

## APOSTLE / DISCIPLE

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An APOSTLE is an ambassador of the Gospel, basically a teacher.

A DISCIPLE is a pupil, a student, a follower.

Jesus chose an original 'inner circle' of twelve disciples, who were themselves to 'make disciples' i.e. followers of 'all nations' (see Matthew 28:18-20). Thus there would eventually be many disciples of Jesus.

The term *apostollos* in the Greek from which we get our word Apostle literally means 'one sent forth.' This is close to the meaning above. Apparently both terms were used while Jesus was on the earth.

### **Luke 6:13 (King James Version)**

*13 And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;*

The term apostle came to be exclusively used after the Ascension of Jesus. Peter in the Christian assembly gave the qualifications for an apostle as a preliminary to the choice of the replacement for Judas.

### **Acts 1:21-22 (King James Version)**

*21 Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.*

The term apostle was also applied to Paul, who, although he did not meet the above qualifications, was personally set apart as an apostle to the Gentiles by Christ himself. The so-called 'apostolic age' ended when the last one died around 100AD and of course, there could be no more as Jesus had left the earth.

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## The Names of the Twelve

Listed in 4 places in [The Bible](#) (Matthew 10:2-4, Mark 3:16-19, Luke 6:12-19, Acts 1:13) with some minor differences due to the various uses of first, family, or nicknames at different times.

**Simon.** - More generally known as [Peter](#). The brother of Andrew. A fisherman from the Sea of Galilee. Considered to be the most impulsive of the group, always ready to speak up, and swing a sword on occasion (e.g. the cutting off of a man's ear at the time of Jesus' arrest - see [The Fateful Night](#)). Some traditions hold that he was eventually crucified, upside down, by the Romans. There has been a very long debate as to whether or not he was actually the first pope.

**Andrew.** - He was active in bringing people to Jesus, including his brother Peter.

**James.** - [James](#) was the older brother of John. He was the first of The Twelve to be martyred.

**John.** - John managed to live to old age because (apart from caring for Mary who was likely not more than age 50 at the time of The Crucifixion) he had yet more writing to do. While banished to the island of Patmos, after having already written the Gospel of John (of which Mary would have been a very good source of information), he was given to write the Book of Revelation.

**Philip.** - From Bethsaida, as were Andrew and Peter. Eventually martyred, possibly at Hierapolis.

**Bartholomew.** He was one of the disciples to whom Jesus appeared at the Sea of Tiberias after His resurrection. He was also a witness of the Ascension.

**Thomas.** He was also called Didymus which is the Greek version of his name. Not easily convinced, he has the nickname "Doubting Thomas." He wanted to actually see and touch Jesus after His Resurrection. Certainly a good witness for us today, because he wanted indisputable proof of what he was expected to report about, *and he got it.*

**Matthew.** Formerly a tax-collector at Capernaum, he became one of the more prominent apostles.

**James.** Known as James the Younger, or James the Less, he wrote the epistle which bears his name.

**Thaddaeus.** Also known as "Judas the brother of James;" while John probably referring to the same person, speaks of "Judas, not Iscariot."

**Simon the Zealot.** The Zealots were a nationalistic sect with very strong political views. There seemed to be a wide variety of personalities among the apostles.

**Judas Iscariot.** The traitor.

**Matthias.** To bring the number back up to twelve after Judas fell away, Matthias was chosen by the remaining eleven apostles.

The Bible does not record what happened to all of the apostles, however there are other references to their activities. Some are rather fanciful, while some are more trustworthy. From those sources, a general consensus has been established among historians.

From the information that we have, it is very likely that John was the only one of the original Twelve Apostles to escape martyrdom, at least at an early age. After he wrote the book of Revelation, while a prisoner of the Romans (see Ancient Empires - Rome), even he too may then have been killed.

**John The Baptist** - John The Baptist was beheaded by Herod. (Matthew 14:1-12) (see Herod The Great and The Herods)

**Stephen** - The account of Stephen is very well documented in the Bible (Acts chapters 6 and 7). He is generally regarded as the first Christian martyr.

It has been estimated that about 2,000 Christians, along with Nicanor, one of the seven deacons (Acts 6:5), also suffered martyrdom during the great persecution that arose after Stephen (Acts 8:1).

**James, the brother of John** - James was "put to death with the sword" by King Herod (Acts 12:2)

**Philip** - Reportedly suffered martyrdom at Heliopolis, in Phrygia. He was severely flogged, imprisoned, and later crucified.

**Matthew** - The former tax collector, he was killed with a halberd (a pike fitted with an ax head) in Nadabah.

**James** - Stoned and clubbed to death in Jerusalem.

**Matthias** - He was stoned, then beheaded at Jerusalem.

**Andrew, the brother of Peter** - He was crucified on an X-shaped cross, two ends of which were in the ground. Hence the origin of the term, "St. Andrew's Cross".

**Mark** - Mark was reportedly torn to pieces by a mob in Alexandria after he told them that their god, a statue carved from stone, was worthless (see Images and Idols).

**Peter** - Peter was reportedly crucified, upside down, during the reign of Emperor Nero.

**Paul** - Beheaded, or torn to pieces by wild animals in the arena, during the time of Nero.

**Jude** - The brother of James, often called Thaddeus. He was crucified at Edessa.

**Bartholomew** - Tortured and crucified in India.

**Thomas** - Thomas was reportedly killed with a spear in India.

**Luke** - Luke was the author of the Gospel which is called by his name, and also probably the Book Of Acts. One account states that he died of old age, while another says that he was hanged in an olive tree in Greece.

**Simon the Zealot** - He traveled widely, and is believed to have been crucified in what is today Britain.

**John** - John took care of Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ (not the mother of God), after the Crucifixion (John 19:26-27). He went on to write the Book of Revelation while a prisoner on Patmos. He may be the only apostle who escaped a violent death.

**Barnabas** - Barnabas is believed to have been killed about 10 years after Paul.