The Twelve

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INTRODUCTION

- The statement is we do not lose heart. I think the apostles are good illustrations of that theme.
- We're going to see twelve varied men struggling at times, but they did not lose heart.
- James and Judas are the only ones whose deaths are recorded. James gave his life for the Lord.

1 God Can Use All Types

Romans 12:4–6; 1 Corinthians 12

- One thing that we can learn is God can use all types. There was no really uniformity in this list, was there?
- Jesus didn't go out seeking twelve men who all fit the same personality profile.
- And somehow this rag tag, varied bunch of men, worked. That kind of describes the New Testament church, doesn't it?
- For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function. So we, being many, are one body in Christ and individually members of one another.
- I need to see that there's a place for me in the kingdom. I need to see that there's a need for me in the kingdom.
- I need to recognize, humbly recognize, that there's a place and there's a need for you. Even though you're much different than me.

2 Real Growth Takes Time and Requires Patience

Mark 4:40; Mark 6:51–52; Mark 8:14–16

- Another lesson that jumps out at the pages of history to us from the apostles is that growth, real spiritual growth, takes time. And therefore requires patience.
- But he said to them, to the apostles, why are you so fearful? How is it that you have no faith?
- They had not understand about the loaves because their hearts were hardened.
- There has to be growth. These apostles grew.
- But we also need to understand that growth, real, sustained growth, takes time. And so we need to be patient.
- Do we have the patience of Jesus that he had with these twelve men?

3 Being a Disciple of Jesus Demands Commitment

- And then the last lesson I see in these twelve is that being a disciple of Jesus demands commitment.
- But they had commitment. They spent their lives.
- The scriptures record the imprisonments, the beatings, the stonings, the threat, the near death of these men. That took commitment.

- What a lesson of grace these men are.
- But when you return, strengthen the brethren.
- You can have that level of commitment, even if you've left him for a time.

THE CHALLENGE

See your place in the kingdom. Recognize the gift that you have that you can offer. Understand that growth can take place, must take place, but it'll take time and patience is required. And commit yourself to this cause. Spend your life for him.

MY NOTES