

The Church of Christ

Called, Chosen, Commissioned, Consecrated

You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain ... John 15:16

3A : CALLED TO HEAVEN -- OR TO SERVICE? (1:13-20)

I:13 Why were the apostles called? (Mark 3:14,15; 2 Cor.5:20)

I:14 Account for not only the apostles being of one accord, but even Christ's family (cf. Mark 3:21; John 7:5)

... for the moment let us concentrate on the concept of "fellowship" Strangely enough, the word occurs only once in Acts (2:42), although it is the dominant theme of the entire book. The Greek word is *koinonia* and may be translated "fellowship, communion, communication, distribution," and in several other ways. The noun form occurs nineteen times in the New Testament ... The root meaning of the word is the idea of "oneness" ... We shall see oneness in the "communion of saints" from the Communion Table to common every-day life. -- **W.S. LaSor**, *Church Alive* p.32

I:15-20 How does Peter reason on Judas' calling? (Matt.22:14; John 6:64-70; 13:18)

There was awe in Peter's voice as he described the traitor as the guide of the arresting band, although he had been numbered with the apostles and had obtained part in their ministry. It was as though Peter felt that it might have been himself. He and the rest had stood at the brink of the precipice over which Judas had flung himself. -- **F.B. Meyer**, *Bible Commentary* p.483

3B: THE SPECIAL COMMISSION OF AN APOSTLE (1:21-26)

I:21-22 Itemize the qualifications of an apostle (10:37-42)

In Peter's declaration that one must be "ordained to be a witness with" them, we learn precisely the apostles' conception of their own office. They had something specifically different from the rest of the one hundred and twenty, and from all others, but that difference did not consist in lordship. While all were to some extent witnesses to the truth, the twelve were chosen and qualified witnesses of the resurrection. They were instrumentally founders of the church in truth, but not its rulers. And whatever may

have been the power of the keys, that power could not transcend this -- their own definition of their office -- witnesses. -- **J.M. Stifler**, *An Introduction to the Study of The Acts of the Apostles* p.13

There is a difference between being builded into the holy temple, which is the habitation of God through the Spirit, and being constituted a foundation, on which the future building is to rise at first and to rest forever. Such was the separate function of the Apostles of the Lord and Saviour, a function which they shared with the special messengers of God who went before them, and even with their Lord himself, -- "Ye are built on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the Chief cornerstone." The cornerstone is but part of the foundation. Though it be the first and the chief part; this consolidation the corner-stone with the adjacent foundations, as one basement to sustain the building, exhibits in the plainest manner the fact, that the Church, in respects of its faith, rests upon a testimony which was delivered, partly by Jesus Christ in person, and partly by the agents whom for that purpose he ordained. Their inspiration as believers associates them with the whole Church; their inspiration as teachers unites them only with their Lord. -- **T.D. Bernard**, *The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament* p.124

To that work there can be no successors, some of the Apostles were inspired to be writers of the authoritative foundations of religious truth; but that gift did not belong to them all, and was not the distinctive possession of the Twelve. The power of working miracles, and of communicating supernatural gifts, was not confined to them, but is found exercised by other believers, as well as by a whole 'presbytery.' And as for what was properly their task, and their qualifications, there can be no succession, for there is nothing to succeed to, but what cannot be transmitted -- the sight of the risen Saviour, and the witness to His Resurrection as a fact certified by their senses. -- **Alexander MacLaren**, *Expositions: Acts* p.33

I:23-26 Who chose Matthias for 'this ministry and apostleship' -- and when? (Eph.1:4-5)

The prayer of the disciples shews us the true aim of prayer. They did not pray to alter or direct the choice of the Lord, but that they might know his will. -- **Richard B. Rackham**, *The Acts of the Apostles: An Exposition* p.13

3C: THE PURPOSE OF POWER (2:1-13)

... anoint them, consecrate them, and sanctify them ... that they may minister to Me as priests ... -- Exodus 28:41 (ch.29-40 passim)

2:1-4 Whereas many have this passage memorized for reasons of their own, what significant symbolic detail seems to be forgotten?

The mere fact of *glossolalia* or any other ecstatic utterance is no evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit. In apostolic times it was necessary to provide criteria for deciding whether such utterances were of God or not, just as it had been necessary in OT times. -- **F.F. Bruce**, *Commentary on the Book of Acts* p.57

The tongue has 3 functions -- praise, prayer, prophesying; and by prophesying I do not

mean predicting. Predicting is a secondary element in prophesying. Prophesying is speaking forth the Word. The tongue is for praise, for prayer, for prophesying, and the fire shadowing the real thing is the emblem and the symbol of it ... I turn to the epistle of James. Go to the third chapter and notice these words -- I am reading at the fifth verse. "So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire!" The literal translation of that is, "Behold, how great a forest is set on fire by a small fire." Now listen. "And the tongue is a fire: the world of iniquity among our members is the tongue, which defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the wheel of nature, and is set on fire by hell" and hell there is not Hades, it is Gehenna. So your tongue is set on fire by hell -- or what? Well, go back here to the sixth chapter of Isaiah only for an illustration: "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord ... Then said I 'Woe is me, for I am undone'. ... Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal" -- a burning coal -- "... and he touched my mouth with it, and said, 'Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin forgiven.'" The tongue is always on fire either of heaven or hell. -- **G.Campbell Morgan, The Birth of the Church p.26**

Two symbols were given -- one appealing to hearing, and the other to seeing. The symbol of sound -- "a rushing mighty wind" the symbol of sight -- "tongues ... of fire" a plurality and a unity, the tongues were many, but the fire was One. These were but symbols, of no value save as signs for the moment. It is necessary to observe that fact, because there is always a hunger in the carnal heart for signs. These signs were material; to-day we do not need them; they were needed at the commencement. -- **G. Campbell Morgan, Acts of the Apostles p.22**

The gift of tongues was one of the miraculous gifts of the apostolic church and as such, together with other miraculous gifts, were its purpose in attesting the presence of the Spirit at a time when such attestation was needed. Hence it was transient and disappeared when the church grew to such proportions that its very presence and power attested the Spirit's presence within it. -- **R.C.H. Lenski, op.cit., p.63**

The Day of Pentecost is the opening of the second period of the New Testament dispensation. It stands alone, as does the day which now we call Christmas: the one the birthday of the Lord, the other the birthday of His Church; the one proclaimed by praises sung by hosts in heaven, the other by praises uttered in the various tongues of earth. -- **T.D. Bernard, op.cit., p.115**

2:5-13 Why is the gift of tongues so important, in Luke's view? (Luke 24:52,53)

The Corinthian glossolalia does not seem to have been quite the same as this, to judge from Paul's deprecating description of it (1 Cor. xiv.23). The effect of the Pentecostal glossolalia was better understanding on the part of the hearers; this does not appear to have been so at Corinth, nor is it so in many circles where the gifts of tongues is cultivated nowadays. -- **F.F. Bruce, Acts [Gk text] p.82**

The phenomenon could not have been the ecstatic psychological phenomenon manifested even among pagan devotees of emotional cults. Whether that type of utterance was the practise Paul sought to damp in Corinth, or whether that disordered church, in a polyglot community, was actually given to multilingual worship, is not clear ... The phenomenon of Pentecost seems to have been almost unique. It recurs at the "Gentile Pentecost" of Acts 10:46 and 19:6. Apart from the equally complex and difficult situation in Corinth, which finds a small place in the first epistle and demanded a ministry of interpreters, "glossolalia," as it is called, had small place in the early Church. It has no mention in the Gospels, save in Mark 16:17, in a brief passage which

conservative scholars, zealous for the authority and integrity of Scripture, generally believe was added to Mark. It finds no mention in Paul's letters, other than the one already quoted, no mention in Peter's, James', Jude's and John's writings. Such a situation forbids overemphasis for any position. -- **E.M. Blaiklock, Acts: The Birth of the Church p.23**

The passion that makes you desire gifts is not to be for the gift that blesses you, so much as for the gift that will help you to bless someone else. -- **G. Campbell Morgan, The Birth of the Church p.60**

We notice that, though S. Paul 'spoke with tongues more than all' the Corinthians, he does not set a high value on the gift of glossolaly. He ranks it last of the *charismata*, and apparently among *childish things*. for (1) it did not edify others. Rather (2) it tended to cause disorder in the church. (3) The fact that glossolaly lay in the spiritual, and not in the rational, sphere opened the door to dangerous confusion. Its phenomena might be counterfeited either by evil spirits, to whose operation the early Christians ascribed the miracles of paganism; or by religious imposters and charlatans, of which the world was then full. -- **Richard B. Rackham, op.cit., p.20**

... this fire of God, if it fall upon you, will burn up all your coldness, and will make you glow with enthusiasm, working you intellectual convictions in fire not in frost, making your creed a living power in your lives, and kindling you into a flame of earnest consecration ... Christians are to be set on fire of God. If the Spirit dwells in us, He will make us fiery like Himself, even as fire turns the wettest green-wood into fire ... Let each of us look at his own heart, and say whether there is any trace in his Christianity of the power of that Spirit who is fire. Is our religion flame or ice? ... The metaphor of fire suggests also -- purifying. 'The Spirit of burning' will burn the filth out of us. -- **Alexander MacLaren, op.cit., pp.53-54**