

# The Apostles Ran Once

Making a mistake can be a good thing long term; the apostles ran away once; they never did it again.

# Apostle

- Apostolos (Greek for apostle) is a compound word made up of 'apo,' from, and 'stellous,' to send; one sent forth” (Vine's Expository Dictionary).
  - Apostle is used specifically for the fourteen -  
Matt. 10:2-4
  - Generally designates one sent with a commission -  
Heb. 3:1; Acts 14:14

# The Fourteen Apostles

- The four lists of the twelve apostles are in: Matt. 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13
  - Matt. 10:2-4 - “Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; 3 Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.”

# The Fourteen Apostles

- John does not have a list of the apostles.
- Note that the lists of the apostles are grouped by fours into three sets.
- Peter heads all the lists and Judas Iscariot is last in the Gospel lists.
- Philip heads the list of the second set in all four lists.
- James the less heads the list of the last group in all four lists.

# The Fourteen Apostles

- Matthias (replacement for Judas who fell) was the 13th apostle - Acts 1:15-26
- Paul was the 14th apostle - Gal. 1:1, 1Cor. 15:8
- The apostles differed in age, leadership ability, occupation, political affiliations, income, and cultural background
- Most of the apostles were married
  - 1Cor. 9:5 - “Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?”

# The Fourteen Apostles

- They accepted no special recognition
  - Acts 10:25-26 - “As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. 26 But Peter lifted him up, saying, Stand up; I myself am also a man.”
- They were untrained, uneducated, and unlikely
  - Acts 4:13 - “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.”

# Apostolic Criteria

- Acts 1:21-22 - “Men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us”
  - Companions of the Lord on His preaching journeys
  - Witness of all of the events beginning with His baptism and ending with His ascension; it would include His resurrection

# Apostolic Criteria

- We have heard it taught that witnessing the resurrection was one of the qualifications based on Acts 1:22. That is a result of ambiguous word choice in the King James Version. ***It actually states that he was chosen to be a witness, not that he was chosen because he was a witness.*** To single this out when the scriptures do not, says both more and less than what is written. Witnessing the resurrection was only part of the greater whole of what he was a witness.

# Apostolic Criteria

- It is a job description, not an exclusive qualification
  - Acts 4:33 - “And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all.”
- For this reason, there are no apostles today

# Apostolic Criteria

- Paul was "one born out of due time" - 1Cor. 15:8
- However, Paul saw the resurrected Lord - Acts 26:14-18
- Unfortunately for those who see this as the most important qualification, Paul spent three years being personally instructed by the Lord; not coincidentally, the same amount of time the other apostles spent with Him.
  - Acts 26:16-20 - At His appearance to Saul, Jesus spoke of things He would yet reveal to him, and then sent him away from the Jews.
  - Gal. 1:11-17 - Paul said that Jesus revealed the whole of the Gospel to him while he spent three years in Arabia and Damascus before going to Jerusalem to meet the other apostles

# Apostolic Criteria

- The capacity to perform miracles as promised by Jesus - Luke 24:49
- The miraculous signs unique to an apostle
  - 2Cor. 12:11-12 - “I have become a fool in boasting; you have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing. 12 Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.”

# Apostolic Criteria

- Began as early as the Limited Commission - Matt. 10:8
- Included inspired teaching - Matt. 10:19
- The fullness of miraculous power was conferred by the Holy Spirit - Acts 1:5, 8
- It included the capacity to impart miraculous gifts to others - Acts 8:18; Rom. 1:11

# Apostolic Criteria

- With the death of the apostles, the imparting of miraculous gifts ceased - 1Cor. 13:8-10
- Before Acts 6:8, only the apostles are said to have performed miracles - Acts 2:43, 3:6-10, 4:16, 33, 5:12

# The Apostles Were Vital In The First Years Of The Church

- 1Cor. 12:28 - “And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles...”
- All truth was to be revealed through the apostles
  - John 16:13 - “However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth...”
  - 1Cor. 2:13 - “These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.”
  - Acts 20:27 - “For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.”

# The Apostles Were Vital In The First Years Of The Church

- The church was built on the work and teaching of the apostles
  - Eph. 2:20 - “Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone”

# The Apostles Were Vital In The First Years Of The Church

- The apostles protected the early, vulnerable church from enemies and doctrines that tried to destroy it
  - Acts 15
  - Phil. 1:17 - “I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.”

# The Apostles Were Vital In The First Years Of The Church

- The apostles arranged for local churches to be organized by appointing elders to oversee them
  - Acts 14:23 - “So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed.”
  - Titus 1:5 - “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you”
  - Phil. 1:1 - “Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons”

# The Apostles Were Vital In The First Years Of The Church

- The apostles ensured that the church would have a record of the doctrine of Christ to ensure its soundness until His return
  - 2Peter 1:12-15

# The Apostles Were Vital In The First Years Of The Church

- The apostles were examples to the early church
  - Phil. 3:17 - “Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern.”
  - 1Cor. 11:1 - “Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.”

# The Apostles Were Not Perfect

- While the teaching and writings of the apostles were inspired and infallible, their conduct was not.
- They had to be rebuked by Jesus, frequently - Matt. 18:1-3
- They all forsook Jesus when He was taken to be crucified - Matt. 26:56
- Peter denied the Lord - Matt. 26:74
- Peter had to be publicly rebuked because of his sin - Gal. 2:11-14
- In the first century there were false apostles - 2Cor. 11:12-15; Rev. 2:2

# Diverse Matters Regarding The Apostles

- Peter appears to be the eldest, and is always mentioned first.
- John's gospel focuses on Andrew more than the other apostles. Andrew began as a disciple of John the Baptist - John 1:35-41
- James and John were brothers, were also cousins of Jesus, and were known for their aggressive dispositions - Mark 3:17
- James, John, and Peter had been partners in a commercial fishing business - Luke 5:10

# Diverse Matters Regarding The Apostles

- Peter and John (who was believed to have been the youngest) worked closely during the early stages of their ministries - Acts 4, 5
- Peter, James, and John constituted the "inner circle" of Jesus companions - Matt. 17:1-8
- John was especially loved by Jesus - John 13:22
- James (John's brother) was the first apostolic martyr - Acts 12:44 (44 AD).
- Peter and Andrew were brothers - Matt. 4:18

# Diverse Matters Regarding The Apostles

- Thomas had a twin brother, of whom nothing is known - John 11:16
- One of the Judases had two other names: Thaddeus and Lebbaeus
- Matthew was a Roman collaborator and tax collector - Matt. 9:9
- Simon the Zealot engaged in guerrilla warfare against the Romans
- Peter was the most active among the apostles in the first 12 years of the church - Acts 2-13

# Diverse Matters Regarding The Apostles

- Paul was the most active during the next 17 years of the church - Acts 14-28
- Paul was the most productive of all of the apostles - 1Cor. 15:10
- Judas, the only non-Galilean apostle, committed self-murder - Matt. 27:5, 10:4

# The End Of The Apostles

- Tradition (Fox's Book of Martyrs) states that all but one of the apostles experienced a violent death directly linked to their apostleship.
- Peter was crucified in 67 AD at 75 years old
- Andrew was crucified
- Philip was beaten and crucified in AD 54
- Bartholomew was beaten and crucified
- Thomas was thrust through with a sword
- Matthew was martyred in AD 60 in India

# The End Of The Apostles

- James the less (James the Just, the brother of the Lord) was stoned and beaten to death with a fuller's club (used to wring out laundry) when he was 39
- Thaddeus was crucified in AD 72
- Simon the Zealot was crucified in AD 74
- John was exiled to Patmos and later released to live a long life and die of old age.

# The End Of The Apostles

- Jesus indicated His apostles would experience unpleasant and untimely deaths - Matt. 10:22; John 16:2
- These were the men who ran away when Jesus was crucified. They ran once; they never ran again.

# The End Of The Apostles

- The apostles were instruments through whom God revealed the soul saving gospel and established His Kingdom. They were not the kind of men we would choose to change the world by means of the most important message it would ever hear. However, these men, transformed and empowered by Christ, launched the greatest movement in the history of this universe and beyond.
- If the power of Christ and His Gospel transformed these ordinary men into heroes who changed the world, what can the Lord do to your life with the same Gospel?