

# The Plan

## Galilean Ministry Part 16

Mark 3:11-15 (Luke 6:12-13) 3/10/2018

---

Summary: In the context of what looks like Jesus being overwhelmed by the flood of human brokenness and need, he ascends a mountain and dramatically summons 12 of the disciples and commissions them as his Apostles, creating the foundation for a new people of God, the church. He first trained them, then sent them out to preach (they are the conveyors of Jesus' message – all of the NT could be in red letters), and they were verified by their ability to do miracles. We must give heed to what they taught!

Introduction.....	2
We're Going to Need a Bigger Plan.....	2
Something Big Is About to Happen .....	2
The Mountain.....	2
The Summons .....	2
The Twelve (A New People of God) .....	3
The Promises .....	4
The Role of the Apostles .....	5
Two Hats .....	5
To Carry Out Jesus' Ministry.....	6
1) Training.....	6
2) To Preach .....	6
Preaching vs. Teaching.....	6
God's Ordained Method.....	6
The Apostles' Doctrine.....	7
It's ALL from Jesus.....	8
Our Only Source.....	9
Inspiration.....	9
3) Authority over Demons .....	9
Accredited by Miracles.....	9
4) Leaders of the Church .....	10
Authority .....	10
Conclusion .....	10

**Mark 3:7 Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the lake, and a large crowd from Galilee followed. 8 When they heard all he was doing, many people came to him from Judea, Jerusalem, Idumea, and the regions across the Jordan and around Tyre and Sidon.**

**9 Because of the crowd he told his disciples to have a small boat ready for him, to keep the people from crowding him. 10 For he had healed many, so that those with diseases were pushing forward to touch him.**

**11 Whenever the evil spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." 12 But he gave them strict orders not to tell who he was.**

**13 Jesus went up on a mountainside and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. 14 He appointed twelve-- designating them apostles-- that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons.**

# Introduction

## We're Going to Need a Bigger Plan

One of my all time favorite lines in any song comes from one of my favorite hymns of all time: Joy to the World. The line I'm thinking of is this: No more let sins and sorrows grow, nor thorns infest the ground; He comes to make His blessings flow far as the curse is found. When the Messiah comes, he comes to fulfill all the promises of the entire OT and bring eternal blessing on the whole universe, and that renewal and restoration and blessing will extend as far as the curse is found. The renewal will be as extensive and as pervasive and as comprehensive as the effects of the curse are.

At this point in Jesus' ministry, in Mark 3, Jesus still has a ways to go to get that done. He has healed some folks around Israel, preached in several villages around Galilee, but he's really got a long way to go to bring blessing as far as the curse is found. The enormity of the problems of the curse are so massive and pervasive, they are portrayed here by Mark as being overwhelming. The masses of broken humanity come from surrounding countries and mob Jesus to the point where he has to plan an escape route.

Is what Jesus has been doing going to get the job done? If you draw a graph of Jesus progress against sin and evil and disease and sickness and death so far, and then you extrapolate that line out to the rest of Jesus' life, that line doesn't even come close to getting the job done. You've heard that famous line from Jaws, "We're going to need a bigger boat"? We see what's happening here and we realize, we're going to need a bigger plan. And what we find here in ch.3 is that Jesus has a bigger plan. That line isn't his plan for reaching the world. He has something much bigger in mind, and that plan gets unveiled here in ch.3.

We have seen Jesus silence the demons multiple times, when they start announcing the he is the Son of God. We see it again right here.

**Mark 3:11 Whenever the evil spirits saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, "You are the Son of God." 12 But he gave them strict orders not to tell who he was.**

The objectives of flooding the world with his grace as far as the curse is found is not going to come about through the testimony of demons. They know the truth, but they can't be entrusted with the proclamation of the truth because they are always up to no good. And also because it's not Jesus' plan to have his message disseminated that way. He's got another plan, this is the point where he sets that plan in motion. And the setting for that unveiling is very dramatic.

## Something Big Is About to Happen

### The Mountain

#### 13 Jesus went up on a mountain

Any time you see someone go up on a mountain in the Bible, look out. You know something really big is about to happen. (Moses getting the law, God appearing on Sinai, Abraham sacrificing Isaac, Elijah calling down fire on the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel, the Transfiguration, the Sermon on the Mount, the list goes on. So this ascent up the mountain signals something very significant is about to happen. That's even clearer in Luke's account, where we find out that Jesus spent the entire night in prayer. What was he praying about?

### The Summons

**13 Jesus went up on a mountain and called to him those he wanted, and they came to him. 14 He appointed twelve**

That whole verse has unusual and striking language. First, it all happens up on a mountain. Then it says he **called** them, and instead of the normal word for calling it's a strengthened form, which has the idea of an official summons. You might get a call from your wife to come home early from work. But you get summoned by a king, or a court. Jesus issued a summons to these twelve men.

Then it says **those he wanted** – that's the word for describing the will of God. Divine election. He appointed them. It's all very high, lofty, majestic, divine kind of language. This is a monumental, history changing moment right here.

## **The Twelve (A New People of God)**

When it says that he **appointed** them, the word for **appointed** is also significant. Instead of the normal word for appointing (*to set in place*), he uses the word that normally means *to create or to make*. It's actually the same word used in the Greek translation of Gn. 1:1 for God creating the world. On rare occasions it can mean to appoint, so appoint is a good translation. But given the context here, it's significant that he uses a word associated with creating. In appointing these men Jesus is creating something.

And what did Jesus create? Something like a whole new Israel. That's the significance of the number 12. I mentioned that last week. I've lived in Colorado all my life, and I don't know how many counties there are in Colorado. I don't know how many countries are in Africa. But everyone knows how many tribes there were in ancient Israel. The Jewish nation came into being when Jacob, whom God renamed Israel, had 12 sons. And those 12 sons became the heads of the 12 tribes of Israel. And now Jesus, who is the true Israel – the fulfillment of everything Israel was supposed to be, now he appoints 12. And if you have doubts about whether Jesus intended this number to call to mind the nation of Israel, listen to the words of Jesus to those 12 men:

**Luke 22:29 I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, 30 so that you may ... sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

**Matthew 19:28 ... when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you ... will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

**Revelation 21:14 The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.**

Last week I made this statement: "Jesus is recreating the ancient people of God on completely new foundations." Jesus is going to take the kingdom away from the Jews and give it to a new nation, a new people of God who will bear fruit. We will see that in detail later in the book – in ch. 11, 12. Jesus will curse a fig tree, that represents Israel, because it wasn't bearing fruit. Then he will drive the people out of the Temple. Then he will tell a parable about Israel's rejection of him and then give this conclusion:

**Matthew 21:43 Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people (*ethnos* – a nation) who will produce its fruit.**

The twelve tribes of Israel were not bearing fruit, and so Jesus is right now taking the kingdom away from them and giving it to a new twelve tribes that he is creating right here on this mountain.

Now, does that mean God rejected the Jews altogether? No, I'll argue in a minute that he didn't reject the Jews altogether, but he did reject that generation of Jews who rejected Christ. And that's nothing new. Lest you think it's somehow anti-Semitic to speak of God rejecting a particular generation of Jews, just go back to the OT and you'll see it's happened before.

**Hosea 1:9 Then the Lord said ... you are not my people, and I am not your God.**

That wasn't the end of Israel as God's people altogether, but it was a rejection of that particular rebellious generation. God warned the Jews, right out of the gate when they first became a nation, that his promises to them as his people were conditioned on their obedience.

**Exodus 19:5 Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession ... 6 you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.**

If an individual Jewish person, or even a particular generation of Jews wants to claim the promises made to Israel to be the special people of God, they must obey God and keep the terms of the covenant. If they rebel, all bets are off.

So that much has happened before. But there is something else Jesus did that was new, that never happened in the OT. He took the kingdom of God away from them and gave it to another nation.

What nation? The church. He took the kingdom away from the physical descendants of the 12 sons of Jacob, and gave it to the spiritual descendants of 12 new patriarchs that Jesus created right here on this mountain.

## **The Promises**

Everything I just said is extremely controversial. This is where the theologians from the various factions in the church will really put up their dukes, and here's why: It's because of the promises God made to Israel. In the OT, the prophets did two things. They pronounced judgment on Israel for their sin, and then they promised glorious restoration after the judgment. The judgment happened, but most of the restoration promises haven't happened yet.

So when will they happen? That's where there is debate. On the reformed side, they say, "Ethnic Israel is done forever, and all the promises of restoration are fulfilled in the church – spiritual Israel. The Jews after the flesh will never be restored." So whenever Isaiah pronounces judgment and punishment, that applies to ethnic Israel. But when he turns around and says, "But then God will bring a glorious restoration," that applies only to the church, not ethnic Israel.

The Dispensationalists, on the other hand, say, "No, Israel is one thing, the church is something completely different. The promises made to Israel will all be fulfilled to ethnic Jews. It will happen during the Millennium – the 1000 year reign of Christ after the Second Coming. And those promises don't apply to the church."

So which is it? Usually when there is a theological debate that rages on for hundreds of years it's because there are strong statements in Scripture on both sides. And that's the case here. Is ethnic Israel done forever, never to reappear as having any theological significance? No. Romans 3:1 says there is a tremendous advantage in being a Jew. And Romans 11:26-31 says that unbelieving Jews, who are now our enemies with regard to the gospel, are still loved by God because of the patriarchs, and so one day they will all be saved. The time will come when ethnic Israel will finally bow the knee to Christ and be saved. So God does still have a plan for ethnic Israel. So we can't go as far as some of our reformed friends in saying God is done with ethnic Israel.

But on the other hand, we can't get too carried away on the dispensational side either and say that the promises only apply to ethnic Israel and not the church. There are so many passages in the NT that quote those OT promises, made to Israel, and apply them to the church. It's everywhere in the NT.

In Exodus 19:6 God promises to make Israel a kingdom of priests. And the NT applies that to the church. For example:

### **Revelation 5:10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests**

And we know that isn't talking about ethnic Israel, because the previous verse tells us that he's talking about men from every tribe and language and people and nation. In Jeremiah 31:33 Israel is identified as the people of God. In Daniel 7 Israel is identified as God's chosen race, a people belonging to God and a holy nation. Now listen to Peter talking to the church:

**1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God**

He might as well just say, "You are Israel."

I think what some of our dispensational friends fail to see is the fact that the ultimate fulfillment of Israel is Christ. Christ is the true Israel. He is everything God intended for his holy people. And we are in Christ.

There is so much language in the Bible referring to the church as the new Israel, the Israel of God, the decedents of Abraham, the chosen people – pretty much every designation of Israel you can think of. There is just no denying that we are, in a very real sense, the new Israel.

One of the reasons so many Jews missed the Messiah was that they had a conception of the end times that didn't allow for anything unexpected, like a first and second coming of the Messiah with a gap in between. And we should take care not to make the same mistake with our theology.

If the Bible says Jesus will return, and Judgment Day will happen, and Satan will be defeated, and there will be a new heavens and a new earth – I don't want to come up with a timeline that is so rigid that I won't be able to handle it if there are some things that unfold at that time that I didn't see coming in prophecy. And I think it would be very much in line with what we know about how God fulfills prophecy if many of the promises made to Israel will be fulfilled in a partial way spiritually in the church and in a physical way later on when all Israel is saved.

## The Role of the Apostles

### 14 He appointed 12-- designating them apostles

So of all his many disciples, Jesus selects 12 and makes them Apostles. And it's important to understand the difference between a disciple and an Apostle. Every Christian is a disciple. There were only 12 Apostles. Paul and Barnabas were added later, maybe a few others, but even so, the Apostles were a very limited, unique group.<sup>1</sup>

The word *disciple* means *learner*. The word *apostle* means *one sent on a mission*. In fact, at the end of the verse when it says **14 ... that he might send them out**, that word send is the verb form of *apostle*.

### 14 He appointed twelve-- designating them apostles ... that he might apostle them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons.

So by calling these 12 *apostles*, he's indicating that he is going to send them out on a mission, and he defines the mission. Do all followers of Christ have a mission? Yes, but not like the Apostles. Many passages distinguish between the Apostles and the rest of the church.

### 1 Corinthians 3:9 For we [the Apostles and their associates] are God's fellow workers; you [the church] are God's field, God's building. 10 ... I laid a foundation as an expert builder...

The Apostles were the builders laying the foundation; we are the building being built on that foundation.

## Two Hats

So in the Gospels, the Twelve play two roles. They wore two hats. They were both disciples and Apostles. As disciples, they are examples for us. As Apostles, they are not examples for us.

So when you read about something involving the Twelve in their role as disciples, you as the reader should take that as instruction on how you should live your life. But if you read an event involving their role as Apostles, that's not for you to imitate. So what is it for? For example, in this passage where it says

---

<sup>1</sup> You see something similar with the 12 tribes in the OT. In some lists, Levi is a tribe and Joseph is a tribe. In other lists, Levi is not counted, since Levi didn't get a portion of the land since God was his inheritance, but Joseph's two sons are each considered a tribe. So counting Levi, Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, the total number is 14. But Scripture always refers to the 12 tribes of Israel, and the Twelve Apostles, because the symbolism of the number 12 is intended to represent the people of God.

they are given authority to drive out demons or do other miracles, what is the application for us? That's what we're going to learn today.

We don't have to guess what Jesus' purposes were in designating 12 of his disciples as Apostles because Mark tells us exactly what they were. Four things. He mentions three, and implies a fourth. And when you read them, they sound really, really familiar.

## To Carry Out Jesus' Ministry

**14 ... that he might send them out to preach 15 and to have authority to drive out demons.**

What does that sound like? Going around preaching and having authority over demons – where have we heard that before? Oh yeah, it's been the constant, repeated description of the ministry of Jesus throughout the book so far. Jesus has been going around preaching and healing and driving out demons. And now he deputizes these men to do the exact same thing. (Mark doesn't mention the healing part here, but we find out in ch.6 that was also included.) This is a very deliberate way of showing that Jesus was conferring on these 12 men the very work of Christ himself. The reason he called these twelve and made them Apostles was so that they could do the exact same work Jesus was doing.

We're going to need a bigger plan? This is it. This is how Jesus is going to reach the whole world – through these 12 men.

### 1) Training

But they don't get started actually doing it until ch.6. They can't do it now because they aren't ready. They need to be trained, which is what the first of the three things Mark mentions. **14 He appointed 12-- designating them apostles...** Why? Reason #1 -- **that they might be with him.** Before they can go out on their own on that first mission trip, they need some intensive training from Jesus. And Mark is going to keep us up to date on how that's going. As we go through the book, Mark will alternate between telling us about things Jesus was doing in his preaching and healing ministry, then a report on how it was going with training the Twelve.

### 2) To Preach

Okay, so Jesus trained them, to do what? **To preach.** That's the second thing Mark mentions.

**14 He appointed twelve-- designating them apostles-- that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach**

These men are going to be the conveyors of Jesus' message to the world. We will see later that they also have a teaching role, but the emphasis is on the preaching.

### Preaching vs. Teaching

“What's the difference between teaching and preaching?” Preaching is louder. Preaching is proclamation. Preaching does involve teaching – explaining the meaning, but it's more than that. Preaching comes across as an announcement – a proclamation of news from the king. It's loud, it's done before a crowd, there is rhetorical force to it, it's strong, it's authoritative.

### God's Ordained Method

That is God's ordained method of propagating the gospel. Every generation thinks they can come up with some better way to reach people than preaching. But preaching is the primary tool God gave us. It

was Jesus' primary tool, it was what he commissioned the Apostles to do, and it's what the Apostles passed down to us to do.

**2 Timothy 4:1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: 2 Preach the Word**

Timothy, of all the things I've taught you in ministry, if you do one thing after I'm dead, make it preaching. "But what if we get into a culture where people just don't listen to preaching anymore?" That's all the more reason to do it.

**2 Preach the Word ... 3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine.**

The fact that people aren't willing to listen is all the more reason to double down on your commitment to it. And what is it that we are to preach? The Apostles' doctrine.

## **The Apostles' Doctrine**

**2 Timothy 1:13 What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching.**

**2 Timothy 2:2 And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.**

This is what the church was devoted to from the very beginning. Acts 2:42 is a summary snapshot of how the NT church operated, and the very first thing it says is:

**Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' doctrine**

The body of teaching we received from the Apostles is not a changing, developing, growing thing. It is a single body of doctrine delivered in full by the Apostles in the first century.

**Jude 3 ...contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.**

Whenever you see the Apostles referred to in the NT you can pencil in the margin, "the NT." That's the significance of the Apostles – they gave us the New Testament.

**Ephesians 3:5 which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.**

Both offices involved revelation, but the Apostles' job was broader – it also included other things. And so when Apostles and Prophets are mentioned together, Apostles always come first. In fact, 1 Corinthians 12:28 explicitly ranks Apostles first and prophets second.

This is why passages like Jn.14:26 are so important.

**John 14:25-27 All this I have spoken while still with you. 26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.**

When you see a verse like that, realize that Jesus is speaking to them as Apostles, not disciples. That's not a promise given to us. If you read that verse in your devotions, and you're thinking of what the application is, don't think, *Oh God will give me perfect recall of all the Bible verses I know*. This was a promise given to the Twelve that they would have infallible recall of everything Jesus said to them, and, additionally, the Holy Spirit would teach them even more. If you read that verse in your devotions, the application for the day is, "Praise God – I can trust my Bible! I can have full confidence in the NT, because Jesus promised to give full recall to the Apostles."

## **It's ALL from Jesus**

So what Jesus refused to allow the demons to do, he now commissions the Twelve to do: namely, to be the proclaimers of his message to the world. And they did it. After Jesus ascended back to heaven, the Apostles went around preaching that message, teaching all that doctrine, repeating it over and over and over, and then when they started getting older, they committed it all to writing.

By the way, as an aside, that's something to keep in mind when you interpret a passage in the NT. If you're studying ch.2 of a book, don't assume the original readers were ignorant about the material in ch.5. The people had heard the message many times verbally prior to getting it in written form.

But the Apostles did finally write it down, and the church preserved those writings, rejected any writings that were not sanctioned by the Apostles, and that body of writings is what we now call the New Testament. John wrote five books (the Gospel of John, 1,2,3 John, and Revelation), Peter wrote two (1,2 Peter, and he provided the material for a third one – the Gospel of Mark), Matthew wrote one, and Paul wrote 12.<sup>2</sup>

And here's what you need to know about those writings – it's all plagiarized. The Apostles didn't create it, none of it was original with them. 100% of it is all material that they got from Jesus himself. "But I read things in the book of Romans that I never see Jesus saying in the gospels." That's because not everything Jesus said is recorded in the gospels.

### **Matthew 10:27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs.**

All that stuff in Romans or Hebrews or 2 Peter - you don't hear Jesus explaining all that material in the gospels, but He did teach it. It whispered it in private to the Apostles, and told them to shout it from the rooftops after he was gone. Don't ever think of your New Testament as having two parts – the teachings of Jesus and the teachings of the Apostles. All the Apostles did was teach what Jesus revealed to them – nothing else. If you want, you could put the whole New Testament in red letters – every word. It all came from Jesus.

### **2 Peter 3:2 I want you to recall ... the command given by our Lord and Savior through your<sup>3</sup> apostles.**

### **Hebrews 1:1 In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son**

Why doesn't it say, "by his Son and the Apostles"? Because, all the Apostles were doing was speaking the words of the Son, that's it.

### **Ephesians 2:19 ...you are ... fellow-citizens with God's people and members of God's household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.**

The cornerstone was the foundation of the foundation. They would cut a perfectly square cornerstone, and use it as a guide for laying the rest of the foundation. It supported everything and was the standard to which everything had to conform. The point of that is the Apostles were perfectly in line with Jesus Christ. The reason the whole church could be built on the Apostles' doctrine (the NT) is that those foundation stones are perfectly aligned with the mind of the Lord Jesus Christ.

---

<sup>2</sup> The rest of the books were written by associates of the Apostles – Luke, Jude, whoever the author of Hebrews was, and James, the brother of Jesus.

<sup>3</sup> Lit. ...**through the apostles of you**. The translations take "of you" as a genitive of possession (your), but another possibility is that it is a genitive of advantage (... **the command given by our Lord and Savior through the Apostles for you**).



## Our Only Source

So as you look at this passage, think for a second about the importance of these men. What do you know about the life or teaching of Jesus that didn't come from these 12 men? Answer: nothing. Outside of what is revealed about the Messiah in OT prophecy, we know nothing about Jesus of any significance that didn't come to us from the Apostles. Jesus didn't write anything. Whatever written records there were back then of his life and teaching are gone. All we have is what the Apostles and their associates gave us.

How much of the NT would we have if it wasn't for these men? Not one word.

How many of us in this room would be going to hell if it wasn't for these men? All of us. Christianity was propagated by these men. It's fashionable these days to do research to check into your ancestry – find out if you're related to some famous person in history. Although that doesn't really matter. If I could somehow discover that I'm descended from Abraham Lincoln, what would that mean? How many of his genes would I have after all these generations? It would be meaningless.

But in the kingdom of God the heritage that matters is spiritual heritage. Paul called Timothy his son, even though he wasn't a biological son, he was his son spiritually. And that really does matter.

And I don't want to brag or anything, but I happen to know that my spiritual ancestry goes all the way back to one of the Apostles. One of those 12 men brought the gospel to someone, who passed it along to someone else, then that person to someone else, all the way down to me. I haven't been able to pin down exactly which of the 12 it was, but I know it was one of them.

## Inspiration

Now, when you hear all that, does it make you think a little bit about the importance of the reliability of the Apostles? If they got anything wrong, then it's just wrong, and we have no remedy.

Can you see why Jesus spent the entire night in prayer before choosing them? I don't know if he was seeking God's guidance on which men to choose, or if he already knew which ones he would choose, and he was praying for those men – for God to bless the whole endeavor of training them and their future ministry. Whichever it was, it was worth a whole night of intensive prayer.

We are basing everything in our lives on the words these men wrote. And we're betting our eternal destiny on these men being reliable, truthful witnesses. That's why the third element is so incredibly important.

## 3) Authority over Demons

**14 He appointed twelve-- designating them apostles-- that they might be with him (that's 1) and that he might send them out to preach (that's 2 – now the third part) 15 and to have authority to drive out demons.**

Jesus gave them miraculous power. Power over demons, and power to miraculously heal people, as I mentioned earlier. Not just any random miracles – the same kinds of miracles Jesus was doing. This is how we know we can trust them.

## Accredited by Miracles

That's the purpose of the miracles – confirmation of the message as being from God. We see that with Jesus.

**Acts 2:22 ...Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs**

**John 14:11 Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.**

We know Jesus spoke for God because of his miracles. And they had the same purpose in the Apostles.

**Acts 14:3 ... the Lord confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders.**

**2 Corinthians 12:12 The signs of the apostle were done among you with great perseverance with signs, wonders and miracles.**

**Romans 15:18 I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me ...19 by the power of signs and miracles.**

**Hebrews 2:3 ... This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. 4 God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles.**

Why did the NT church accept the 27 books and reject all other writings and teachings of the time? Because they were there, and they saw with their own eyes the miracles. Lots of people were claiming to be Apostles, but the church could clearly see which ones were being confirmed by God with signs and wonders, and those are the ones that were universally accepted by the church as God's Word.

When you're having your devotions and you read something in the Gospels about the Twelve that applies to them in their role as Apostles, how do you apply that in your daily life? The wrong approach is to dumb it down and try to make it apply as a promised to you. No, when you see those passages, the right response is to say, "Praise God – I can trust my Bible!!!"

## **4) Leaders of the Church**

So Jesus appoints these 12 men, trains them to be the ones to publish his gospel to the world by preaching (and later on by writing), and then gives them miraculous power to prove they are speaking for him. Those are the three stated purposes, and then there is a 4<sup>th</sup> that is implied by the number 12. This one we've already seen. Jesus made these men the leaders over the new people of God.

### **Authority**

It's significant that Mark uses the word **authority** in v.15. Jesus gave them authority. That word **authority** has been tremendously important so far in Mark. The reason that's so important is that it's been the theme of the book so far. It's been all about Jesus' authority – authority in his preaching unlike anything they had ever heard from the Scribes, authority over demons, authority over the lives of men, authority over disease. He's the Daniel 7 Son of man who is given all authority. And so for Jesus to now confer his authority to the Apostles is a big deal.

They carried Jesus' authority. What the Apostles taught and wrote is binding. To reject it is to reject Christ. To accept it is to accept Christ.

**Luke 10:16 He who listens to you listens to me; he who rejects you rejects me; but he who rejects me rejects him who sent me.**

**1 Thessalonians 4:8 he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.**

In Acts 5 we see that if someone lies to the Apostles, they are lying to the Holy Spirit. If an Apostle taught something, it was true. And if an Apostle told you to do something, it was a sin not to do it. The Apostles of Jesus Christ were the highest authorities ever to walk the face of the earth other than the Lord himself.

## **Conclusion**

So what's the bottom line for this whole study tonight? What should you take away from this? I can't think of a better application than the one Peter gives in 2 Peter 1. Listen to the words of the man who was there on that mountain that day, and who became the leader of the Twelve.

**2 Peter 1:16 We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. 17 For he received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." 18 We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain. 19 And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and (here's the application) you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.**