



Paul or Matthias: Who Was the Real 12th Apostle? Contradiction Series

**Acts 1:21-22: (NASB) ²¹*Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us*
²²*...one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.***



For every Christian, Jesus is THE example, leader and fulfiller of our faith. We continually gain inspiration from his perfect example and unselfish sacrifice. When we think about a less-than-perfect Christian example, most of us go to the Apostle Peter or the Apostle Paul. Both men showed us how to achieve spiritual victory through imperfection. They both had failures, they both had regrets, they both had doubts, and yet they were faithful. These challenges endear them to our hearts and give us courage to work through our own imperfect experiences.

Knowing this, it can be hard to believe there are many who see the Apostle Paul as an interloper, one who hijacked the gospel message. These accusations begin with disregarding the authenticity of Paul's apostleship. They say Matthias, as a replacement for Judas, was appointed as the 12th Apostle long before Paul's conversion.

We started our four-part series on contradictions with things Paul said or did that require a second look:

[Ep.1111: Does the Apostle Paul Contradict Himself? \(Part I\)](#)

[Ep.1112: Does the Apostle Paul Contradict Himself? \(Part II\)](#)

This podcast is a special foundational program. There is much discussion within the Christian community as to whether or not Paul or Matthias was the rightful 12th Apostle.

Three common complaints about Paul:

1. Though he was a contemporary of the apostles, we have no record of him actually meeting the man Jesus.
2. All of Paul's theology comes from his own revelations or visions, so we have to take his word for it.
3. There is no written record of either God or Jesus confirming Paul's apostleship. We only have Paul himself saying he is an apostle and a claim written by his friend Luke in the book of Acts. The Bible never says Paul was the 12th Apostle, but it does say Matthias was.



**Pro-Matthias
Points**



CONTRADICTION -
or needing a
clear explanation?



How can Paul be
THE 12TH APOSTLE WHEN
MATTHIAS
was already chosen
to be Judas' replacement?

The meaning of apostle, Acts 1:12-26, Matthias Replaced Judas

- *Now, some of you think that Paul replaced Judas. Paul is one of the apostles, but you know the word apostle means “sent one.” So, yeah, we got the 12 chosen disciples, we got the 12 chosen apostles, but there are many other apostles. You know, by definition of the word, everybody that is sent of the Lord is an apostle. You can say Isaiah was an apostle of the Lord. You can say Moses was an apostle of the Lord. Just because Paul calls himself an apostle doesn't mean that he's one of the 12.*

He brings up a valid point. There are 24 “apostles” listed in the New Testament:

1. Simon Peter (Matthew 10:2, Luke 6:14)
2. Andrew, Peter's brother (Matthew 10:2, Luke 6:14)
3. James, son of Zebedee (Matthew 10:2, Luke 6:14)
4. John, James' brother (Matthew 10:2, Luke 6:14)
5. Philip (Matthew 10:3, Luke 6:14)
6. Bartholomew, Philip's brother (also known as Nathanael) (Matthew 10:3, Luke 6:14)
7. James, son of Alphaeus (Matthew 10:3, Luke 6:15)
8. Thaddaeus, James' brother (also called Judas and Lebbaeus) (Matthew 10:3, Luke 6:16)
9. Matthew, son of Alphaeus, perhaps brother of James and Judas (Mark 2:14; Luke 6:15)
10. Thomas (Matthew 10:3, Luke 6:15)
11. Simon the Zealot (also called Simon the Canaanite) (Matthew 10:4, Luke 6:15)
12. Judas Iscariot (Matthew 10:4, Luke 6:16)
13. Matthias (Acts 1:26)
14. Barnabas (Acts 13:1,2; Acts 14:4,14)
15. Andronicus (Romans 16:7)
16. Junia (Romans 16:7)
17. Apollos (1 Corinthians chapters 3-4, specifically 4:6-9)
18. James, the Lord's brother (Galatians 1:19)
19. Silas (also known as Silvanus) (1 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:6)
20. Timothy (1 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Thessalonians 2:6)
21. Titus (2 Corinthians 8:23)
22. Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25)
23. Paul (Galatians 1:1; Galatians 2:8)
24. Jesus Christ (Hebrews 3:1)

All of these are called *apostles*, but they are not what Revelation 21:14 refers to as the *twelve apostles of the Lamb*. So, maybe Paul fits into this OTHER category of apostles?



Pro-Matthias Point:
Maybe Paul was just
a “regular” apostle?



This is the only event recorded during the ten days between Jesus' ascension and Pentecost. All 11 remaining apostles are there, as well as disciples:

Acts 1:15-17,20-26: (NASB) ¹⁵At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said, ¹⁶Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the holy spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. ¹⁷For he was counted among us and received his share in this ministry. ²⁰For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his homestead be made desolate, and let no one dwell in it (quoting from [Psalm 69:25](#)) and let another man take his office (quoting from [Psalm 109:8](#)).

(*****How did Peter know these particular Psalms were prophecies about Judas?** More on this on page 8.)

Peter stood up and told them it was prophesied that Judas would fall away and should be replaced.

²¹Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us - ²²beginning with the baptism of John until the day that he was taken up from us - one of these must become a **witness <3144>** with us of his resurrection. ²³So they put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus), and Matthias. ²⁴And they prayed and said, You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵to occupy this ministry and **apostleship <651>** from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place. ²⁶And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

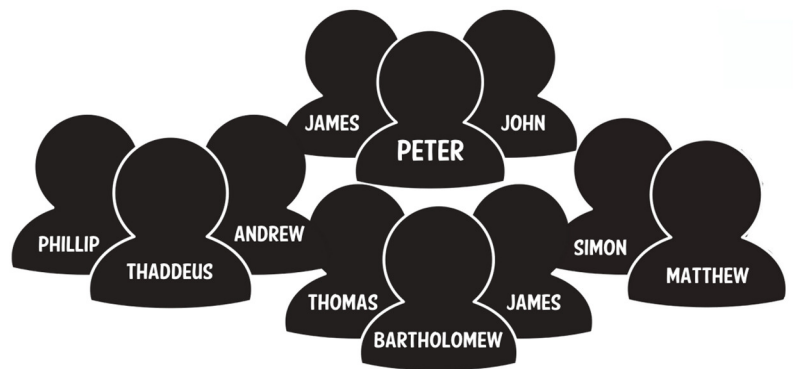
Witness: Strongs #3144 *martus*; of uncertain affinity; a witness (literally [judicially] or figuratively); by analogy, a "martyr"

Apostleship: Strongs #651 *apostole*; commission, i.e. (specifically) apostolate

The number 12 was important to the Jewish people because of the 12 Tribes of Israel.



Pro-Matthias Point:
Acts 1:26 states
Matthias was added
to the eleven.



- Peter led the decision to find a 12th Apostle to fill a necessary and prophesied void.
- They looked for one who had been with Jesus throughout his entire ministry. But not all of them would have met this requirement, including Peter himself.
- They looked for one who would be a *witness* to Jesus' resurrection, and who would be a *minister and apostle*.
- They prayerfully and sincerely cast lots for an answer.
- Matthias was chosen: *and he was added to the eleven apostles*.



(Source: Biblical Commentary by Albert Barnes) Casting lots was common among the Jews on important and difficult occasions, and it was natural that the apostles should resort to this. Thus, David divided the priests by lot, 1 Chronicles 24:5. The land of Canaan was divided by lot, Numbers 26:55, Joshua 15:1-17:18.

(Please see the **Bonus Material** for other examples listed.)



Pro-Paul Point:

The resurrected Jesus personally called Paul. The choice of Matthias did not involve Jesus.

Christians who believe Matthias should NOT have been chosen in the first place point to the fact that the resurrected Jesus personally called Paul; therefore, Paul was clearly meant to be the 12th Apostle who would “complete” the original group.

The main counterargument is there were about 120 brethren who all specifically prayed to God to reveal His choice in Acts 1:24,25. Peter said, *You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two you have chosen to occupy this ministry and apostleship.*



Pro-Matthias Point:
They prayed and cast lots, an approved Old Testament method to determine God's will. God did not say otherwise, so the choice stands.

Of course, they only “gave” the Lord two choices. They did not leave room for the answer to be “neither.”

Can we even hint at saying the apostles were wrong when they had a lot of Old Testament support?

To have integrity in observing this event, we need to acknowledge several resounding truths. First, all eleven apostles participated along with over 100 others. In the Old Testament, the casting of lots was often used to determine God's will. They were sincere and prayerful. How could this have been wrong?

Let's begin by looking for Jesus' instructions to them before his crucifixion:

John 14:25-26: (NASB) ²⁵*These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you.* ²⁶*But the helper, the holy spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he (it) will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.*

The holy spirit (God's influence and power) was in many ways a replacement for Jesus. He took great pains to explain that he was their guide, but the spirit would serve as a guide and as a reminder of his words when he was gone.

John 16:12-13: (The Concordant Bible) ¹²*Still much have I to say to you, but you are not able to bear it at present.* ¹³*Yet whenever that may be coming - the spirit of truth - it will be guiding you into all the truth, for it will not be speaking from itself, but whatsoever it should be hearing will it be speaking, and of what is coming will it be informing you.*

These verses are part of Jesus' last conversation with the apostles before he dies. This will mirror his last words before his ascension in Acts 1:8, which we will read shortly.

Jesus explicitly tells them: **WHEN THE SPIRIT COMES, THE GUIDANCE WILL START.** These were among Jesus' most important last words of encouragement to them before his crucifixion.





Trish: God told Abraham that he and Sarah would give birth to “the promised seed.” Because Sarah was barren, she gave Hagar to Abraham. When Ishmael was born, Abraham asked if Ishmael could be the seed. God said no. He did not condemn Abraham for asking. God even gave him a blessing. Is this a similar picture of someone running ahead and trying to fix God’s problem in a way God did not have in mind?

That is an excellent example.

It sounds like waiting until Pentecost before making any major decisions was the right thing to do, even if it might have seemed like choosing a replacement apostle should be done right away. But why NOT use casting lots as the interim until they DID receive the holy spirit?

This next audio clip suggests this thought.

 **Why they cast lots, Is Paul Supposed to be the 12th Apostle, New Life of Albany**

- *Yes, I think Matthias was in fact the 12th Apostle, and the disciples got it right. And the reason that they cast lots, and we don't cast lots today (even though a lot of people do, believe it or not) is because they had not received the holy ghost (spirit). Now the spirit is supposed to lead and guide you into all truth.*

Jesus breathed on them right before the Doubting Thomas account:

John 20:22,23: (NASB) ²²And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, Receive the holy spirit. ²³If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained.



Pro-Matthias Point:
While Pentecost had not yet occurred, they already received some measure of the holy spirit.

But did they really have some of the holy spirit at this point? We do not believe they did.

Here Jesus appeared during the 40 days after his crucifixion and before he ascended to heaven:

John 20:19-20: (NASB) ¹⁹...Peace be with you. ²⁰And when he had said this, he showed them both his hands and his side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹So, Jesus said to them again, Peace be with you; as the Father has sent me, I also send you.

Did they receive the holy spirit at that point? Christians have different perspectives on this, but we do not believe so. We think Jesus appeared to them and meant: I am GOING TO BE sending you out in a short time from now.

Long before this, here were the preaching instructions Jesus gave to the 12:

Matthew 10:5,6,16-18: (NASB) ...Do not go in the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans; ⁶but rather go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. ¹⁶...I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves ¹⁷But beware of men, for they will hand you over to the courts and scourge you in their synagogues; ¹⁸and you will even be brought before governors and kings for my sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles.



Verses 17 and 18 had not yet happened. This was a prophecy. Jesus meant: I am sending you out now as a picture of how you will be sent later.

He showed them what was going to happen after they received the spirit and were sent out later. They were told not to go anywhere for the ten days between the ascension and Pentecost.

For those who believe they DID receive a measure of the holy spirit in John 20:22,23 (and not that it was foreshadowing of what was to come, as in Matthew 10), note, it would have been limited to what is described in verse 23 - forgiving or retaining of sins. This had nothing to do with discerning the choice between Barsabbas or Matthias. This was a skill they would have and need after Pentecost.



Pro-Paul Point:

The measure of the holy spirit was a future foreshadowing of a skill they would have after Pentecost. Even if this was a present gift, it would have nothing to do with the choosing of Matthias.

Jesus, after he was raised and seen by his followers over a 40-day period, was again parting. He again instructs his disciples in a similar fashion to his pre-crucifixion teaching:

Acts 1:4-9: (KJV) ⁴And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. ⁵For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the holy spirit not many days hence.



They are told to WAIT. They were not yet being sent out.



John baptized Jesus with water.

The apostles would be baptized with the holy spirit.

Jesus' ministry did NOT start until he was baptized.

Their ministries did NOT start until they were baptized.

ACTS 1:5

Jesus continues and verifies the beginning of their mission. It starts with the spirit:

⁶When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? ⁷And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. ⁸But ye shall receive power, after that the holy spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be **witnesses <3144>** unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. ⁹And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.



But ye shall receive power, after that the holy spirit is come upon you - the obvious instruction from Jesus, both before his crucifixion and before his ascension, was WAIT for the spirit before you do anything.



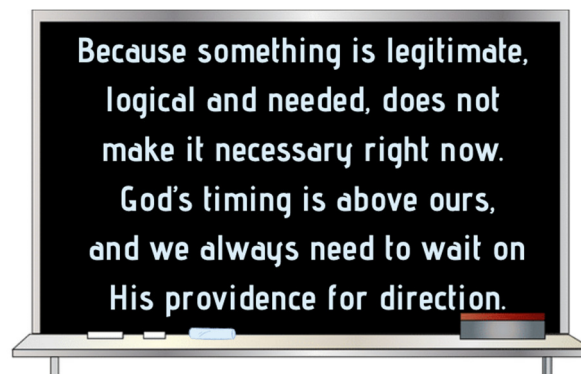
Pro-Paul Point:
They were clearly instructed to wait for the holy spirit before doing anything. Instead of waiting, they cast lots.

Peter is addressing an important need. But was his timing appropriate?

Acts 1:21-22: (NASB) ²¹Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us ²²...one of these must become a **witness <3144>** with us of his resurrection.

Peter needed to fulfill the obligation of becoming a witness, but Jesus was specific for them to wait for those ten days between his ascension and Pentecost.

This story reminds us of King Saul and David. There was a lag in time between when David was anointed and when he actually became king. Maybe Peter ran ahead before he should have because the 12th Apostle did not need to be picked at that time.



Because something is legitimate, logical and needed, does not make it necessary right now. God's timing is above ours, and we always need to wait on His providence for direction.

It is so important to be sure our spiritual footing is on the firm foundation of God's providence.

Were there practical differences between the call to discipleship and the call to apostleship?

To state that every apostle is a disciple but not every disciple is an apostle is a simple place to start. It is important to realize that Scripture tells us there were only 12 Jesus-appointed apostles. Jesus' earthly ministry and Revelation 21:14 both reflect this. Both Paul and Matthias cannot be the 12th Apostle.



Pro-Matthias Point:
Jesus did not call Paul an apostle; he called him a witness.

(Source: <https://www.jesuswordsonly.com/books/175-pauls-contradictions-of-jesus.html>) Excerpt: However, Paul repetitiously claimed he was an apostle. Yet, not once did Jesus ever call Paul an apostle, even by Luke's quotations taken from Paul's claims to his encounter with Jesus. Read for yourself Paul's vision accounts in Acts 9, 22 and 26. In these three accounts, the Jesus whom Paul met said Paul would be a "martus." That means "witness," not "apostolos" (messenger).



Is Paul just a *witness* and not an *apostle*? We need to understand how the calling works.

But first:

 **Jesus opened their eyes, Is Paul Supposed to be the 12th Apostle, New Life of Albany**

- ...Since Jesus, according to Luke 24, opened the eyes of the apostles that they could understand things, that the apostles didn't get it wrong by getting Matthias to be the 12th Apostle. Now, you might say even if they did, whatever they "bind on earth will be bound in heaven" whatever they "loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." But I just don't think they got it wrong.

Luke 24:45: (NASB) *Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,*

This audio clip misapplied the text. In context, the resurrected Jesus appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus. He vanished just as they started to recognize him.

Luke 24:27: (NASB) *Then beginning with Moses and the prophets, he explained to them the things concerning himself in all the Scriptures.*

Shortly thereafter, Jesus appeared to the 11:

Luke 24:44-45: (NASB) ⁴⁴*Now he said to them, These are my words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.* ⁴⁵*Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures,*

He did not open their minds to make decisions, to heal or to be able to forgive sins. ***This is where Peter got the ability to put the Psalms together during the casting of lots in Acts 1:15-17,20-26 we discussed in Segment 1.

Peter never quotes Scripture before this event. Jesus gave him the ability to understand the prophecies.

The "opening their minds" was specific to being able to discern the Old Testament writings as they related to Jesus.

Is Paul just a *witness* and not an *apostle*? We need to understand how the calling works. There is no record of anyone directly called to be an apostle - all were called to "discipleship." We do not have a record of how each apostle was called, but we do have precedent.

Peter was drawn to Jesus three times. The first was a prophesied name change, then twice Jesus said:

Matthew 4:18-19: (NASB) ¹⁸*Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen.* ¹⁹*And he said to them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.*

Matthew's calling:

Matthew 9:9: (NASB) *As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man called Matthew, sitting in the tax collector's booth; and he said to him, Follow me! And he got up and followed him.*



Phillip's calling:

John 1:43: (NASB) *The next day he purposed to go into Galilee, and he found Philip. And Jesus said to him, **Follow me**.*

The idea of *follow me* is a clear theme throughout all of Jesus' ministry to ALL potential disciples, even those who were not part of the 12:

Matthew 8:22: (NASB) *But Jesus said to him, **Follow me**, and allow the dead to bury their own dead.*

Matthew 16:24: (NASB) *Then Jesus said to his disciples, If anyone wishes to come after me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and **follow me**.*

Mark 10:21: (NASB) *Looking at him, Jesus felt a love for him and said to him, One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, **follow me**.*



Pro-Paul Point:

**It makes sense
Paul was *not* called
to be an apostle -
no one was!
All were called to
be followers.**

The only time Jesus calls the 12 Apostles by that name is when he collectively "named" all of them:

Luke 6:12-16: (NASB) ¹²*It was at this time that he went off to the mountain to pray, and he spent the whole night in prayer to God. ¹³And when day came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also named as **apostles** <652>: ¹⁴Simon, whom he also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James and John; and Philip and Bartholomew; ¹⁵and Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon who was called the Zealot; ¹⁶Judas the son of James (**Thaddeus**), and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.*

Apostles: Strong's #652 *apostolos*; a delegate; specifically, an ambassador of the gospel; officially a commissioner of Christ ("apostle") (with miraculous powers)

There was a definitive naming process done quietly and privately.



How did Jesus not know Judas would betray him? If he had called 1,000 apostles and one turned out bad, those odds seem better than 1 in 12. Was Jesus' judgment off?

The Old Testament Scriptures the Apostle Peter quotes in Acts 1:17 gives us the answer. There are prophecies showing there would be a betrayal. Jesus knew there would be a betrayal, but did not know who that would be when he chose his apostles.

Who became a traitor - this tells us Judas started out with a good character. He had the ability and potential to rise up to the call, but they all had free will. Judas' passion for money grew stronger until it corrupted him.



Referring to Jesus, Hebrews 4:15 tells us he understands our infirmities and was tempted in all things like we are, yet without sin. One of the hardest human experiences to go through is betrayal. It was necessary for Jesus to experience this from a close friend. We get the sense it was supposed to happen, all within the plan and providence of God.

The Apostle Paul was not immediately named an apostle by Jesus. No one else was either. All the other followers were with him for a period of time; then at the right time, he appointed 12. Jesus only appointed 12 apostles. Others are called apostles, but they were sent out by other followers.

The seriousness of this “naming” is obvious. These 12 would become Christianity’s foundation.

As we examine all of the factors that influence our conclusions, we see how serious the matter of apostleship is.

Do Paul’s personal experiences in becoming a disciple and apostle fit in with what we have seen?

Here we need to pay close attention to the details because Paul’s experience in coming to Christ is vastly different than what we have seen. Up to this point, Jesus met potential followers half-way. He saw their lives and invited them. With Paul, Jesus stood in his way and challenged him.

Back to the example of the lag between the reign of King Saul and David. If David was anointed, how come he was not appointed king the next day? This is how God’s plan works. Sometimes there is an overlap in time or time passing slower than we would prefer.

Let’s remember the important pieces of the context.

Here is Jesus’ proclamation as to what will be happening once the spirit is working in them:

Acts 1:6-8: (KJV) ⁶When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? ⁷And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. ⁸But ye shall receive power, after that the holy spirit is come upon you: and ye shall be **witnesses <3144>** unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

In the three accounts of Paul’s conversion in Acts 9, 22 and 26, Jesus said Paul would be a *witness*, not an *apostle*. But as we see above in Acts 1:8, so were all of the 12 Apostles! Paul was called under different circumstances but still to be a *witness* like the others.

Peter himself said they needed that 12th individual to be a specific kind of witness, just like Jesus said:

Acts 1:21-22: (NASB) ²¹Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us ²²...one of these must become a **witness <3144>** with us of his resurrection.



Strict requirements, Acts 1:12-26, Matthias Replaced Judas

- *There were strict requirements to be part of the 12. You had to have been with Jesus from John the Baptist until the resurrection and until this point in time in history. Paul wasn't there, okay. He was not qualified.*



Pro-Matthias Point:
Peter's requirements
for the position
eliminated Paul as a
possible candidate.

But many of the undisputed apostles were not with Jesus at his initial baptism, including Peter. Why would Peter make up qualifications for the 12th Apostle that he himself could not meet? We know Paul (Saul) was not there, so Paul would be disqualified. We presume both Barsabbas and Matthias met the qualifications.

The qualifications were not something God or Jesus required from the 12. For example, Matthew was a tax collector. He was not there at the beginning of Jesus' ministry - he was working.



Pro-Paul Point:
Peter's requirements,
though well-meaning,
were not instituted by
God or Jesus.

However, we have to deeply appreciate the intensity and sincerity of Peter. He just went through the painful learning experience of his own denial of Jesus. He watched Judas betray Jesus. He needed to be sure they would choose someone who had already proven their reliability, even when they did not think they were being tested. They could be sure this new person would stay the course and glorify God. There is no hint of pride in this procedure of casting lots.

Jesus said *follow me* to the other apostles. What did he say to Paul?

Acts 26:14-18: (NASB) ¹⁴And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew dialect, Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads. ¹⁵And I said, Who are You, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. ¹⁶But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a **minister** <5257> and a **witness** <3144> not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you; ¹⁷rescuing you from the Jewish people and from the Gentiles, to whom I am sending you, ¹⁸to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in me.

Minister: Strongs #5257 *huperetes*; a derivative of *eresso* (to row); an under-oarsman, i.e. (genitive case) subordinate (assistant, sexton, constable)



Why didn't Jesus just say *follow me* like with the others? When Jesus was literally standing in front of the others while he was a man, he could say something like: Follow me to Galilee, and I want you to walk with me.
Or: We will go here, here and here, and I want you to come with me.



Now that Jesus had ascended to heaven, no one could physically follow him. “Following” would now mean being subordinate to his direction. We are to be like an under-oarsman. This is the same as following him, except he is spiritual and we are earthly. The context of following was no longer physical.

To be a minister is to be subordinate, which by definition means to follow:

Luke 1:1-2: (NASB) *¹Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, ²just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants <5257> of the word,*

Servants here is the same word previously translated as *minister*, meaning “under-oarsman,” referring to those who worked hard to verify the word and keep it sacred.

Jesus never directly told Paul: “You are the 12th Apostle!”

But Paul was called to do exactly the same as the others. He may have been called later, but he was not out of the context of what Jesus’ work was about.

Jesus never directly told Matthias: “You are the 12th Apostle!” In fact, Jesus had nothing to do with the choosing of Matthias. Jesus appointed every apostle, as they were “his” apostles. Using a traditional Old Testament method of choice, taking Jesus out of the picture, was not the right path.

To be a *witness* is to exactly fulfill what Jesus required before his ascension. This is how the Apostle Paul was described.

For Paul to be designated to go to the Gentiles is also precisely what Jesus required. Here is Jesus speaking to a third-party witness, Ananias:

Acts 9:15-16: (NASB) *¹⁵But the Lord said to him, Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine, to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel (Paul did all of this); ¹⁶for I will show him how much he must suffer for my name’s sake.*



Pro-Paul Point:
Jesus chose Paul;
he did not choose
Matthias.

He is a chosen instrument - As a former Pharisee, Paul knew the Law, he had prestigious training, he had zeal and courage. He was the perfect choice but needed to be developed and prove his worthiness. He was called to be a disciple before he was an apostle. He was a diamond in the rough.

Paul was clearly directed to represent Christ to the Gentile world. Ananias was a witness to the words of Jesus. It cannot be a coincidence that Paul, as a convert, is described exactly the way the other apostles were.

What about the matter of being a witness?
Paul did not actually see what the eleven apostles saw.

One of the most faith-strengthening aspects of being so particular about grasping scriptural truth is we often find answers in several different accounts. This verifies authenticity. If you were trying to deceive someone, you would conveniently and obviously line all your evidence upfront.

CONTRADICTION -
or needing a
clear explanation?



Did Paul himself admit
he was NOT
one of the 12?

Critics say Paul admitted there were 12 apostles existing before him, and he is not one of them:

1 Corinthians 15:3-5: (NASB) ³For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵and that he appeared to Cephas (Peter), then *to the twelve*.

The argument: Paul is telling the story of how after the resurrection, Jesus appeared to various groups. Saying he appeared *then to the twelve* means Paul did not count himself as one of them. The 12 were established before Paul's conversion.

The answer: This event happened before Matthias was chosen. Matthias is not even one of the 12 at this point. Does this show Paul cannot count? Paul uses the phrase *the twelve* to recognize the only-appointed body by Jesus.

John uses that phrase which gives the sense they were called *the twelve* even when incomplete:

John 20:19, 24: (NASB) ¹⁹So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, Peace be with you. ²⁴But Thomas, *one of the twelve*, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

Thomas, one of the twelve - there was technically only 11 at this point, as Judas was gone. Jesus individually appointed 12 apostles. This is what they were called, whether they were all there or not.

Simply, Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:5 is likely quoting from John. Paul was not there when our resurrected Lord *appeared to Peter, then to the twelve*. Paul had to have heard the account from someone else - probably John or Peter. We cannot say Paul is writing himself out; rather, he is using the name of authority, the formal "title" of the group.

But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus - Thomas is and always would be one of the chosen 12, even when only 11 were assembled. It is like calling Barack Obama, "Mr. President." He is not the president of the United States anymore, but he still retains the title and always will.





A few verses later, the whole group was together when Jesus appears again. This is most likely the event Paul is quoting in 1 Corinthians 15:5:

John 20:26: (NASB) ²⁶*After eight days his disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, Peace be with you.*

Now that Jesus has been raised from the dead, he often says, *Peace be with you*, and no longer, *Follow me*. He calms them, as they need to wait for further instructions.

Paul quotes this event for a specific reason. He is showing how each of the apostles and many followers literally became *witnesses* of Jesus' resurrection.

Continuing in 1 Corinthians, Paul cites how Jesus further appeared during those 40 days:

1 Corinthians 15:8-10: (NASB) ⁸*and last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared to me also. ⁹For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain...*

- Jesus was raised from the dead.
- He appeared to the 11 and made them witnesses of his resurrection.
- He appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus and made him a witness as well.

Paul testifies that he, too, was a witness of the risen Lord just like the others.

Paul explains: I am a witness just like they were. Jesus treated me just like he treated them. You would think because I persecuted the church I would not even be fit to be called an apostle, but here we are! Jesus came to me, and I received my opportunity.

The argument: Couldn't Jesus have talked to Paul earlier and directly chosen him as one of the 12 apostles with the others?

The answer: *as to one untimely born* - implies he was too young to be chosen at that time. According to Acts 7:58, he was a young man at the stoning of Stephen.

The argument: We still do not have any direct Scripture that says Paul was appointed to be one of the 12 apostles.

But we have one for Matthias:

Acts 1:26: (NASB) *And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.*

The answer: Matthias was added...but by whom? By the ones who were running ahead of the Lord, doing what they were not authorized to do.

Paul describing his conversion to King Agrippa:

Acts 26:16: (NASB) *But get up and stand on your feet; for this purpose I have appeared to you, to appoint you a minister and a witness not only to the things which you have seen, but also to the things in which I will appear to you.*



Jesus told Paul this would not be the last visit. PERHAPS Jesus specifically told Paul in a vision that he was one of the 12. It is reasonable to assume Jesus was specific with him in the same way he was specific with the other eleven pillars of the Christian church.

The rest of the individuals in the New Testament called *apostles* (although not part of the 12 apostles) were sent out as messengers. This is an appropriate title. However, in 1 Peter 1:1 and 2 Peter 1:1, Peter specifically introduces himself as an *apostle of Jesus Christ*.

The only other person who calls himself an apostle in Scripture is Paul.

No one disputes Peter's apostleship, and Paul acknowledges this same title.

More evidence - the gifts:

After choosing the 12, these are the gifts Jesus bestows on them:

Matthew 10:8: (NASB) *Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons. Freely you received, freely give.*

What about Paul?

Acts 16:16-24: Paul cast out demons.

Acts 19:11-12: Paul had healing powers.

Acts 20:9-15: He raised a young man named Eutychus from the dead.

Acts 19:1-7: Paul laid hands on 12 disciples to receive the holy spirit and the gifts of the spirit, allowing them to do miraculous things.



Only the 12 apostles could pass on the gifts of the spirit. Someone receiving the gifts could not pass them on to someone else. Paul clearly was able to pass the gifts to others.

Paul acknowledged he is one of the 12:

1 Corinthians 1:1: (NASB) *Paul, called as an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God...*

What does Peter say about Paul?

2 Peter 3:14-16: (NASB) ¹⁴*Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless, ¹⁵and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you, ¹⁶as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.*

Peter says not to distort the writings of the Apostle Paul, and the Apostle Paul writes that he is an apostle. AMEN.

Final Conclusion:

The evidence overwhelmingly shows us that Paul was the 12th apostle of Christ.



Pro-Paul Conclusion:

- **Paul preaches like Peter**
- **Peter approves of Paul's work**
- **Jesus specifically approves of Paul**
- **Both Peter and Paul call themselves "apostles" in their writings**
- **Paul does things only apostles can do – passing on the gifts, raising the dead**
- **Paul is given visions**
- **Paul's work to advance the gospel is indisputable**

*So, who was the 12th Apostle - Paul or Matthias?
For Jonathan and Rick (and Julie) and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*



**Join us next week for our podcast on February 24, 2020
Ep. 1114: Did the Apostle Paul Contradict Jesus?**

Bonus Material

One who gains strength by overcoming obstacles possesses the only strength which can overcome adversity. — Albert Schweitzer



The two other accounts of Jesus appointing the 12 apostles:

Matthew 10:1-4: (NASB) ¹*Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness.* ²*Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; and James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; ⁴Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.*

Mark 3:13-19: (NASB) ¹³*And he went up on the mountain and summoned those whom he himself wanted, and they came to him.* ¹⁴*And he appointed twelve, so that they would be with him and that he could send them out to preach, ¹⁵and to have authority to cast out the demons.* ¹⁶*And he appointed the twelve: Simon (to whom he gave the name Peter), ¹⁷and James, the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James (to them he gave the name Boanerges, which means, Sons of Thunder); ¹⁸and Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Zealot; ¹⁹and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.*

Regarding the casting of lots (Acts 1:26):

(Source: Albert Barnes Commentary) Verse 26: And they gave forth their lots. Some have supposed that this means they voted. But to this interpretation there are insuperable objections.

1. The word lots — κληρους — is not used to express votes, or suffrage.

2. The expression; “the lot fell upon,” is not consistent with the notion of voting. It is commonly expressive of casting lots.

3. Casting lots was common among the Jews on important and difficult occasions, and it was natural that the apostles should resort to it in this. Thus David divided the priests by lot, 1 Chronicles 24:5. The land of Canaan was divided by lot, Numbers 26:55, Joshua 15:1-17:18. Jonathan, son of Saul, was detected as having violated his father's command, and as bringing calamity on the Israelites, by lot, 1 Samuel 14:41,42. Achan was detected by lot, Joshua 7:16-18. In these cases, the use of the lot was regarded as a solemn appeal to God, for his direct interference in cases which they could not themselves decide. Proverbs 16:33, “The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.” The choice of an apostle was an event of the same kind and was regarded as a solemn appeal to God for his direction and guidance in a case which the apostles could not determine. The manner in which this was done is not certainly known. The common mode of casting lots was to write the names of the persons on pieces of stone, wood, etc., and put them in one urn; and the name of the office, portion, etc., on others. These were then placed in an urn with other pieces of stone, etc., which were blank. The names were then drawn at random, and also the other pieces, and this determined the case. The casting of a lot is determined by laws of nature, as regularly as anything else. There is properly no chance in it. We do not know how a die may turn up; but this does not imply that it will turn up without any regard to rule, or at haphazard. We cannot trace the influences which may determine either this or that side to come up; but still it is done by regular and proper laws, and according to the circumstances of position, force, etc., in which it is cast. Still although it does not imply any special or miraculous interposition of Providence; though it may not be absolutely wrong, in cases which cannot otherwise be determined, to use the lot, yet it does not follow that it is proper often to make this appeal. Almost all cases of doubt can be determined more satisfactorily in some other way than by the lot.

The three drawing experiences of Peter:

John 1:35-43: (NASB) ³⁵*Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶and he looked at Jesus as he walked, and said, Behold, the Lamb of God!* ³⁷*The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.* ³⁸*And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, What do you seek? They said to him, Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are you staying? ³⁹He said to them, Come, and you will see. So they came and saw where he was staying; and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour. ⁴⁰One of the two*



who heard John speak and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, We have found the Messiah (which translated means Christ). ⁴²He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas (which is translated Peter). ⁴³The next day he purposed to go into Galilee, and he found Philip. And Jesus said to him, Follow me.

This next "calling" is between six months and one year later:

Matthew 4:18-22: (NASB) ¹⁸Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. ¹⁹And he said to them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. ²⁰Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹Going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them. ²²Immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed him.

Peter's final call - this one is the keeper:

Luke 5:1-11: (NASB) ¹Now it happened that while the crowd was pressing around him and listening to the word of God, he was standing by the lake of Gennesaret; ²and he saw two boats lying at the edge of the lake; but the fishermen had gotten out of them and were washing their nets. ³And he got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little way from the land. And he sat down and began teaching the people from the boat. ⁴When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, Put out into the deep water and let down your nets for a catch. ⁵Simon answered and said, Master, we worked hard all night and caught nothing, but I will do as you say and let down the nets. ⁶When they had done this, they enclosed a great quantity of fish, and their nets began to break; ⁷so they signaled to their partners in the other boat for them to come and help them. And they came and filled both of the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸But when Simon Peter saw that, he fell down at Jesus' feet, saying, Go away from me Lord, for I am a sinful man! ⁹For amazement had seized him and all his companions because of the catch of fish which they had taken; ¹⁰and so also were James and John, sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, Do not fear, from now on you will be catching men. ¹¹When they had brought their boats to land, they left everything and followed Him.

We contrast what they "left behind" here to what they had earlier - now it says they left everything.

All uses of the phrase *the eleven* in the New Testament:

Matthew 28:16: (KJV) Then the **eleven <1733>** disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

Mark 16:14: (KJV) Afterward he appeared unto the **eleven <1733>** as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

Luke 24:9: (KJV) And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the **eleven <1733>**, and to all the rest.

Luke 24:33: (KJV) And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the **eleven <1733>** gathered together, and them that were with them,

Acts 1:26: (KJV) And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the **eleven <1733>** apostles.

Acts 2:14: (KJV) But Peter, standing up with the **eleven <1733>**, lifted up his voice, and said unto them, Ye men of Judaea, and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, be this known unto you, and hearken to my words



All uses of *the twelve* in the New Testament:

Matthew 10:2: (KJV) *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;*

Matthew 19:28: (KJV) *And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

Matthew 20:17: (KJV) *And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,*

Matthew 26:14: (KJV) *Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,*

Matthew 26:20: (KJV) *Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.*

Matthew 26:47: (KJV) *And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.*

Mark 4:10: (KJV) *And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.*

Mark 6:7: (KJV) *And he called unto him the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;*

Mark 19:3-5: (KJV) *And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all.*

Mark 10:32: (KJV) *And they were in the way going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him,*

Mark 11:11: (KJV) *And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.*

Mark 14:10: (KJV) *And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests, to betray him unto them.*

Mark 14:17: (KJV) *And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.*

Mark 14:20: (KJV) *And he answered and said unto them, It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish.*

Mark 14:43: (KJV) *And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.*

Luke 8:1: (KJV) *And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him,*

Luke 9:12: (KJV) *And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place.*

Luke 18:31: (KJV) *Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the son of man shall be accomplished.*



Luke 22:3: (KJV) *Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.*

Luke 22:14: (KJV) *And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.*

Luke 22:30: (KJV) *That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

Luke 22:47: (KJV) *And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.*

John 6:67: (KJV) *Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?*

John 6:71: (KJV) *He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.*

John 20:24: (KJV) *But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.*

Acts 6:2: (KJV) *Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.*

Acts 7:8: (KJV) *And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat the twelve patriarchs.*

1 Corinthians 15:5: (KJV) *And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve:*

James 1:1: (KJV) *James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting.*

Revelation 21:12: (KJV) *And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.*

Revelation 21:14: (KJV) *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

