



Called & Changed by Christ

A Study of Conversion in the Lives of Peter and Paul

At Christ's Table ~ ACTpublications

"Explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words."

1 Corinthians 2:13

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PART 1

Called

3:13 “And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him.

3:14 And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him, and he might send them out to preach.

3:15 and have authority to cast out demons.

3:16 He appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter).

3:17 James the son of Zebedee and John the brother of James (to whom he gave the name Boanerges, that is, Sons of Thunder).

3:18 Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Cananaean,

3:19 and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.” Mark 3:13-19¹(ESV)

¹ All scripture quotes in “Called” are from the *English Standard Version*, unless otherwise noted.

Who are “called”?

In addition to those listed in the gospel account,² who are “the called”?

“And he went up on the mountain and called to Him those whom He desired, and they came to Him. And He appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles)” Mark 3:13-14a

This says that Jesus “called to Him those whom he desired.”
And in I Timothy 2:3-6a it says:

2:3 “This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior,
2:4 who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

2:5 For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

2:6 who gave Himself as a ransom for all....”

“All” are called by Christ. But Jesus chose and appointed 12 from all those He had called. In the parable of the Wedding Feast (Matthew 22:2-14), we see the phrase: “Many are called, but few are chosen.” Many were invited to the wedding feast, but few properly attended. So too, **many are called but not many properly answer the call, in order to be chosen and appointed.**

² See the Addendum

The exception to the rule here is Judas, who was chosen and appointed to play the unique role of the betrayer. The **apostles** were **appointed**. In the literal sense, apostles are merely “sent ones”; and we are all “sent ones”. (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; II Corinthians 3:2; 5:18-20) **Those He specially appoints as apostles are those whom He knows will answer the call properly.** The appointment is available to all – “Many are called but few are chosen”. **Many are called, but few answer the call properly.**

The significance of the 12 does not begin with their job descriptions as apostles. Their significance begins with the spiritual condition of their hearts.

So, **who are called?** In Revelation 22:17, it says the call goes out to “**those who hear**” and “**those who thirst**”, and “**whosoever desire**” – namely, **anyone desiring to be a disciple of Christ are called, not just the ones He “appoints as apostles”.**

Answering the Call of Christ dramatically changed lives of “ the 12” and allowed God to do extraordinary things with the surrendered lives of ordinary people.

What is the Nature of the Call?

Because of the widespread popularity of the idea of “receiving Christ into your heart and life”, we need to state the obvious: What is being discussed here is **Christ calling us** – NOT that we are calling Christ.

In his book *“So I Send You”* in a chapter entitled, *Workmen of God: Recognizing and Answering God's Call to Service*, Oswald Chambers writes: *“The call is the expression of the nature from which the call comes and can only be heard by those who are attuned to that nature. The call of God is not an echo of my nature, but expressive of God's nature.”*

And Mark 3:14 gives the reason for Christ's Call: “so that they might be with him, and he might send them out to preach” The Call is to **come into relationship** with Christ, and to **go out as a witness** for Christ. **Christ is calling us to Himself and His life.** This is **NOT** a situation of “receiving Christ” into your life. We must understand this in order to answer the Call properly.

The Call is to “come out” of the realm of self: The Church is the “*ecclesia*”. This Greek word means – “*the called out*” – those who are “called out” of something and “called in” to something.

We are **“called out”** of the world and **“called in”** to the Kingdom of heaven. Listen to God’s Call to Abram (or Abraham) in Genesis 12:1-2: “Now the LORD said to Abram, ‘Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing.’”

There is another Call of God recorded in Psalm 45:10-11. It is a call to a woman, who is a symbol of the Church:

“Hear, O daughter, and consider, and incline your ear: forget your people and your father’s house, and the king will desire your beauty. Since he is your lord, bow to him.”

Christ calls us out of the realm of self – that realm which has been fashioned for us by family and culture - our world, our comfort zone, business as usual, life as we know it. The Call is to **“come in” to the realm of Christ**: The Church is made up of those who are **“in” Christ**.

There are many scripture verses in the New Testament that refer to Christians being **“in Christ”**. One example is 2 Corinthians 5:17: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” Another example is Ephesians 2:6: “And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the

heavenly realms in Christ Jesus.”³ The Call is to “**come in**” to the **realm of Christ**. Regarding “the realm of Christ”, the apostle Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:9: “But, as it is written (Isaiah 64:4), ‘What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him.’”

The Call is also to “go back out into the realm of the world”

- as “strangers and exiles on the earth” (Hebrews 11:13)
- as “salt and light” (Matthew 5:13-16)
- as “witnesses” of the Gospel of the Kingdom (Matthew 24:14)
- as “citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem” (Hebrews 12:23; Cf. Philippians 3:20)
- as “ambassadors of Christ” (2 Corinthians 5:20)

Regarding the Call, in his book, *“Following Jesus in the Real World”*, Richard C. Lamb had this to say:

“Jesus made a remarkable promise to His disciples in John 15:16: “You did not choose Me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last.” Jesus promised that His intention in calling us to be His disciples is that our lives will be fruitful. Meaningful. Effective. That our lives will make an impact. This is an amazing promise, but He said more than that. He described the fruit as “fruit that will last”. Eternal fruit. Today, Jesus says to us, “I chose you and appointed you to give your live for something that will last forever.”

³ Also: John 15:5; Romans 8:1; 1 Corinthians 1:2, 6:17; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, 2:14; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 1:1-8; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 3:1-4.

*There is no cause, no corporation, no movement that can promise its adherents that what they accomplish with their lives will last forever. None, that is, except the movement that Jesus proclaimed, the kingdom of God.... Let's settle for nothing less than Jesus' purpose for us: lasting fruit."*⁴

⁴ From the Introduction, "A Turning Point", "Something That Will Last Forever".

PART 2

Changed

“These things I once considered valuable, I now consider worthless for Christ. It’s far more than that! I consider everything else worthless because I’m much better off knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. It’s because of Him that I think of everything as worthless. I threw it all away in order to gain Christ and to have a relationship with Him. This means that I didn’t receive God’s approval by obeying laws. The opposite is true! I have God’s approval through faith in Christ. This is the approval that comes from God and is based on faith that knows Christ. Faith knows the power that His coming back to life gives and what it means to share His suffering. In this way I’m becoming like Him in His death, with the confidence that I’ll come back to life from the dead.” Philippians 3:7-11⁵

In this passage from one of Paul’s epistles, we see a radical change in a natural human perspective: Compared to the opportunity of knowing Christ, all other things are considered worthless. Indeed, there is even willingness to lose all things for the opportunity of knowing Christ. This is truly being changed by Christ.

⁵ All scripture quotations in “Changed” are from the *God’s Word Translation*, unless otherwise noted.

A Life-Changing Encounter

Let's do a quick review of Paul's initial encounter with the Risen Christ. We read in Philippians 3 about Paul's radical change of perspective: Along with his statement "compared to the opportunity of knowing Christ, I consider all other things to be worthless", he also said "I am even willing to lose all things for the opportunity of knowing Christ". And, indeed, Paul *did* lose everything he had and everything he had accomplished before he came to Christ. In Galatians 1:14 Paul said that he "was far ahead of other Jews in his age group in following the Jewish religion." Today we might say he was "climbing the corporate ladder". He was not only very gifted and educated, but he was also quite ambitious and ruthless in his climbing the ladder of success. Yet in Galatians 6:14, Paul said "It's unthinkable that I should ever brag about anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. By His cross my relationship to the world and its relationship to me have been crucified." I have always understood that to mean something like this: **After his conversion, Paul's life was drastically changed by the cross of Christ: He was no longer impressed with anything or anyone in this world – AND, in spite of all his education, abilities and successes, the world was no longer impressed with Paul.** Indeed, in Acts 26:24, when he stood before Agrippa and Festus telling them of his conversion on the road to Damascus, they said

to him: “Paul, you’re crazy! Too much education is driving you crazy!” In I Corinthians 4:13, Paul said that his reputation had “become garbage in the eyes of the world and trash in the site of all people.” Yes, when we are truly being changed by Christ, the things of the world⁶ should begin to pale in our view. And, the accompanying stark reality that the world is no longer impressed with us, should not be surprising.

So, in a very real way, Paul *did* lose everything. Yet **the only thing he was concerned about in this life was knowing Christ.** Why? What had brought about such a dramatic change in Paul? It was his encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus. Then and there he was forever **changed by Christ.**

We read in Acts 9:8-9, that after his encounter with Jesus: “Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were opened, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank.”⁷ Three days he was without sight. This was the Lord’s way of communicating to Paul: *“You think you’re serving Me, and you’re acting like you’re ‘God’s gift to the world’, but actually, you’re so spiritually blind, you have totally misunderstood My plans, and you are, in fact, working against My purposes”.* Paul was humbled to the point that someone had to lead him by the hand in

⁶ Galatians 1:10, 13-14; 2 Timothy 2:4; 1 John 2:15-17

⁷ *New American Standard Bible* (NASB)

order for him to walk. He was in this condition for three days – **three days in the travail of being born again.**

Through his encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus, Saul was changed forever. His name was changed from “Saul” to “Paul”. The name “Saul” means “the one asked for”. After the Israelites had ask for a king, we read in I Samuel 9 that Saul was chosen to be their first king, because he was the tallest and the most handsome in the land. The apostle was named after this king of Israel. They were, in fact, from the same tribe of Benjamin. But through his encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus, Saul’s name was changed to “Paul”, which means “small one”. After God humbled him by cutting him down to size, Paul was changed from a persecutor⁸ of the Household of God to a servant and builder⁹ in the Household of God. He was truly **changed by Christ.**

⁸ Acts 9:4; 22:4, 7; 26:14

⁹ 1 Corinthians 3:5-11

A Life-Changing Process

“One day Jesus was standing by the Sea of Galilee. The people crowded around him as they listened to God’s word. ² Jesus saw two boats on the shore. The fishermen had stepped out of them and were washing their nets. ³ So Jesus got into the boat that belonged to Simon and asked him to push off a little from the shore. Then Jesus sat down and taught the crowd from the boat. ⁴ When he finished speaking, he told Simon, “Take the boat into deep water, and lower your nets to catch some fish.” ⁵ Simon answered, “Teacher, we worked hard all night and caught nothing. But if you say so, I’ll lower the nets.” ⁶ After the men had done this, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to tear. ⁷ So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. Their partners came and filled both boats until the boats nearly sank. ⁸ When Simon Peter saw this, he knelt in front of Jesus and said, “Leave me, Lord! I’m a sinful person!” ⁹ Simon and everyone who was with him were amazed to see the large number of fish they had caught. ¹⁰ James and John, who were Zebedee’s sons and Simon’s partners, were also amazed. Jesus told Simon, “Don’t be afraid. From now on you will catch people instead of fish.” ¹¹ Simon and his partners brought the boats to shore, left everything, and followed Jesus.”

For many of us, our conversion to Christ wasn’t so dramatic as Paul’s. However, the issue is not “how dramatic” but rather “how changed.” For example, the apostle Peter’s conversion to Christ was not as dramatic as Paul’s. However, he too was thoroughly **changed by Christ**. His change was not a “crisis experience” like

Paul's – It was more of a **process**. Not one radical encounter with Jesus, but **repeated encounters** with Jesus led to Peter being radically changed by Christ.

Peter had kind of an up-and-down walk with the Lord: We see in Matthew 4 that he left his fishing nets to follow Jesus. But then in Luke 5:1-11, we see that Peter went back to his fishing business on Lake Gennesaret. In fact, he had been fishing all night, but caught nothing; and Jesus told him to lower his nets to catch some fish. We can imagine Peter answering the Lord something like this: *“Jesus, we tried this spot. Believe me there are no fish here. I know the fishing business. You are a very good, preacher, but leave the secular work to me. But I will lower the nets just to prove to you that I know what I’m doing.”* But, when he lowered the nets, there was a great catch of fish.

Notice Peter's reaction: he said: “Leave me, Lord. I’m a sinful person.” (Luke 5:8) “For all sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ”. (Romans 3:23) That's how Peter now saw himself. And Peter learned that day that Jesus was Lord of all – even the fish. Peter also learned that Jesus could live Peter's live and do Peter's work better than he could for himself. But Peter also felt that he was too much of a failure to be a disciple of Jesus.

Notice Jesus' response to Peter: “Don't be afraid. From now on you will catch people instead of fish.” (Luke 5:10) “Don't be

afraid?” Don’t be afraid of what? He was saying to Peter, “*Don’t be afraid that you are going to fail at trying to be My disciple.*” At other times, Jesus had also said: “The things that are impossible for people to do are possible for God to do.” (Luke 18:27) “You can’t produce anything without Me.” (John 15:5b) “... (but you) can do produce anything through Me, when I become your strength.” (Philippians 4:13 paraphrased) “*Don’t be afraid. I said, ‘I will make you a fisher of men.’*” (Luke 5:10)¹⁰ And so, Peter left his nets *again* to follow Jesus. (Luke 5:11)

Whereas Paul needed to be crushed in *a crisis of conversion*, Peter needed to be convinced in *a process of conversion*.

In John 6:68, Peter said that he would never leave Jesus: “Lord, to what person could (I) go? Your words give eternal life.” In John 13:37, Peter said, “I’ll give my life for You.” But then in John 18, Peter denied Jesus three times in a row.

In John 20, Peter sees the empty tomb of the risen Christ. Jesus appears to him and the other disciples and commissions them to go into all the world to preach the gospel. Just as the Father had sent Him, He was sending them. And in John 21:3, we hear Peter’s response to all this: “I’m going back to my fishing

¹⁰ From Robertson’s Word Studies: “The old verb *Zōgreō* means to catch alive, not to kill. So, then Peter is to be a catcher of men, not of fish, and to catch them alive and for life, not dead and for death. The great Pentecost will one day prove that Christ’s prophecy will come true. Much must happen before that great day. But Jesus foresees the possibilities in Simon, and he joyfully undertakes the task of making a fisher of men out of this poor fisher of fish.”

business.” (Paraphrased) But then at the Sea of Tiberias, Peter experiences something similar to what he experienced at the Lake of Gennesaret:

“15 After they had eaten breakfast, Jesus asked Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me more than the other disciples do?’ Peter answered him, ‘Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.’ Jesus told him, ‘Feed my lambs.’

16 Jesus asked him again, a second time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’ Peter answered him, ‘Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.’ Jesus told him, ‘Take care of my sheep.’

17 Jesus asked him a third time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’ Peter felt sad because Jesus had asked him a third time, ‘Do you love me?’ So, Peter said to him, ‘Lord, you know everything. You know that I love you.’ Jesus told him, ‘Feed my sheep.’”

(John 21:15-17)

We see that Jesus addressed the apostle as “Simon”, because he was acting like his old self. *Three times* He asked him: “Do you love Me?” Why three times? Possibly because three times Peter denied the Lord. Was Jesus being vindictive or emotionally abusive to Peter? No, Jesus knew that Peter needed this kind of heart-level encounter to be changed. *Three times* Peter answers: “Yes, Lord. You know I love You.” But Peter knows that he can no longer claim that he loves the Lord more than the other disciples. (Matthew 26:33) And *three times* Jesus responds with “Feed and take care of My flock.”

Much like the “life-changing encounter” in Paul’s life, in this passage, we have the “life-changing encounter” with Christ that radically changed Peter. The meaning of this passage is found in the original Greek words used to translate what Jesus was saying to Peter: Each of the *three times* Jesus asked Peter: “Do you love Me?”, the Greek word “agape” is used – that is, the word for **a godly kind of love, a self-denying love**. But each of the *three times* that Peter answers: “Yes Lord, You know I love you.”, the Greek word “filio” is used – that is, the word for **a brotherly affection**. In other words, Jesus is asking Peter: *“Do you feel that you love Me more than all these other disciples? Do you love Me with a godly love, a sacrificial love, willing to deny yourself and die to yourself, out of love for Me?” (Paraphrased)* And each of the three times, all Peter can honestly come up with is: **“I have a brotherly affection for You, Lord.”** Jesus asked him once, then twice, then to kind of “drive the point home”, He asked him a third time. The third time, Peter breaks down. He is grieved and answers: *“Lord, why do You keep asking me that? You know all things. You know I haven’t been able to love You with a godly kind of self-denying, self-dying love. You know all I’m good for is a simple brotherly affection.” (Paraphrased)* And Jesus answers: “Take care of My flock - anyway. Don’t be afraid. Remember, I said that ‘I would make you a fisher of men. The things that are impossible for people to do are possible for God to do. (Luke 18:27) You can’t produce anything without Me (John 15:5b) ... (but you) can produce

anything through Me, when I become your strength.’ (Philippians 4:13 paraphrased) Don’t be afraid. I have the power to radically change you!”

Then Jesus adds:

“¹⁸‘I can guarantee this truth: When you were young, you would get ready to go where you wanted. But when you’re old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will get you ready to take you where you don’t want to go.’ ¹⁹Jesus said this to show by what kind of death Peter would bring glory to God. After saying this, Jesus told Peter, ‘Follow me!’” Jesus could “guarantee” that Peter would even be willing to die for the cause of Christ. Like Paul, he too was truly changed by Christ.

Real Encounters ~ Real Change

If these two great apostles needed to be so changed, all the more do we. But also: If even these two great apostles needed to be so changed, we should never think that we are not “good enough” to serve the Lord. The fact is: No one is “good enough”. It says in Romans 3:10 & 23: “Not one person has God’s approval Because all people sinned, they have all fallen short of God’s glory.” So, whether it is *a crisis* experience like Paul’s or *a process* like Peter’s, **real encounters with the living Christ bring about real change in our lives.**

What is the nature of this change? It is coming to a true knowledge of Christ, and in the process, coming to a true knowledge of ourselves.

- Whereas we once thought that we were “good”, we come to realize that all our own righteousness is “like a filthy garment”, as it says in Isaiah 64:6 (*NASB*).
- Regarding our spirituality, whereas we once thought that we were “rich, wealthy and didn’t need anything”, we realize that we are actually “miserable, pitiful, poor, blind and naked”, as Jesus said to the Laodicean church in Revelation 3:17.

- And in response to experiencing His amazing grace, our main focus in life becomes Christ:
 - an intense desire to know Him.
 - a surrender to worship Him in humility.
 - a zeal to give our lives in His service.

Answering the Call¹¹

Our Personal Story

Frances

My wife, Frances, has her own unique and beautiful story of Answering the Call of Christ. In lieu of relating all the details of her personal experience, I will give a brief overview of the Call in her life: Before we met and married, Frances was gainfully self-employed as a hair stylist. As a single woman she adopted a daughter from an orphanage in Costa Rica, and had a house built in the suburbs. Except for not knowing if she was ever going to find someone she wanted to marry, in a manner of speaking, she had basically achieved the rest of her life aspirations. When we met and were later engaged, she knew I was called to the work of ministry. During the first three years of our marriage, the Lord prepared us in various ways for overseas ministry. This season was particularly “life-changing” for Frances: In prayer, the Lord spoke to me that Frances should stop working, which she did incrementally. This presented a challenge of faith for our material provisions. The Lord also had us experiment in various ways of “living off the grid” – in a suburb! In a word, Frances was being

¹¹ All scripture quotations in “Answering the Call” are from the *New American Standard Bible*, unless otherwise noted.

“weaned” from the life of her family, childhood, hometown, occupation, etc. It was a process. During this season, the Holy Spirit “spoke” to her heart two passages of scripture which worked powerfully in calling her into the Cause of Christ:

“My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Behold, there he stands behind our wall, gazing through the windows, looking through the lattice. My beloved speaks and says to me: “Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come away.” Song of Solomon 2:9-10

“I slept, but my heart was awake. A sound! My beloved is knocking. “Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one, for my head is wet with dew, my locks with the drops of the night.” I had put off my garment; how could I put it on? I had bathed my feet; how could I soil them? My beloved put his hand to the latch, and my heart was thrilled within me. I arose to open to my beloved, and my hands dripped with myrrh, my fingers with liquid myrrh, on the handles of the bolt. I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had turned and gone. My soul failed me when he spoke. I sought him, but found him not; I called him, but he gave no answer. Song of Solomon 5:2-6

Christ calls us to **“come away”** – out of our life into His life, out of our self-made spheres, into the realm of His Kingdom. Frances knew that God was also calling her to work in a field in His Kingdom. She could choose to remain in the life she had made for herself. But the Lord was going somewhere. She could stay

behind, or go with Him. By the end of that three-year period, Frances was willing and able to sell the house and most of the household goods, leave family and friends, and answer the call to work in the overseas field of South Africa.

Bill

It was about 50 years ago that I surrendered myself and my life to the Lord. During the first year, something was established in my heart that has very much governed the major decisions in my life ever since – namely, embracing the idea of being called to a vocation, as opposed to “making a living” through an occupation. For the next 50 years, this served to govern where I lived, where I fellowshiped, and touched on all the details that go into making a life.

I remember while reflecting specifically on my occupation as a teacher in the government schools at the time, I purposed in my heart that I would rather choose to invest my time and talents into serving the Kingdom of God with my life. The Holy Spirit made particular Scriptures very clear to me:

- From the apostle Paul: “No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him.” 2 Timothy 2:4

- From the apostle John: "... the whole world lies in the power of the evil one." 1 John 5:19 And: "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world--the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions--is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever." 1 John 2:15-17
- From the apostle Peter: "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells." 2 Peter 3:10-13

"David served the purpose of God in his own generation."

Acts 13:36

It was clear to me that if scriptures like these were not shaping our view of life, then the Christianity we practice was different than that which the apostles received from Christ. I had purposed in my heart that I would not spend my life pursuing something in the world system which is passing away; but rather, I would give

my life for the Kingdom of Heaven and the eternal purposes of God. It was about 10 years later in South Africa that I first heard the words of this song:

*“I want to serve the purpose of God in my generation.
I want to serve the purpose of God while I am alive.
I want to give my life for something that will last forever.
Oh, I delight, I delight to do Your will.”¹²*

Extraordinary Things in the Lives of Ordinary People

Answering the Call of Christ dramatically changed the lives of the apostles we see in the gospels. It allowed God to do extraordinary things with the surrendered lives of ordinary people:

Peter, Andrew James, and John, as well as Thomas, and most likely Thaddaeus the son of James, were all fishermen by occupation. In fact, it is quite likely that all the apostles, with the exception of Matthew, who was a tax collector, and maybe Simon the Zealot, were fishermen by occupation. But in answering the Call of Christ all of them, except Judas, after Jesus’ ascension, traveled the whole of the known world as missionaries.¹³

¹² “I Want to Serve the Purpose of God in My Generation”, Mark Altrogge, (1982)

¹³ See Addendum

Now in this article, it has not my intention to belittle any occupation, nor unduly exalt the ministry of missionaries. My intention was two-fold: Firstly, I simply desired to point out the dramatic change that took place when the apostles – the “sent ones” - answered the Call of Christ. And secondly to communicate that God is in the business of doing **extraordinary things with the surrendered lives of ordinary people**.¹⁴ Frances and I have had a very rich life, but no season - before or after – can compare with the 13 years we spent in South Africa. Our season on the mission field was the apex of our lives.

¹⁴ Cf., “*Twelve Ordinary Men*” by John MacArthur (2006).

Addendum

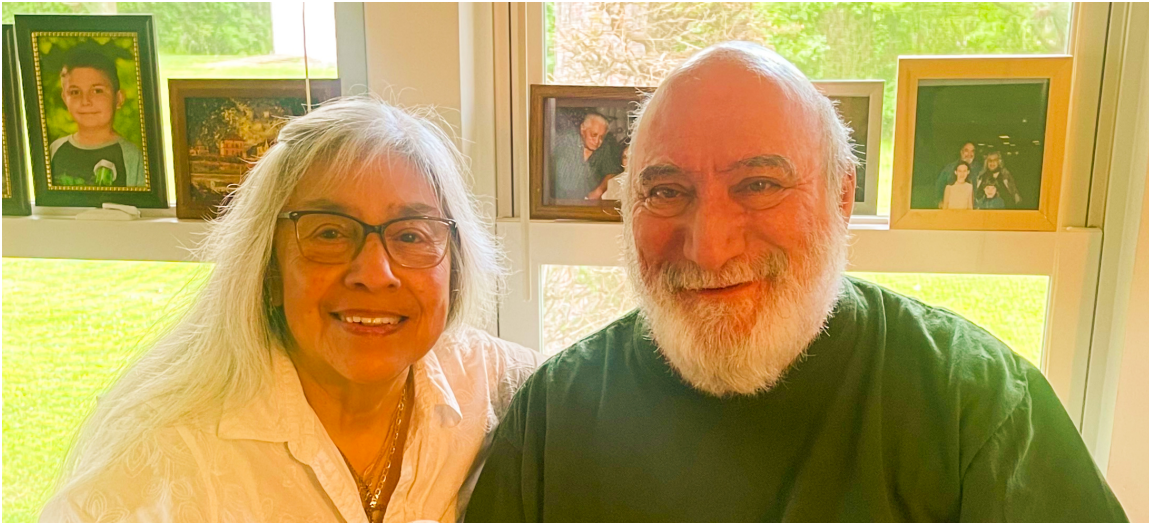
Who Were The Twelve?

(Matthew 10:2-4, Mark 3:16-19, Luke 6:13-16)

- [Simon](#) (Peter)
- [Andrew](#) (Peter's brother)
- [James](#) (Son of Zebedee)
- [John](#) (James' brother)
- [Philip](#)
- [Bartholomew](#)
- [Thomas](#)
- [Matthew](#) (the tax collector)
- [James](#) (Son of Alphaeus)
- Thaddaeus (Judas, son of James ([Luke 6:16](#)) / Lebbaeus ([Matthew 10:3](#)))
- [Simon](#) (The Zealot / The Canaanite Mark 3:18)
- [Judas](#) Iscariot / [Matthias](#) (replaced Judas Iscariot Acts 1:20-26)

If you are interested in learning more about what may have happened to the apostles after the events recorded in the Gospels and Acts – where they traveled and what kind of impact they had on the world, I suggest reading: *“The Search for the Twelve Apostles”* by [William Steuart McBirnie](#). Visiting biblical sites and researching ancient documents, legends, and local traditions, McBirnie developed overviews of their lives after answering the Call of Christ.

Bill & Frances Furioso
~ At Christ's Table ~



Bill Furioso and his wife, Frances, have been married for more than 40 years, and have two children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Bill and Frances served as missionaries in South Africa for thirteen years making disciples, establishing churches, and training church leaders. Over a span of 40 years, they also traveled extensively in an itinerant Bible teaching ministry which took them to hundreds of gatherings on four continents ministering in churches, conferences, spiritual formation seminars, and home gatherings. They have shepherded several churches, discipled many to Christ, and mentored church leaders in the USA and abroad.

Being an avid student by nature, Bill has done both formal and informal study in various fields including Education, Music, Philosophy and Theology. As a writer, he has authored many publications which are distributed worldwide. Because of Bill's disabilities resulting from a spinal cord injury, he can no longer travel, so their ministries of writing, recording, distributing, mentoring, and correspondence are now shared primarily via the Internet... www.AtChristsTable.org

ACTpublications

"Explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words." 1 Corinthians 2:13

A teaching ministry from Bill and Frances Furioso

At Christ's Table

Disciples of the King and His Kingdom eating and drinking of Jesus

THE HEAD

THE CENTER

THE FOUNDATION

of Biblical Christianity

with a view to

REVELATION of Christ

RELATIONSHIP with Christ

REFLECTION of Christ

READ-LISTEN-DOWNLOAD (FREE)

ALL OF OUR MINISTRY RESOURCES ON OUR WEBSITE:

<https://www.AtChristsTable.org>

Other places you will find our written & recorded resources ...

WRITTEN MESSAGES

The Restoration Library: <https://www.therestorationlibrary.com>

Academia.edu: <https://independent.academia.edu/WDFurioso>

RECORDED MESSAGES

YouTube: www.YouTube.com/user/BillFurioso

Academia.edu: <https://independent.academia.edu/WDFurioso>

SoundCloud: <https://soundcloud.com/user-648428572>

Spreaker: <https://www.spreaker.com/user/14502151>

SOCIAL MEDIA

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Called & Changed by Christ

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