

## THE APOSTLES OF CHRIST MATTHIAS

After the fall of Judas, another disciple, Matthias, was selected to take his place. Peter considered the replacement of Judas a matter of prophecy as he quoted Psalm 69:25 saying, "Let another take his office" (Acts 1:20).

The qualifications Matthias had to meet to be an apostolic replacement are stated in Acts 1:21-22, "Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection."

It is likely the replacement for Judas would have been among the seventy disciples selected by Jesus to prepare cities for His arrival. Their qualifications would be consistent with those stated by Peter. Luke 10:1 says, "After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go." Eusebius, an uninspired historian writes, "The

names of the Savior's apostles are sufficiently obvious to everyone from his gospels; but of the seventy disciples, no catalogue is given anywhere...Matthias, who was numbered with the apostles in place of Judas, and he who had been honored to be a candidate with him, were also said to have been deemed worthy of the same calling with t h e s e v - enty" (*Ecclesiastical History*, Book 1, Chapter 12).

If it is true Matthias was one of the seventy it tells us a few things about his character.

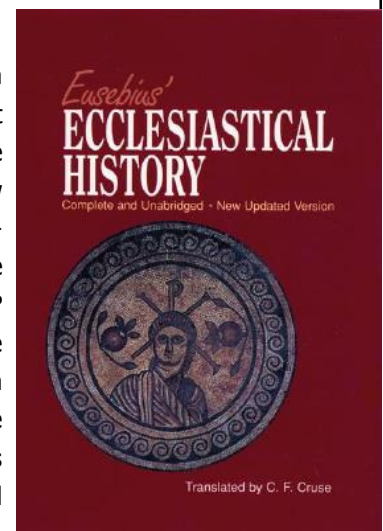
**First, he could be loyal without the highest recognition.** The Bible makes a distinction between the twelve apostles and the seventy. The twelve are named and experience the most intimate of conversations with Jesus. The twelve are not named and seem the second tier of disciples. Even so, all indications are the seventy did their work with great devotion and "returned with joy" after finishing the Lord's task (Luke 10:17). Some will only work if promised recognition. Real disciples serve regardless of earthly honor.

**Second, Matthias was familiar with evangelism.** Evangelism takes more than just preaching sermons from a pulpit. Among the seventy, it required prayer (Luke 10:2). Telling others the gospel demands we prepared for resistance and rejection (10:3, 10-16). Yet, despite such rejections it takes a person who approaches all people with optimism (10:5). Further, sharing the truth with others demands an ability to communicate and associate with people of varied backgrounds and classes (10:6-8). Since these qualities are seen among the seventy, Matthias must have possessed them. Beyond this, he must have excelled in his work to have been the one man selected for apostleship!

**Third, he was a reliable witness.** It would be foolish to choose an apostle who only knew Jesus after His resurrection. How would he be able to prove His death? Likewise, it would make little sense to choose a man who never heard the teaching, saw the miracles or could verify the fulfilled prophecies of Christ. For

this reason, it was of utmost importance to choose a witness who could verify the events beginning with John the Baptist continuing on through the ascension of Jesus Christ. God did not want the verifying witnesses for the Messiah to be of doubtful character or credibility. How could our own faith be solidified if their credibility could be called into question? Therefore, the stringent requirements for discipleship are noted in Acts not only for the sake of any who might call themselves an "apostle" but for our own faith in the high standards for the office itself! May we trust the eyewitness testimony of these apostles and believe in the One of whom they testify!

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