



## World Christian Fellowship

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### Apostles- James Luke 6:12-16

**Luke 6:12-16**, *Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.<sup>13</sup> And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:<sup>14</sup> Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew;<sup>15</sup> Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot;<sup>16</sup> Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.*

#### Group One:

1. Simon called Peter,
2. Andrew,
3. James,
4. John.

Peter, James, and John's names get mixed around in the list, Peter's is always first, but they are always in group one.

### **Group Two:**

1. Philip,
2. Bartholomew — or Nathanael,
3. Matthew,
4. Thomas.

Always group two in every list.

The names of Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, and Thomas get mixed, but Philip is always the first name of group two.

### **Group Three:**

1. James the son of Alphaeus,
2. Simon the Zealot,
3. Judas son of James,
4. Judas Iscariot.

Always the same in every list.

The names may be mixed a little bit, the two middle names, the names of Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James get mixed.

James the son of Alphaeus is always the first name in group four and Judas is always the last name of the twelve.

## **James**

There are Three James were prominent in our New Testament.

James, the son of Zebedee.

James, the son of Alphaeus.

James, the brother of the Lord, a leader in the Jerusalem church and author of the book of James.

So, this apostle is known as James the Great.

**Father: Zebedee**

**Mother: Salome**

**Brother: John**

**Hometown: Capernaum**

**V 14**, Peter is followed by Andrew, his brother, and then comes James and then John.

James was a son of a man named Zebedee. Zebedee had a fishing business James, and John were fishermen in that business.

James is more significant than we at first would consider because we know so very little about him. In two of the lists his name comes after Peter.

Some reason to maybe assume from that that he was a very, very strong leader. Also, when the two names of the brothers are together, James and John, James is first, which could indicate that he was older and could indicate that he was the more dominant of the two.

James never appears at any time in the gospels apart from John. We do not have any information about James without John. It is James and John!

They are inseparable in the gospels.

But James seems to be the predominant one. Their business was successful.

**Mark 1:19-20**, *When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending their nets. <sup>20</sup> And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.*

**Matthew 4:21-22**, *Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, <sup>22</sup> and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.*

Their father had this business and apparently, they had hired hands so that the business was large. James and John, of course, like Peter and Andrew, were privileged to be called in that first calling, along the shore of Galilee that day when Jesus came and pulled them into that inner circle. (**Mark 1:16-20**)

Unlike Andrew, James was in the intimate three.

He was there on the Mount of Transfiguration.

He was there in the special place in the garden with the Lord praying.

He was with that triad that were intimate with Jesus, and yet we know so little about him.

The best way to get a look at James is probably to note that Jesus gave them a name. He called them Boanerges!

**Mark 3:17**, *James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James, to whom He gave the name Boanerges, that is, "Sons of Thunder";*

Now when you call somebody a son of thunder, you are defining their personality in very vivid terms.

This fits James, zealous, thunderous, passionate, fervent. He may well have been the New Testament counterpart of Jehu, who said in the Old Testament, "Come see my zeal for the Lord," and then uprooted the house of Ahab and swept away Baal worshipers from the land. (**2 King 10**)

James was a fiery person, passionate. He seems to have been able to make great enemies rapidly.

While Andrew was quietly bringing people to Jesus, he was driving them away. There is a place in spiritual leadership for those people who have thunderous personalities.

James apparently was that way by personality, by character and it may have been aided and abetted by the fact that he camped on some of the things that Jesus did that justified that kind of fury.

James well remembered that Jesus had made a whip and cleansed the temple when those people in the temple were doing what dishonoured God.

James was convinced that his fury was righteous indignation, protective of the holiness of God.

But sometimes his zeal was less than righteous.

Luke 9 and here is a typical response of a son of thunder.

Jesus is now going to ascend into Jerusalem for the final Passover, for His death, burial, resurrection. He sets His face in to go to Jerusalem.

**Luke 9:51**, *Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem,*

Now they are coming from the Galilee area, coming down toward Jerusalem. They have to go through Samaria.

There is a Samaritan village. There was no place to stay.

There was no reservation system hence they have to send a messenger ahead. This is the time when a lot of pilgrims are migrating, got to find a place to stay. So, they send messengers on ahead of Jesus.

They go and they enter a village of the Samaritans. Samaritans and the Jews hated each other with a passion. Samaritans were people who had intermarried with Gentiles. They were Jews who disregarded and disdained their heritage.

They had intermarried with pagans, and thus they had polluted the line of Israel. They were hated for such disdain and defection by the Jews. Jews would not even go into Samaritan areas.

The Samaritans not only hated the Jews, but they also hated the worship of Jerusalem. They had their own worship on Mount Gerizim. They therefore hated the messianic gospel. They had no interest in that at all. That was just more of the Jewish things that they despised.

So, when the messengers ahead of Jesus came, they probably said, "Look, the Messiah is coming,"

**Luke 9:52-53**, *and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. <sup>53</sup> But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem.*

They wanted nothing to do with somebody going to Jerusalem, going to be a part of that worship and they wouldn't receive Him.

So, when His disciples, James, again first name, and John saw this, they responded.

They did not ask the Lord the following:

"Lord, do we pray for these dear people that they will be enlightened?"

"Lord could we show that you are the Messiah?"

**What did they ask?**

**Luke 9:54**, *And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?"*

This is not the seeker-friendly mentality.

They did not even ask God for power they knew they had the power, so they wanted permission to use them.

This is the son of thunder.

It may well have been that there was a serious visit in the Samaritan village. The messengers could have been driven out with curses and stones thrown at them, the animosity was that great. But just the fact that they would not accept the Messiah infuriated James and John.

James, apparently, as always, the leader and James' idea was that the Lord should give them the power to call down fire from heaven and literally turn that whole town into ashes, obliterate the unsaved.

Andrew would have said, bring them to Jesus.

James said, burn them up.

Not exactly the missionary spirit.

Is not it interesting that the Lord called a guy like this and his brother like that into the apostles?

**Luke 9:55-56**, *But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. <sup>56</sup> For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." And they went to another village.*

### **Can't you be more like Andrew?**

So, they had to go to another village.

There is a touch of nobility in it. There is something about it that I like. Better to get fired up with righteous wrath than to allow insults to Christ, wouldn't you agree?

I like the fact that they do not allow an insult to the Messiah to pass without a reaction, and Jesus got angry when God was dishonoured, zealous, explosive, and fervent.

### **Using mummy:**

This is one of the more bizarre incidents in all the gospels about the apostles. James was fervent, passionate, zealous, but insensitive. But he was also ambitious, driven to achieve the highest places.

**Matthew 20:20**, *Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him.*

They sent for their mother. She could sort of soften up Jesus.

**Matthew 20:21**, *And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom."*

Any idea where they might have gotten their attitude?  
We do not know what Zebedee was like, but Mrs. Zebedee was a handful.

She is commanding the Messiah.  
Poor Mr. Zebedee!

Surely Zebedee spent a lot of time on the boat.

They knew they were in the intimate circle. They had been called as disciples for a long time. They knew Him well. They were going to take advantage of that position. They were on the inside track and they knew it. They got their mother involved.

She did not have any hesitance. That is how bold she was. She carried their ambition right before Him.

**Matthew 20:22**, *But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able."*

What Jesus was saying was that is a place for sufferers!

Since He suffered the greatest, He will be exalted the greatest and those who suffer the most will be exalted to those positions. It is given to those who suffer.

## **So, are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?**

Of course, in their self-ambitious confidence they said, "*We are able,*"

Would the Lord purposely call somebody who is insensitive and harsh and zealous and passionate and ambitious into ministry? He does it all the time.

He likes projects.

The only kind of people He's got to work with are problems that need to be solved. With the kind of passion, the kind of zeal, and the kind of fervency that these brothers had when harnessed was used mightily by God.

**Matthew 20:23-24**, *So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father."*  
<sup>24</sup>*And when the ten heard it, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers.*

There will be seats of prominence in the kingdom, even among the apostles. They will rule over the twelve tribes, yes. But some will receive more prominence than others. But the Father knows that.

Their zeal becomes a stalking enterprise to get them into the positions of power. They play on their privilege and so demean Christ and the kingdom, a lot of work to do on these two.

James wanted a crown; Jesus gave him a cup.

James wanted power; Jesus gave him servanthood.

James wanted to rule; Jesus gave him a sword of his own execution.

Fourteen years later, after this, heaven was found by James beneath the shadow of the sword.

**Acts 12:1-2**, *Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. <sup>2</sup>Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword.*

Now Herod is very furious, irate against the church, the spread of the church, the spread of the gospel. It is starting to affect the pagan world. He starts to persecute.

**When Herod wants to stop the growth of the church, who does he kill?**

**Peter?**

No.

**John?**

No.

James.

By this time James is a force for God. By this time James is spiritual power personified. He killed James, not Peter, the great preacher of the first twelve chapters of Acts, nor John, the companion of Peter who travelled with him. He killed James.

That son of thunder had been mentored by Christ, empowered by the Holy Spirit, shaped by those means into a man whose zeal and ambition were for God. Whose strength and intolerance was for divine purposes and the protection of the truth, whose sympathies were reserved for those things that honoured God.

Somewhere along the line he had learned to control his temper, bridle his tongue, redirect his zeal, eliminate revenge, and completely lose personal ambition. Courageous, zealous, sometimes loveless, insensitive, ambitious, a man of passion, he had now turned into an instrument of God.

His strength was so great that when it came time to stop the church, he was the man who had to die. He drank the cup, his life was short. It came to an end swiftly at the edge of a sword.

James' zeal for Jesus resulted in his being the first of the twelve apostles to be martyred. He was killed with the sword on order of King Herod Agrippa I of Judea, about 44 A.D., in a general persecution of the early church.

One historical writer says that when he was sentenced to death he was taken to the place of execution by an officer, it says, who guarded him, who became so impressed by the courage he displayed that he repented of his sin and fell down at that apostle's feet and begged pardon for the part he had played in the rough treatment he had received on the way to execution.

The apostle, according to this report, raised up the officer from the ground, embraced and kissed him and said, "Peace, my son, peace be to you in the pardon of your sins." Immediately transformed, the officer, publicly confessed his surrender to Jesus Christ and was beheaded alongside of James.

James became a little more like Andrew, bringing someone to Jesus even in his death.

God wants passionate, zealous, front-runners, dynamic, strong, ambitious people, but not with insensitivity. God must do a wonderful work to tenderize people like that. Zeal with insensitivity is cruel.

Billy Sunday, famous American evangelist, all his children died in unbelief. James could have been like that very easily, but he needed refinement.

Now if I must choose between a man of burning, flaming, passionate, enthusiasm and a potential for failure and a cold compromiser, I will take the man with passion.

But it takes a lot of work to harness that. If by the grace of God, it is harnessed, then you get James, who is so important and so strong and so committed that to stop the church you have to execute him.

God needs His Peters,  
God needs His Andrews, and  
God needs His James, as well.