

## Bible study notes: Apostles

The apostles were the foundation of the church, the Lord Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone:

- Ephesians 2:19-22 “Now therefore ye [the church at Ephesus and, by extrapolation, every local church under Christ] are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”
- 1 Corinthians 3:9-10 For we are labourers together with God: ye [“ye” is plural in the King James English; Thus, “ye here is the church at Corinth, to whom Paul is writing.] *are* God's husbandry, *ye are* God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

Acts 1:2: “Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen.”

The word **apostle**, = "one sent forth," is used of our Lord Heb 3:1: “Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;”. Elsewhere it is used for the twelve who were called to that office by our Lord during His earth ministry; of Paul, called to the apostleship by the risen and ascended Lord, and of Barnabas Ac 14:14 specially designated by the Holy Spirit Ac 13:2. Of Matthias, chosen by lot by the eleven to take the place of Judas Iscariot, Ac 1:16-26: "And he was numbered with the eleven." Ac 1:26.

The "signs" of an apostle were:

- (1) They were chosen directly by the Lord Himself, or, as in the case of Barnabas, by the Holy Spirit Mt 10:1-2; Mr 3:13-14; Lu 6:13; Ac 9:6; 13:2; 22:10,14-15; Ro 1:1
- (2) They were endued with sign gifts, miraculous powers which were the divine credentials of their office Mt 10:1; Ac 5:15; 16:16-18; 1+1">Mt 28:8-9.
- (3) Their relation to the kingdom was that of heralds, announcing to Israel only Mt 10:5-6 the kingdom as at hand. Cmt. on Mt 4:17 and manifesting kingdom powers Mt 10:7-8.
- (4) To one of them, Peter, the keys of the kingdom of heaven, viewed as the sphere of Christian profession, as in Mat 13, were given Mt 16:19.
- (5) Their future relation to the king will be that of judges over the twelve tribes Mt 19:28.
- (6) Consequent upon the rejection of the kingdom, and the revelation of the mystery hid in God Mt 16:18; Eph 3:1-12 the Church, the apostolic office was invested with a new enduement, the baptism with the Holy Spirit Ac 2:1-4 a new power, that of imparting the Spirit to Jewish-Christian believers; a new relation, that of foundation stones of the new temple Eph 2:20-22 and a new function, that of preaching the glad tidings of salvation through a crucified and risen Lord to Jew and gentile alike.
- (7) The indispensable qualification of an apostle was that he should have been an eye-witness of the resurrection Ac 1:22; 1Co 9:1.

See also, “Disciples.” Names of the 12: Mt. 10:2-4; Mk. 3.13-19; Luke 6.12-19.

(1 Cor. 4:9-21) The apostolic example of humility & patience. Apostles are made a spectacle unto the world, are fools for Christ's sake, weak, despised, hungry, thirsting, naked, buffeted, have no certain dwelling place, labour, reviled, persecuted defamed made as the filth of the world, are the offscouring of all things, etc. But there is such a thing as apostolic authority.

Matthew 10:2-:“2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The 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 publican; James *the son of* Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: 6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” John 1.35-51;

See McGee, *Ephesians*, pp 17-18: Paul states, "I am an apostle." An apostle is the highest office the church has ever had. No one today is an apostle because no one can meet the requirements. The requirements of an apostle are: (1) The apostles received their commission directly from the living lips of Jesus Christ. Paul made that claim for himself. He wrote, "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead" (Ga. 1.1). This is the reason Paul took the place of Judas, according to Dr. McGee. The disciples had selected Matthias, but one can find no where in the Bible that Jesus Christ made him an apostle. Apparently all the apostles received their commission directly from the Lord Jesus. (2) The apostles saw the Saviour after His resurrection. Paul could meet that requirement. (3) The apostles exercised a special inspiration. They expounded and wrote Scripture (See John 14.26; 16.13; Ga. 1.11, 12). Paul measures up to that more than any apostle. (4) They exercised supreme authority (Jn. 20.22, 23; 2 Co. 10.8). (5) The badge of authority was the power to work miracles (Mk. 6.13; Lk. 9.1, 2; Ac. 2.43). Such power is not invested in men today. That was the badge of an apostle. John wrote at the end of the first century, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed" (2 Jn. 10). The badge was no longer the ability to work miracles but having right doctrine. (6) They were given a universal commission to found churches (2 Co. 11.28).

See also, McGee, *Galatians*, pp. 13-15. In his well stated position, Paul, not Matthias, was an apostle; he argues that Paul, not Matthias, replaced Judas. Some disagree with this position (See, e.g. the teaching of Pastor Ben Hickam). This is not a matter for division.

Note. The “household of God, spoken in Ephesians 2:19, encompasses all who know the grace of God; and, in verses 20-22 progresses beyond their salvation into that of their being built upon the foundational doctrine of the apostles into the Lord’s local churches.

See also, “Biblical Apostles,” a Bible teaching by Pastor Ben Hickam.