

Remnant Life Church
February 3, 2021
The Disciples of Jesus
James the Elder/Phillip

Once again, we are dealing with a very common biblical name meaning we have to be careful to keep them straight

- It is such a common name that two of the disciples were named James and Jesus had a younger brother named James
 - Three men all with close connections with Jesus
 - All three prominent in the NT
- The name James is a derivative of Jacob
 - Jacob in the Hebrew is Yakov – means God will protect
 - But in the account of Jacob and Esau it means “he grasps the heel”
 - Which is what Jacob did to his brother born moments before him
 - The names James, however, means supplanter
- Like over half the disciples, this James was also a fisherman
 - Part of a fishing business started by the fathers of James and John his brother, as well as Andrew and Simon Peter
- Whenever he is mentioned in the Bible it is always with his brother
 - However, he is always listed first probably because he was the older of the two
 - After Jesus’ resurrection John becomes more prominent most likely because of his association with Peter
- James and John were the sons of Zebedee and Salome
 - Salome is said to be the sister of Mary
 - If that is the same Mary, the mother of Jesus, then that would make Jesus, James, and John cousins
- Other than his inclusion in the trio of men who were with Jesus at special times little is known about him away from his brother
 - It would seem that he shared the same passion for the work of Jesus as John did
 - Jesus called James and John the sons of thunder most likely referring to their zeal and emotional forcefulness
- It was following the transfiguration and going into Samaria, that the brothers asked Jesus to allow them to call down fire because of the people’s lack of reception to Jesus (**Luke 9**)
- Their boldness also came with an undeserved sense of importance
- **READ – Mark 10:35-41**
 - James is a cautionary tale of what happens when you allow pride to rise up
 - James and John mistook their relationship with Jesus as something they had earned from which they should be rewarded
 - Nothing we are given by God is earned – it is a gift and a demonstration of His great love
- Like the others did not fully understand Jesus until after His death
- Most accounts put James in Spain preaching about Jesus

- Following his time there he does return to Jerusalem and is credited with helping to establish and maintain the early church, most likely under the leadership of another James, the younger half-brother of Jesus
- It was James son of Zebedee and the other elders in Jerusalem who received Paul in Jerusalem (**Luke 21:18**)
- Following the coming of the Holy Spirit in **Acts 2** James and John are no longer recorded as being together
 - James is not present with Peter and John in **Acts 3**
 - Interestingly, the Gospel of John, written by his brother, does not mention James at all
- But James is the first of the disciples to be martyred.
 - Killed by Herod the Great's grandson, Herod Agrippa in 44 A.D.
 - He is not only the first, but the only one of the 12 whose death is recorded in the NT
- An extra-biblical account tells of the false accuser who was responsible for the charges accompanied James to his execution
 - in the time leading up to the date of his death, the man converted to Christianity due to James' Christ-like demeanor
 - He ended up being executed with him.

Phillip

- Another name that can be confusing – there are 2 in the NT
- The first is Philip, one of the 12 disciples
- The other is one of the 7 men selected in **Acts 6:5** to help serve the people so the disciples could focus on teaching
 - This Philip became an evangelist
 - He preached and worked miracles in Samaria (**Acts 8:5-8**)
 - Most famously met a Ethiopian eunuch, an official in the court of Candace the queen of Ethiopia
 - The man was reading from **Isaiah 53**
 - Philip explained the meaning to him
 - He was converted and baptized
- The disciple Philip was called by Jesus in his home area of Bethsaida in Galilee
 - When Jesus called him he immediately ran to his friend Bartholomew (also called Nathaniel) to bring him along
 - Philip is only mentioned a couple of times but one of those is a very important one for us
- Just prior to the feeding of the 5000 in **John 6**, Jesus asks Philip how they might feed so many people
 - **READ - John 6:1-7**
 - Instead of answering in faith, Philip began to calculate the amount and cost
 - He demonstrated the lack of true understanding of who Jesus was and is
- How often do we do this same thing?

- How about the political scene that we have been witness to these last several years?
- What will it take for the evil to be removed from our government?
- Most will begin to go through a long litany of the events that must take place
- Why do we not answer that question in faith and trust in God?

James and Philip were called by Jesus to serve with Him as one of His 12 original disciples

- They gave their lives in that call
- They were men who grew in their faith
- But they were men of weakness as well

Today, you, as a disciple of Jesus Christ have also been called to be a minister of the Gospel

- You may never speak in public about it
- You will most likely not be called to lay down your life
- But you are called to be a living witness to the ministry of Jesus Christ
- Watch for those opportunities you are given to witness through your words and actions

None of the 12 were perfect, but they were willing to give their all for Jesus Christ

- Can we say the same about our lives today?
- If not, what is keeping that from happening?
- Surrender your all to Him