

Carry the Torch of Truth-2



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When Jesus commissioned His twelve apostles—He means that everyone ever-after is to Carry the Torch of God’s Truth by the way we live, and talk, and conduct our life in this world. He wanted His apostles to reach all nations AV Matthew 28:20 “Teaching them to observe all things [to obey everything NIV] whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo [surely NIV], I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

As we study the lives and personalities of the apostles, we see that they were much like us—they met various trials; faced temptation; encountered difficult people; and had to respond to the circumstances of life much as we do today—which is to always be according to the Scriptures. They had the great privilege of walking with the Master and learning directly from Him.

Jesus prayed all night for divine guidance, and then selected the disciples to help in His ministry as well as to carry the torch of Truth to the world after He ascended. Even though, at times, they fell away from the faith, the disciples—with the exception of Judas Iscariot—remained loyal to the Lord and to the work He had entrusted to them.

The twelve apostles are listed in four Books—Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:12-16; Acts 1:13. Before selecting them, however AV Luke 6:12 “[Jesus] went out

into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. 13 And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles.”

Matthew—was the seventh to be chosen at age 31. He was Levi the tax collector who left his job to follow the Master. Roman tax collectors were disliked by the Jews—nevertheless, Matthew left a lucrative position to carry the torch of Truth for the Lord.

Jesus had just healed the man lowered through the roof—then NKJV Luke 5:27 “After these things He went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, ‘Follow Me.’ 28 So he left all, rose up, and followed Him.”

Two gospels call him Levi but later was changed to Matthew. The old life of Levi the tax collector was *crucified* and *gone*, and the new life of Matthew the apostle had been *reborn* and *alive*. Matthew now believed as the apostle Paul AV Philippians 3:7 “What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.” Matthew knew the cost of being a disciple but he does not hesitate for a moment. The others could go back to fishing, but Matthew was out of a job.

Simon Peter, James, John, Andrew, Philip and Nathaniel were all devout Jews and, no doubt, followed John the Baptist—but Matthew was just a tax collector. For him to leave the high-paying job of collecting revenue for the Romans and to join the other disciples, would be a big decision on his part—a decision that *would* transform his life.

The Gospel of Matthew tells us that Jesus fulfilled many prophecies of a coming Messiah. His Gospel includes the birth of Jesus; His life and teaching; the crucifixion and resurrection; and the commission to *Carry the Torch of Truth* to the world. Matthew *had* collected taxes but now he would write the greatest *story ever told* and of the most important *life ever lived*.

Thomas—or Didymus in Greek, was the eighth apostle at age 29. He was called *Doubting Thomas* since he would not believe unless he had seen the scars. Jesus had told His disciples AV John 14:1 “Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.”—because He was preparing a mansion for them.

He added 4 “And where I go you know, and the way you know.” Thomas didn’t know and said NKJV 5 “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?” Jesus replied AV John 14:6 “I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

The details of Thomas’ life are few in the gospels, but his words tell us of his sincere heart and steadfast faith. At one time, when it was obvious that Jesus’ life would be in danger if He went to Judaea, only Thomas put into *words* what the others were *thinking* in their minds, AV John 11:16 “Let us also go, that we may die with him.” Regardless of the risk, Thomas would follow the Master.

Thomas was absent the first time Jesus appeared after His resurrection, but the second time he *was* there and still his ten friends had not convinced him—even after saying AV John 20:25 “We have seen the Lord.

“But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.” Eight days later Thomas would have proof. When Jesus showed him His hands and side AV John 20:28 Thomas answered—“My Lord and my God.”

James—the Younger, was 26 years of age and the son of Alphaeus. In each list he is mentioned ninth as the brother of Jude. There is little information on James the Younger, but the historical record says that James was a *quiet* and *humble* man.

His mother was one of the women who stood by the cross at the crucifixion and visited the tomb.

NIV Mark 15:40 “Some women were watching from a distance. Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joseph, and Salome.” James had a brother Joseph who was also a believer.

Jude / Thaddaeus, was 26 when called to be an apostle. His opening verses tell of his message—AV Jude 1:1 “*Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called: 2 Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.*”

He goes on 3 “*Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.*”

Jude gives many warnings WEY Jude 1:4 “*For certain persons have crept in unnoticed—men spoken of in ancient writings as pre-destined to this condemnation—ungodly men, who pervert the grace of our God into an excuse for immorality, and disown Jesus Christ, our only Sovereign and Lord.*”

Jude’s main point is that God’s grace should not be distorted, changed, or misunderstood, because the gift of eternal life is of infinite value. Jude warns that there will be much false teaching and wrong interpretation of God’s Truth as the return of Christ approaches. Jude emphasizes that the *Torch of God’s Truth* must continue to be carried to the world.

Simon the Zealot—was 28 when he became an apostle. Zealots strongly opposed Roman rule, but they cherished Mosaic Law. Simon was always referred to as *the Zealot*, showing of his love for God’s Truth and his loyalty to Christ. *Simon the Zealot* distinguishes him from Simon Peter.

The little information we have is AV Luke 6:15 “*Simon called Zelotes.*” He was selected when

NKJV Matthew 4:18 “*Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. 19 Then He said to them, “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” 20 They immediately left their nets and followed Him.*”

We see no hesitation when God calls these men to *carry the torch of His Truth*. NKJV Matthew 4:21 “*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, 22 and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.*”

Judas Iscariot—was 30 years old and the only non-Galilean to be chosen. He is always referred to as Judas Iscariot. Not many positive things can be said of him, but he did have the position of treasurer.

Even though called AV John 17:12 “*The son of perdition,*” OF NIV “*The one doomed to destruction,*” Judas Iscariot could still have *chosen* differently—but he *chose* to betray the Lord and he suffered the worst consequences of that terrible decision to reject God and His Son.

Judas Iscariot shows several negative character traits—it seems he did not care about the poor but was only wanted to increase his own finances by pilfering funds from the treasury. John said that Judas Iscariot was a thief, so it was probably known among them.

Also, Judas wanted the money from the sale of the perfume, and he even tried to hide his true motives by saying the money could be given to the poor. The sin of *deceit* is added to the sin of *covetousness*.

The gospels present the betrayal of Christ by Judas Iscariot as the most serious sin in human history. The Old Testament predicted that horrible deed Psalm 109; Zechariah 11. When the disciples asked

Jesus who would betray Him NKJV John 13:26 “*Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it.”*”

“*And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. 27 Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”*”

Everyone agrees that Judas made the most serious mistake ever—as it affected everyone ever-after. Jesus *knew* that Judas Iscariot would betray Him, but Judas could *still* have repented and chosen differently. Judas *made* the choice—God just *knew* what that choice would be.

The apostles were real people who faced real-life decisions and choices every day—just like we do. They were not wealthy; did not attend seminary schools; and had no reputation or political influence to speak of. They were poor working-class people who learned at the feet of Jesus.

Their mission—and everyone ever-after—is to ***Carry the Torch of Truth*** to the world! AV Matthew 28:19 “*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*”

May our lives and the way we walk, talk, and treat others, be a life that *Carries the Torch of Truth* to a lost and dying world! It’s our only task—and it’s the only way to Paradise!



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