

## **Lesson 4: JH: NT Survey: Disciples**

### **Andrew**

Andrew was the brother of Peter. He was a fisherman before Jesus called him. Originally he was a disciple of John the Baptist. Andrew brought his brother, Peter, to Jesus. Andrew introduced others to Jesus. Although circumstances placed him in a position where it would have been easy for him to become jealous and resentful, he was optimistic and well content in second place. According to tradition, it was in Achaia, Greece, in the town of Patra that Andrew died a martyr.

### **Bartholomew/ Nathanael**

Bartholomew Nathanael, lived in Cana of Galilee. Tradition says he was a missionary in Armenia. A number of scholars believe that he was the only one of the 12 disciples who came from royal blood, or noble birth. He developed into a man of complete surrender to the Carpenter of Nazareth, and one of the Church's most adventurous missionaries. He died as a martyr for his Lord. He was flayed alive with knives.

### **James the Elder**

James, the Elder, a fisherman who lived in Bethsaida, Capernaum and Jerusalem. He preached in Jerusalem and Judea and was beheaded by Herod, AD 44 (Acts 12:1,2). He was a member of the Inner Circle. He was a man of courage and forgiveness-a man without jealousy, living in the shadow of John, a man of extraordinary faith. He was the first of the twelve to become a martyr.

### **James the Younger**

James, the Younger, lived in Galilee. He was the brother of the Apostle Jude. According to tradition he wrote the Epistle of James, preached in Palestine and Egypt and was crucified in Egypt. James was a man of strong character and passion. Tradition tells us that he also died as a martyr and his body was sawed in pieces.

### **John**

John, son of Zebedee and Salome, brother of James, the Apostle. He was known as the Beloved Disciple. A fisherman who lived in Bethsaida, Capernaum and Jerusalem, he was a member of the Inner Circle. He wrote the Gospel of John, I John, II John, III John and Revelation. He preached among the churches of Asia Minor. Banished to the isle of Patmos, he was later freed and died a natural death. He was a man of action; he was very ambitious; and a man with an explosive temper and an intolerant heart. It is said that an attempt was made on his life by giving him a chalice of poison from which God spared him. He died of natural causes.

### **Judas**

Judas Iscariot, the traitor, lived in Kerioth of Judah. He betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver and afterwards hanged himself. It is said that Judas was a violent Jewish Nationalist who had followed Jesus in hope that through Him his nationalistic flame and dreams might be realized. No one can deny that Judas was a covetous man and at times he used his position as treasurer of the band to pilfer from the common purse.

### **Jude/Thaddeus**

Jude was a brother of James the Younger. He was one of the very little-known Apostles and lived in Galilee. Tradition says he preached in Assyria and Persia and died a martyr in Persia. By character he was an intense and violent Nationalist with the dream of world power and domination by the Chosen People. He was killed with arrows at Ararat.

### **Matthew/ Levi**

Matthew, or Levi, son of Alpheus, lived in Capernaum. He was a tax collector. He wrote the Gospel that bears his name. He died a martyr in Ethiopia. The Jews hated tax collectors but Jesus had a plan for Matthew. He became the first man to write down the teachings of Jesus. He was a missionary of the Gospel, who laid down his life for the faith of his Master.

## **Peter**

Simon Peter, was a fisherman who lived in Bethsaida and Capernaum. He did evangelistic and missionary work among the Jews, going as far as Babylon. He was a member of the Inner Circle and authored the two New Testament epistles which bear his name. Tradition says he was crucified, head downward, in Rome. Yet, it is he who denied Christ before a maiden. He was an Apostle and a missionary who laid down his life for his Lord. It is true, Peter had many faults, but he had always the saving grace of the loving heart. No matter how many times he had fallen and failed, he always recovered his courage and integrity. Peter was martyred on a cross. Peter requested that he might be crucified head downward for he was not worthy to die as his Lord had died.

## **Philip**

Philip was a fisherman. Philip was a man with a warm heart and a pessimistic head. He was one who would very much like to do something for others, but who did not see how it could be done. Yet, this simple Galilean gave all he had. In return God used him. It is said that he died by hanging. While he was dying, he requested that his body be wrapped not in linen but in papyrus for he was not worthy that even his dead body should be treated as the body of Jesus had been treated.

## **Simon the Zealot**

Simon, the Zealot, one of the little-known followers lived in Galilee. Tradition says he was crucified. The Zealots were fanatical Jewish Nationalists who had heroic disregard for the suffering involved and the struggle for what they regarded as the purity of their faith. The Zealots were crazed with hatred for the Romans. From this background, we see that Simon was a fanatical Nationalist, a man devoted to the Law, a man with bitter hatred. Yet, Simon clearly emerged as a man of faith. He abandoned all his hatred for the faith that he showed toward his Master and the love that he was willing to share with the rest of the disciples and especially Matthew, the Roman tax collector. Simon, the Zealot, the man who once would have killed in loyalty to Israel, became the man who saw that God will have no forced service. Tradition says he died as a martyr.

## **Thomas Didymus**

Thomas Didymus lived in Galilee. Thomas was his Hebrew name and Didymus was his Greek name. Thomas appeared in the raising of Lazarus (John 11:2-16), in the Upper Room (John 14:1-6) where he wanted to know how to know the way where Jesus was going. In John 20:25, we see him saying unless he sees the nail prints in Jesus' hand and the gash of the spear in His side he will not believe. That's why Thomas became known as Doubting Thomas. He was killed with a spear as a martyr for his Lord. His symbol is a group of spears, stones and arrows.

## **How did the 12 disciples die?**

1. **Andrew** = Crucified on an X-shaped cross
2. **Bartholomew** or Nathanael = Flayed alive with knives
3. **James the elder** = First apostle martyred
4. **James the lesser** = Sawn in pieces
5. **John** = Died of natural causes on the isle of Patmos
6. **Judas Iscariot** = Hung himself
7. **Jude** or Thaddeus = Killed with arrows
8. **Matthew** or Levi = Martyred in Ethiopia
9. **Peter** = Crucified upside-down on a cross
10. **Philip** = Died by hanging
11. **Simon the Zealot** = Died a martyr's death
12. **Thomas** = Killed with a spear

## **Summary:**

They were common men who made mistakes. Once they saw the resurrected Jesus their life changed to the point that they were willing to die for their faith. We can be confident that Jesus came back to life because people will not die for a lie. We all need a Jesus moment when Jesus becomes alive to us! This happens through devotionals we have, camp experience, or a ministry experience. (Mission trip, Helping with Sunday

School, VBS, Day Camp). We have to give up some time and leave our comfort zone to see God work in our lives.