

James the Less, Simon the Zealot, and Judas (Not Iscariot): The Emptiness of Worldly Fame and the Joy of Eternal Reward

(12) In these days he went out to the mountain to pray, and all night he continued in prayer to God. (13) And when day came, he called his disciples and chose from them twelve, whom he named apostles: (14) Simon, whom he named Peter, and Andrew his brother, and James and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, (15) and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot, (16) and Judas the son of James... (Luke 6:12-16)

(2) The names of the twelve apostles are these... James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; (4) Simon the Zealot... (Matt. 10:2-4)

(13) And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. (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 (15) and have authority to cast out demons. (16) He appointed the twelve... James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot... (Mark 3:13-18)

(21) Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him." (22) Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, "Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?" (23) Jesus answered him, "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. (John 14:21-23)

(14) And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. (Rev 21:14)

(12) Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. (13) And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. (14) All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. (Acts 1:12-14)

(40) There were also women looking on from a distance, among whom were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses... (Mark 15:40)

(1) When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. (Mark 16:1)

(14) And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax booth... (Mark 2:14)

1. Jesus does not need celebrities to endorse Him, He wants the committed and called to learn from Him and exalt Him.
2. Jesus unifies the most unlikely people to display His greatness and His Oneness with the Father.
3. Jesus uses the redirected strength, zeal, and passion of some, and the empowered tender heart, gentleness, and meekness of others.

Bottom Line: It's never about the person God uses, it's always about Christ living in and through the person.