gospel of Matthew.
THOMAS (the Twin)	Unknown	Courage and doubt	Suggested the disciples go with Jesus to Bethany—even if it meant death; asked Jesus about where he was going; refused to believe Jesus was risen until he could see Jesus alive and touch his wounds.
JAMES (son of Alphaeus)	Unknown	Unknown	Became one of Jesus’ disciples.
THADDAEUS (Judas son of James)	Unknown	Unknown	Asked Jesus why he would reveal himself to his followers and not to the world.
SIMON THE ZEALOT	Unknown	Fierce patriotism	Became a disciple of Jesus.
JUDAS ISCARIOT	Unknown	Treacherous and greedy	Became one of Jesus’ disciples; betrayed Jesus; killed himself.

THE TWELVE DISCIPLES / *Mark 3 Continued*

What Jesus Said about Him

Named him Peter, “rock”; called him “Satan” when he urged Jesus to reject the cross; said he would fish for people; he received revelation from God; he would deny Jesus; he would later be crucified for his faith.

Called James and John “Sons of Thunder”; said he would fish for people; would drink the cup Jesus drank.

Called John and James “Sons of Thunder”; said he would fish for people; he would drink the cup Jesus drank; and he would take care of Jesus’ mother after Jesus’ death.

Said he would fish for people.

Asked if Philip realized that to know and see him was to know and see the Father.

Called him “a true son of Israel” and “an honest man.”

Called him to be a disciple.

Said Thomas believed because he actually saw Jesus after the Resurrection.

Unknown

Unknown

Unknown

Called him “a devil”; said Judas would betray Jesus.

A Key Lesson from His Life

Christians falter at times, but when they return to Jesus, he forgives them and strengthens their faith.

Christians must be willing to die for Jesus.

The transforming power of the love of Christ is available to all.

Christians are to tell other people about Jesus.

God uses our questions to teach us.

Jesus respects honesty in people—even if they challenge him because of it.

Christianity is not for people who think they’re already good; it is for people who know they’ve failed and want help.

Even when Christians experience serious doubts, Jesus reaches out to them to restore their faith.

Unknown

Christians follow Jesus because they believe in him; they do not always understand the details of God’s plan.

If we are willing to give up our plans for the future, we can participate in Jesus’ plans.

It is not enough to be familiar with Jesus’ teachings. Jesus’ true followers love and obey him.

Selected References

Matthew 4:18-20
Mark 8:29-33
Luke 22:31-34
John 21:15-19
Acts 2:14-41
Acts 10:1–11:18

Mark 3:17
Mark 10:35-40
Luke 9:52-56
Acts 12:1-2

Mark 1:19
Mark 10:35-40
Luke 9:52-56
John 19:26-27
John 21:20-24

Matthew 4:18-20
John 1:35-42; 6:8-9
John 12:20-24

Matthew 10:3
John 1:43-46; 6:2-7
John 12:20-22
John 14:8-11

Mark 3:18
John 1:45-51
John 21:1-13

Matthew 9:9-13
Mark 2:15-17
Luke 5:27-32

Matthew 10:3
John 14:5; 20:24-29
John 21:1-13

Matthew 10:3
Mark 3:18
Luke 6:15

Matthew 10:3
Mark 3:18
John 14:22

Matthew 10:4
Mark 3:18
Luke 6:15

Matthew 26:20-25
Luke 22:47-48
John 12:4-8