

# Carry the Torch of Truth-1



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Considering the lives of the twelve apostles enables us to learn why the Lord chose these twelve men to help in His ministry. These disciples [followers; believers] were much like any of us in personality and character traits.

We learn much from how a person responds to difficulties; how they decide on various life issues; and what attitudes they had toward friends and others in general. Knowing more about the disciples of Christ will help us in our Christian walk of faith.

The twelve apostles: AV Matthew 10:2-4 “Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; <sup>3</sup> Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; <sup>4</sup> Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.”

In Revelation, the apostle John was carried away in the Spirit to a high mountain where he viewed AV Revelation 21:10-11 “The holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, <sup>11</sup> Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious.”

This magnificent city <sup>12</sup> had a high wall; twelve gates with twelve angels at each gate; and on the doors “The names of the twelve tribes of

Israel. <sup>14</sup> The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.” The basis of our faith is founded and focused on the Atonement sacrifice of the true Lamb of God.

**Simon Peter**—joined the apostles at the age of 30 and was working at the fishing trade when called. Jesus had known Simon for some time before being introduced to him. Simon Peter was a good speaker, impulsive, and asked many questions. It is he who said to Jesus “Even if all fall away on account of you, I never will,” Matthew 26:33 NIV—to which Jesus replied that before that evening was over NKJV Matthew 26:34 “You will deny Me three times.”

Nevertheless, Simon truly loved the Lord and was faithful in giving the gospel message to the world. It was Simon who told the religious leaders NKJV Acts 4:9 “If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, <sup>10</sup> let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole.

<sup>11</sup> “This is the ‘stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.’ <sup>12</sup> “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

We should be just as *confident* and *bold* in proclaiming God’s Truth as Simon was. He was always ready to learn more of the Gospel under the teaching of His Master. He wrote AV 1 Peter 1:7 “That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

**Andrew**—was also working at his fishing trade with Zebedee when the Lord chose him. Andrew was 33 and the oldest of the apostles. The

example he shows is introducing others to the Lord. He took Simon Peter to meet Jesus, took a young lad with bread and fish to Him, and led some Greeks to Jesus who wanted to ask Him some questions.

When John the Baptist said AV John 1:36 “Behold the Lamb of God!” Andrew and the other disciple then followed Jesus. <sup>39</sup> NKJV They, “Saw where he was staying, and spent that day with him.” Also, John 1:40-41 NIV “Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. <sup>41</sup> The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, ‘We have found the Messiah’ (that is, the Christ).”

Andrew had followed John the Baptist for some time and would have heard him preach many times on repentance, judgment, and the coming Messiah. Andrew always wanted to introduce someone to the Lord. He had been a fisherman by trade but left that employment and followed Jesus when called—becoming a *fisher of men* Matthew 4:19; Mark 1:17.

Andrew knew the prophecies concerning a Messiah—and would recall AV Isaiah 9:6 “His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” The Bible records little information on Andrew, however, after Jesus fed the five thousand John 6, and after the time Andrew asked the Lord about the sign of His return Mark 13.

We know, however, that it is a privilege to be used by God even in some small way to be an example of godly conduct, or to introduce the Gospel truth to someone who is willing to know more about it. Our *example*, our *words* and *attitudes* should always be a positive influence on those around us or with whom we spend time—as Andrew’s life did.

**James**—was the older brother of John and one of the three with Jesus when He raised Jairus’ daughter to life. James was at the *Transfiguration*,

but he was *sleeping* when Jesus was *praying* in Gethsemane. James was an eyewitness to the *crucifixion* as well as the *resurrection* of the Lord Jesus.

James and John are the two that asked for special seats of honor in the Kingdom. Jesus asked them AV Matthew 20:22 “*Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?*”—meaning would they follow Him no matter what the cost or how serious the risk? They were willing, they said—and seventeen years later James proved the sincerity of his commitment as he was martyred for his faith in Jesus.

James and John were called *Sons of Thunder*—probably because of their reaction to situations—like asking Jesus if He wanted them to *call fire down from heaven to destroy* a Samaritan village that had rejected their teaching.

AV Luke 9:55 “*But [Jesus] turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. 56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village.*” James was *willing* to learn, and he learned *much* from the Master.

**John**—became an apostle at age 24 and was the youngest of the twelve. Four times in his Gospel John is called “*the disciple whom Jesus loved.*” We know that Jesus loved everyone, and He gave His life on the cross to prove that He did. John was just close to the Master.

John was inspired to write AV John 1:14 “*The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.*” And later wrote NIV 1 John 1:1 “*That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life.*”

John was imprisoned several times and later exiled to the Greek island of Patmos. There, he was inspired to write Revelation—giving us a glimpse into the Kingdom and a warning of the coming wrath. John wrote the words of Jesus AV John 14:1 “*Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many mansions.*” The Master promised to *prepare* a place for all who truly believed Him.

The historical record says that John lived to be a 101. As *John* knew, we *also* must know, and *believe* what he wrote—AV John 1:1 “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God.*”

**Philip**—was the fifth to be chosen to join the apostles at age 27. He lived in Bethsaida and had known of Jesus for some time. He did not actually *know* who Jesus was, however, until after the Master said “*Follow Me*”—*then he realized* Jesus was the Messiah.

At the Last Supper Philip asked: “*Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us*” John 14:8 NIV. Jesus told him 9 “*Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.*” Many want to draw *closer* to God and we are told in Scripture to *seek the Lord* AV Acts 17:27 “*Though he be not far from every one of us.*”

Every believer must know that Jesus came from God the Father to *live* on the earth; to *die* on a cross; and by that sacrifice to *pay* the price to forgive the sins of the world. He is presently at the Father’s right hand—and NKJV Hebrews 7:25 “*Making intercession for us.*”

**Nathaniel**—called **Bartholomew**, is the sixth apostle to be chosen at age 25. Philip said to Nathaniel *have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph*” John 1:45 NIV. Nathaniel replies NKJV John 1:46 “*Can*

*anything good come out of Nazareth?*” Philip said to him, “*Come and see.*”

Nathaniel was not sure Philip had actually found the Messiah, but he is willing to *see* for himself. NKJV John 1:47 “*Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, ‘Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit [no guile AV; nothing false NIV]!’ 48 Nathanael said to Him, ‘How do You know me?’ Jesus answered—Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.*”

Nathaniel realized then that Jesus was the promised Messiah—saying AV John 1:49 “*Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.*” Jesus responds 50 “*Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.*”

Nathaniel is sincere and a true disciple who would *hold* to the words and teaching of his Master. He truly believed in Jesus—who said of the Jews who *believed* him, AV John 8:31 “*If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.*”

When Jesus spoke of seeing *greater things*, He may have thought of *Jacob’s ladder* AV Genesis 28:12 “*A ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven.*” Jesus is the *Way* and *Truth* and *Link* between earth and Heaven. Only true believers ascend into Paradise.

AV 1 Timothy 2:5 “*For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; 6 Who gave himself a ransom for all.*” Now we know that the One who said AV John 14:6 “*I am the way, the truth, and the life*” really meant it—as “*No man cometh unto the Father, but by [the Master].*”



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