



“Power & Celebration” Luke 10:18-20

“Jesus Sends Out
The Seventy-Two” by
James Tissot

In October 2021 this particular series “The Call” Luke 10:1-24 was laid on my heart. It was a challenge to fulfill the mission of Christ in the world. Part of this is seeing the need in the world around us. Another part is being willing to serve where Christ has called us. While a 3rd part is understanding what is really important in the mission. Finally, I want us to look at the glory we have been given in Jesus Christ.

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Jesus Exhorting His Twelve Apostles – James Tissot. The intensity of Jesus’ teaching is captured in this painting.



A profoundly troubling thought is that Judas Iscariot was one of the 12 Apostles, not because he betrayed Jesus or that he was an embezzler as John’s gospel indicated. Men of great stature politically and religiously have often been betrayed by close associates. Most identity theft is perpetrated by close family members, so Judas embezzled funds from the ministry’s treasury was not surprising.

Luke 10:18-20 [ESV]

17 The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!"

18 And he said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. 19 Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. 20 Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

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Apostolic Succession was a doctrine that seems to have developed during the 2nd Christian century in opposition to the growth of the Christian gnostic movement. It was weaponized during the great schisms of the church in the 5th and 9th centuries. It was reinterpreted by the the Protestant movement to apply to the era of New Testament Scripture.

Isaiah 14:12-15 [ESV] *Luke 10:18*

12 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Day Star, son of Dawn! How you are cut down to the ground, you who laid the nations low!

13 You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; above the stars of God I will set my throne on high; I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far reaches of the north;

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.'

15 But you are brought down to Sheol, to the far reaches of the pit.



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This is the earliest depiction of the Apostles seated in authority with Christ it is from the Domitillia Catacomb [1st-4th centuries] and dates to around 350. The use of the Chi Rho is among the earliest depictions in Christian art.

One of the problems of this doctrine as it tended to develop was that it focused on the 12 Apostles to the exclusion of a broader ministry of apostles in the 1st century. There were at least 75 [Barnabas, James ½ brother of Jesus and Paul were added after the Resurrection] and may have been as large as 500 [1 Corinthians 15:6] plus 1 [Paul].

Psalm 91:13 [ESV] *Luke 10:19*

9 Because you have made the LORD your dwelling place — the Most High, who is my refuge —

10 no evil shall be allowed to befall you, no plague come near your tent.

11 For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.

12 On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.

13 You will tread on the lion and the adder; the young lion and the serpent you will trample underfoot.

14 "Because he holds fast to me in love, I will deliver him; I will protect him, because he knows my name.

15 When he calls to me, I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will rescue him and honor him.

16 With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation."



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Paul, John and Peter in their letters and the Revelation indicate that the expansion of the gospel message so rapidly during the first 40 years of the Church’s existence was due to the work of the apostles. These apostles were empowered with authority and special spiritual gifts to revolutionize the world.

Luke 9:1-2 [ESV]

1 And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, 2 and he sent them out to proclaim

Matthew 10:1 [ESV]

1 And he called to him his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every affliction.

Mark 6:7-8 [ESV]

7 And he called the twelve and began to send them out two by two, and gave them authority over the unclean spirits. 8 He charged them to take nothing for their journey except a staff — no bread, no bag, no money in their belts — 9 but to wear sandals and not put on two tunics.



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It is hard to understand nearly 2000 years later how profound a difference was made in the world by Jesus’ commissioning of the apostles. These people were directly empowered and endowed as Jesus Christ’s personal representatives in the world. This is why an apostle’s credentials were to be carefully examined as both Paul and John indicate in the New Testament.

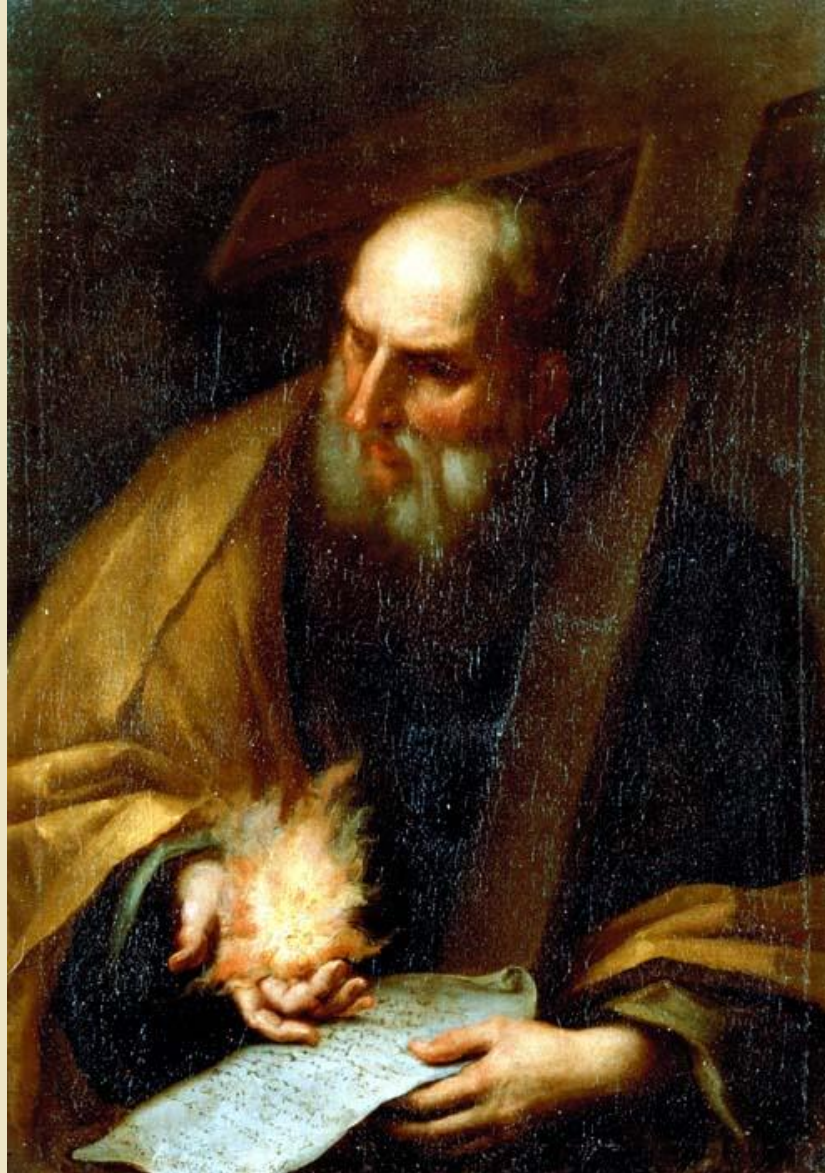
Matthew 7:21-23 [ESV] *Luke 10:20*

- 21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.
- 22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?'
- 23 And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

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Luke 10:18-20

Apostleship became a deeply desired authority in the early church as indicated in Acts 4:32-5:11 & 8:5-25. In both of these accounts the people involved are attempting to enter apostleship in the early Church.



Anonimo lombardo, S. Barnaba, evangelizzatore di Milano, XVIII sec., Quadreria Arcivesc., Milano

Saint Barnabas by Anonimo
Lombardo 1458-1516

Acts 4:33 [ESV]

33 And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.

.... Acts 4:36-5:4 [ESV]

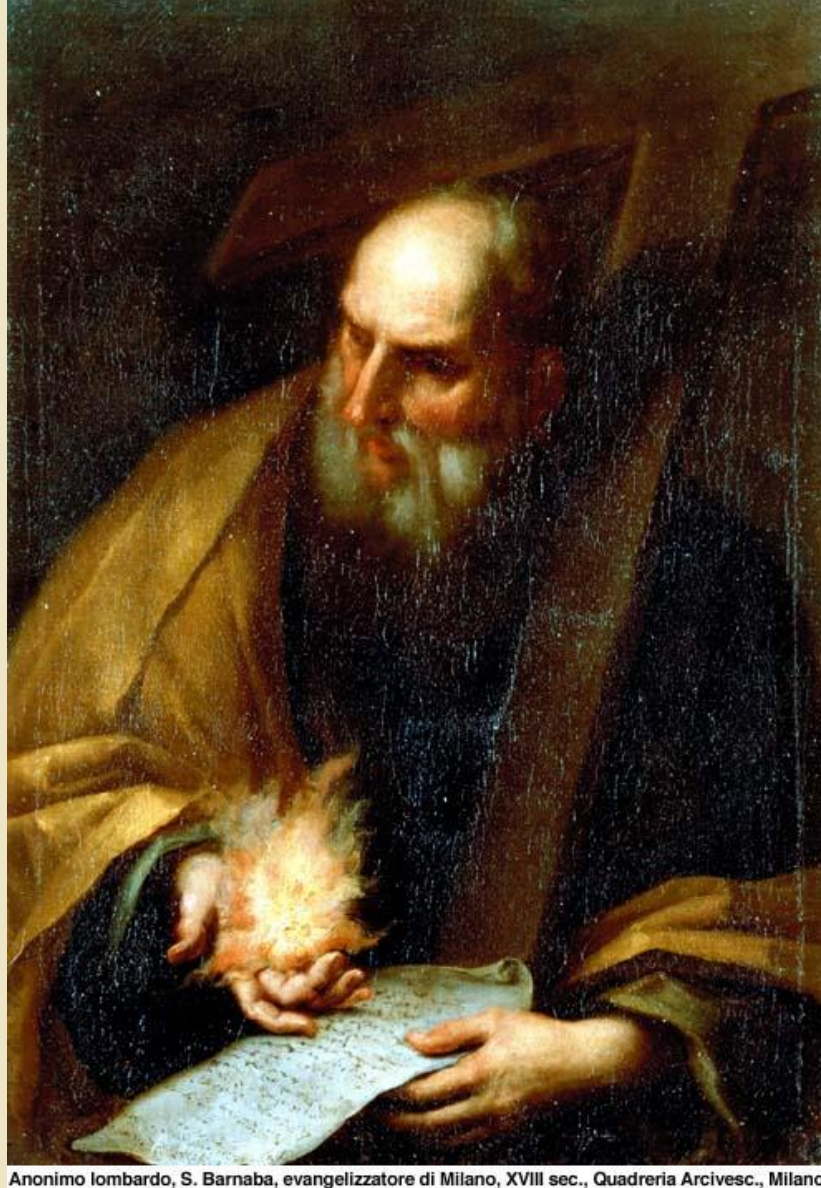
36 Thus Joseph, who was also called by the apostles Barnabas (which means son of encouragement), a Levite, a native of Cyprus,

37 sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. 5:1 But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, 2 and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? 4 While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God."

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One requirement of an apostle was that he give up all worldly resources including all property. He must live the rest of his life in service to the Christian community. Beyond basic living expenses, needs and personal defense, he was to be expected to give all other proceeds away. He was not allowed to own a house, business or other income generating resources, his provisions were to be dependent on the generosity of the Christian community or his own manual labor.



Anonimo lombardo, S. Barnaba, evangelizzatore di Milano, XVIII sec., Quadreria Arcivesc., Milano

Saint Barnabas by Anonimo
Lombardo 1458-1516

Acts 8:18-21 [ESV]

18 Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money,

19 saying, "Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit."

20 But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!

21 You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God.



Apostle Paul by Peter Paul
Rubens 1577-1640

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In Acts 8 we have a man who was used to having prestige due to his ability to produce wonders. Simon the Sorcerer attempts to buy Apostolic power to improve his status in Samaria. Many people desire spiritual manifestations and power to prove their worth and value in the Church. Paul would say that the role of Apostle was a thankless role which often ended in humiliation, abuse and death [1 Corinthians 4:9]. Peter’s response to Simon was a stark reminder that spiritual power is for service not aggrandizement.

1 Corinthians 15:8-9 [ESV]

5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.

8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

9 For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

11 Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

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Apostle Paul by Peter Paul
Rubens 1577-1640

In addition, an apostle must have a direct commission from Jesus Christ. This is why Paul tells the Corinthians [1 Corinthians 15:8] he was an apostle “born out of due season”, because he was not present when Jesus had directly commissioned his other apostles. Paul appeals for his apostolic authority to the direct commission from Jesus on the road to Damascus and the “signs of an apostle”. He indicates special powers given to the apostles when Jesus sent them out. The Church leaders examined apostles’ credentials based on these criterion. [Revelation 2:2]

2 Corinthians 12:11-13 [ESV]

11 I have been a fool! You forced me to it, for I ought to have been commended by you. For I was not at all inferior to these super-apostles, even though I am nothing.

12 The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with utmost patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works.

13 For in what were you less favored than the rest of the churches, except that I myself did not burden you? Forgive me this wrong!

Acts 2:43 [ESV]

43 And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles.

Acts 5:12 [ESV]

12 Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon's Portico.

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Jesus indicated to his apostles that spiritual experience and power was not the most important thing in their lives. The most important thing was that their names were enrolled in the book of life. A distinction that they shared with other Christians.

Judas wanted power, wealth and position. He would become the anti-type of an apostle. During the middle ages they began to designate him with a dark or black halo indicating dark intentions. Paul in 1 Corinthians 11 uses his betrayal as a reflection on attitudes of those who are “guilty” of violating the meaning and purpose of the Lord’s Supper.

Judas Iscariot window from the Church of John The Baptist, Yeovil, UK built around 1480. Notice the black halo around his head it represents evil spiritual influence.



1 Corinthians 11:17-34 [ESV]

Vv. 18-20

18 For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are **divisions among you**. And I believe it in part, 19 **for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized**. 20 When you come together, **it is not the Lord's supper that you eat**.

Vs. 23

23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night **when he was betrayed took bread**,...

Vv. 27-29

27 Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an **unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord**. 28 **Let a person examine himself**, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. 29 For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.

Vs. 33

33 So then, my brothers, when you come together to eat, **wait for one another —**

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Judas would not grasp this reality, to him position, power and opportunity was more important than the free gift of salvation and the blessing of service.

When we look at spiritual gifts and positions of authority as an end in themselves rather than an opportunity to further the gospel message then we will betray Jesus.

***Judas Iscariot** window from the Church of John The Baptist, Yeovil, UK built around 1480. Notice the black halo around his head it represents evil spiritual influence.*



2 Corinthians 12:7-10 [ESV]

7 So to keep me from becoming **conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations**, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. 8 Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. 9 But he said to me, "**My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.**" Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 **For the sake of Christ**, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

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Apostle Paul by Peter Paul
Rubens 1577-1640

Paul in many ways seems to have had a similar personality and upbringing to Judas. According to tradition Judas came from a well to do Pharisee family. He was likely skilled at business and probably felt himself superior to most of the other disciples.

Paul had such an upbringing. But he tells the Corinthians that God had allowed him to see the very depth of his shortcomings and so guard him against conceit. As Christians we do not rejoice in spiritual power, manifestations, positions or experiences. We celebrate Christ's gift of salvation in each of us.