

**Welcome to the
Common Ground Café!**



Sunday, May 14, 2017

**“What God Can Do with Ordinary You”
Week 5: James, Thaddaeus, and Simon
A Study
of Matthew 10:1-4**

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The “Middle Child Syndrome” is the feeling of exclusion by middle children (those with one younger and one older sibling). Why do you think the “middle child” feels overlooked? How can a parent help a middle child overcome that feeling?

In today’s sermon on the 12 Apostles, we looked at three Apostles who are often overlooked. We know little about them from the Gospel stories. In fact, even the way they are named in the Bible indicates who they are *not*.

The man named James son of Alphaeus in Matthew 10:3 is also called “James the younger” or “James the Less” in Mark 15:40 (depending on your translation). Which more famous James is he being distinguished from?

The man named “Thaddaeus” in Matthew 10:3 is also named Judas in other passages. How is he named in John 14:22? Which more famous Judas is he being distinguished from?

In Matthew 10:4, Simon is called “the Zealot” to distinguish him from a more famous Simon. Who is the more famous Simon?

Even though we know little about these three men in particular, they were part of that group called “The Twelve.”

Jesus didn’t choose 24, he didn’t choose 6, or 8—he chose 12. Why do you think that number was important?

Read Ephesians 2:19-20. What do you think it means to say the Church is “built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets”?

In today's sermon we discovered three principles we can draw from the presence of three "overlooked apostles"—James, Thaddaeus, and Simon.

God Uses Ordinary People to Accomplish His Work

We don't know anything specific about James, Thaddaeus, and Simon, other than their names. But since they were among the Twelve, everything the Bible says the Twelve did included them. Read the following verses and then describe what these three "ordinary" Apostles accomplished for God.

- ❖ Mark 6:7
- ❖ Acts 1:12-14
- ❖ Acts 2:4-11
- ❖ Acts 2:42

Describe an "ordinary" Christian who has meant a lot to your faith and spiritual growth.

God Uses All Kinds of People to Accomplish His Work

- ❖ What do Mark 2:14 and 3:18 seem to indicate about James (also called Levi)?
- ❖ What does the label "Zealot" tell you about Simon?
- ❖ Tax collectors worked *for* the Romans and Zealots worked *against* the Romans. Do you think this made it hard for James and Simon to get along?
- ❖ What differences make it hard for Christians to get along with each other today?
- ❖ What does Ephesians 4:16 teach us about the importance of Christians getting along despite our differences?

God Remembers and Rewards Those Who Do His Work

Read the following verses and describe how these three “ordinary” Apostles were recognized and rewarded.

- ❖ Acts 2:1-4
- ❖ Matthew 19:28
- ❖ Revelation 21:10-14

Read Hebrews 6:10. How can this truth help us when—

- we don't feel appreciated by those we serve
- we don't think there's any lasting value to ministry we do
- we feel like quitting



Close with praise reports and prayer requests