

# What Motivated the Apostles?

Sanford Beattie

7/19/2014

Who were the disciples of Jesus, and most particularly who were the 12 who were appointed to be the apostles? Were they merely ignorant Galileans plucked by Jesus out of obscurity? Were they religious, or seeking a religious life before being called? Or were they dragged into their calling against their will? And how did their ideas and upbringing influence their actions and reactions during the time they spent with Jesus during His ministry? Were the Jews looking for the Messiah? Why? And did this include the twelve? And who was the Messiah anyway?

Today we are going to discuss these questions, and perhaps learn a few lessons in the process.

(Mark 1:14-20 NKJV) "Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, (15) and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." (16) And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. (17) Then Jesus said to them, "Come after Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." (18) And immediately they left their nets and followed Him. (19) When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also *were* in the boat mending their nets. (20) And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him."

Does anybody else find this behavior a bit odd? Some guy wanders by a lake, finds some fishermen, tells them to follow Him, and they abandon their business and family and go after Him. The book of Luke helps us out a bit here in chapter 5 when it explains that He asked Simon to take the boat out a short ways so He could preach to the crowd, and then had them cast their nets to draw in a large quantity of fish.

(Luke 5:1-11 NKJV) "Now so it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, (2) and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing *their* nets. (3) Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. (4) Now when He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." (5) But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." (6) And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. (7) So they signaled to *their* partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. (8) When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" (9) For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; (10) and so also *were* James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." (11) So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him."

This demonstration of preaching and miraculous power at least gave some basis for dropping everything to follow Him. Luke also explains that this pair of brothers were business partners and knew each other quite well. Fortunately for us, one of these fishermen, John, wrote his own account of Jesus ministry, and filled in some of the back story. But before going to John's account, let's get a comment from Luke:

(Luke 3:15-18 NKJV) "Now as the people were in **expectation**, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the **Christ** or not, [why? 70 weeks prophecy of Daniel] (16) John answered, saying to *them* all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. (17) "His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire." (18) And with many other exhortations he preached to the people."

(John 1:19-25 NKJV) "Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" (20) He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the **Christ**." [John knew what they were wondering. He didn't even wait for them to ask.] (21) And they asked him, "What then? Are you **Elijah**?" He said, "I am not." [Didn't Jesus say he was? But there was a common misconception that Elijah himself would show up, and John was addressing that idea here.] "Are you the **Prophet**?" [who was the prophet? reference to Dt18? Some felt this was different than the Messiah] And he answered, "No." (22) Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?" (23) He said: "I *am* 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Make straight the way of the LORD," ' as the prophet Isaiah said." (24) Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees. (25) And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the **Christ**, nor **Elijah**, nor the **Prophet**?"

(John 1:26-34 NKJV) "John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. (27) "It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose." (28) These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing. (29) The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The **Lamb of God** who takes away the sin of the world! (30) "This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.' (31) "I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water." (32) And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. (33) "I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' (34) "And I have seen and testified that this is the **Son of God**." [the Son of God is equated with the Messiah. Several times in the new testament we read of this, and even at His trial, the high priest asked if He was Christ, the Son of God (Mat 26:63 NKJV) "But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to Him, "I adjure You by the living God that You tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God.""]

(John 1:35-39 NKJV) "Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. (36) And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the **Lamb of God**!" (37) The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. (38) Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?" (39) He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and **remained with Him that day** (now it was about the tenth hour)." [This gave them a chance to know Him a bit before the following events]

(John 1:40-51 NKJV) "One of the two who heard John *speak*, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. [This was well before the event in Mark, within the first six months of Jesus ministry. The other disciple was probably John, the often unnamed author of the gospel] (41) He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the **Messiah**" (which is translated, the Christ). [Andrew was not just a clueless fisherman. He was also a disciple of John the Baptist. He knew of the prophecies about the Messiah. This was a tremendously bold claim and profound discovery.] (42) And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).

(43) The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me." (44) Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. [Note the relationships that already existed between these men: four of them were two sets of brothers, and business partners. Philip was from the same town as two of them. And now he brings in a friend] (45) Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom **Moses** in the law, and also the prophets, wrote; Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." (46) And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." (47) Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" (48) Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." (49) Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the **Son of God!** You are the **King of Israel!**" [again, this was someone these people were looking for. They were familiar with the scriptures and the prophecies therein. There was a great expectation amongst any with a non-secular interest that the Messiah was due. Note also that Nathaniel equated the Prophet with the Messiah, as most seemed to.] (50) Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these." [and did that ever come to pass over the next 3 years of so] (51) And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the **Son of Man.**"

Jesus 1<sup>st</sup> Passover during His ministry occurs after this (Jn2:13), six months into Jesus' 3½ year ministry.

(John 2:19-22 NKJV) "Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (20) Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" (21) But He was speaking of the temple of His body. (22) Therefore, **when He had risen from the dead**, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said." [this was the first hint Jesus gave about what was to come, but note that the disciples who went with him to Jerusalem, probably including these 6 we just read about, didn't understand what he had said.]

It appears that after returning to Galilee the disciples went back to work. They had not yet made it their fulltime job to follow Jesus. But as that spring and summer wore on, there came that day we read about earlier in the gospel of Mark when Jesus came to them by the lake and invited them to follow Him. And there was no hesitation. This was the Messiah. This was the Son of God. This was the One who was going to establish the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Israel, and they were being invited to help do that very thing. At least the 4 fishermen accompanied Jesus on His first tour a Galilee. Others, like Matthew, may have been added as well, until about a year later when He finally selected the twelve, delivered the Sermon on the Mount, and started a second tour of Galilee.

And so we come to this story, which probably took place during the summer after the 2<sup>nd</sup> Passover of Jesus' ministry:

(Mark 4:35-41 NKJV) "On the same day, when evening had come, He said to them, "Let us cross over to the other side." (36) Now when they had left the multitude, they took Him along in the boat as He was. And other little boats were also with Him. (37) And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. (38) But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" (39) Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. (40) But He said to them, "Why are you so fearful? How *is it* that you have no faith?" (41) And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "**Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!**" [On the one hand, they believed this man to be the Messiah. They believed He was the Son of God. But it appears they did not fully understand just what that meant.]

The following is probably a bit before the 3<sup>rd</sup> Passover, a year before the crucifixion:

(Mat 9:35-38 NKJV) "And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. (36) But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. (37) Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly *is* plentiful, but the laborers *are* few. (38) "Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest." [and then He did just that]

(Mat 10:1 NKJV) "And when He had called His twelve disciples to *Him*, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease."

(Mat 10:5-8 NKJV) "These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. (6) "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (7) "And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' (8) "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, **raise the dead**, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

These 12 were now not only following the Messiah, the One who would set up the Kingdom of God, but now they were granted some of the same power this Messiah had exercised. They too were healing the sick, and even raising the dead. Mark's account:

(Mark 6:7 NKJV) "And He called the twelve *to Him*, and began to send them out two *by two*, and gave them power over unclean spirits."

(Mark 6:12-13 NKJV) "So they went out and preached that *people* should repent. (13) And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed *them*."

(Mark 6:30-31 NKJV) "Then the apostles gathered to Jesus and told Him all things, both what they had done and what they had taught. (31) And He said to them, "Come aside by yourselves to a deserted place and rest a while." For there were many coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat." [this resulted in feeding the 5000, let's switch to John's account]

(John 6:4 NKJV) "Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near." [3<sup>rd</sup> Passover]

(John 6:14-15 NKJV) "Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did [feeding the multitude], said, "This is truly the **Prophet** who is to come into the world." (15) Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to a mountain by Himself alone."

It was immediately after this (next morning) that He came walking to them on the water: (Mat 14:32-33 NKJV) "And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. (33) Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the **Son of God.**"

That day He preached to the multitudes about Him being the Bread of Life, which many found hard to understand:

(John 6:66-69 NKJV) "From that *time* many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. (67) Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" (68) Then Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. (69) "Also we have come to believe and know that **You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**"

Later that summer, less than a year before the crucifixion:

(Mark 8:27-33 NKJV) "Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, "Who do men say that I am?" (28) And they answered, "John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets." (29) He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" And Peter answered and said to Him, "**You are the Christ.**" (30) Then He charged them that they should tell no one about Him. (31) And **He began to teach them** that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. (32) He spoke this word openly. [although He had hinted at this in Jerusalem 2 years earlier, they hadn't gotten it then. And they didn't get it now] And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. (33) But when He had turned around and looked at His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, "Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

(Mark 9:1-10 NKJV) "And He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that there are some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom of God present with power." [this was indeed good news. Jesus was confirming that they would see the kingdom of God in their lifetime, wasn't He? They did not understand just how this would be fulfilled] (2) Now after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up on a high mountain apart by themselves; and He was **transfigured** before them. (3) His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them. (4) And Elijah appeared to them with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. [Luke explains what they talked about: (Luke 9:31 NKJV) "who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem."] (5) Then Peter answered and said to Jesus, "Rabbi, it is good for us to be here; and let us make three tabernacles: one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah"; (6) because he did not know what to say, for they were greatly afraid. (7) And a cloud came and overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "**This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!**" [quite a witness that they had gotten His identity correct] (8) Suddenly, when they had looked around, they saw no one anymore, but only Jesus with themselves. (9) Now as they came down from the mountain, He commanded them that they should tell no one the things they had seen, till the Son of Man had risen from the dead. (10) So they kept this word to themselves, **questioning what the rising from the dead meant.**"

It was very soon after that (maybe a few days), that Jesus again brought up the subject of His death (if you are trying to follow along, keep Mark open):

1. (Luke 9:43-50 NKJV) "And they were all amazed at the majesty of God. But while everyone marveled at all the things which Jesus did, He said to His disciples, (44) "Let these words sink down into your ears, for the Son of Man is about to be **delivered** into the hands of men." (45) **But they did not understand this saying**, and it was hidden from them so that they did not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this saying.

(Mark 9:30-32 NKJV) "Then they departed from there and passed through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know *it*. (31) For He taught His disciples and said to them, "The Son of Man is being delivered into the hands of men, and they will **kill** Him. And after He is killed, He will rise the third day." (32) But they did not understand this saying, and were afraid to ask Him." [But not only were they afraid to get clarification about being delivered into the hands of men, something about this triggered some other thoughts. If some did try to take Him by force, surely that would trigger the establishment of the Kingdom that was so much on their mind. And when that Kingdom was set up, what would each of them be doing:]

[Luke 9}(46) Then a **dispute** arose among them as to which of them would be greatest.

(Mark 9:33-34 NKJV) "Then He came to Capernaum. And when He was in the house He asked them, "What was it you disputed among yourselves on the road?" (34) But they kept silent, for on the road they had disputed among themselves who *would be the* greatest."

This is the first of 3 times the disciples are recorded as having disputed about and jostled for power. In every case, it is preceded by mention of Jesus suffering and death. Something about that subject triggered these thoughts. As Luke pointed out they didn't fully understand what He said, but to them, this meant the establishment of the kingdom. But also, every time this dispute arose, Jesus provided a lesson. A very similar lesson. As was often the case, Jesus did not rebuke them, but used it as a teaching tool instead. Matthew does not record the dispute, but he does say the subject came up:

(Mat 18:1 NKJV) "At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (Mat 18:2-4 NKJV) "And Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, (3) and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and **become as little children**, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. (4) "Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." [He didn't discourage them from wanting to be great in the Kingdom. Instead He told them how to do it.]

Back to Luke:

(47) And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him, (48) and said to them, "Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great." (49) Then John answered and said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow with us." (50) But Jesus said to him, "Do not forbid *him*, for he who is not against us is for us." [was John jealous?]

Six months or more later, within a month of the crucifixion, we encounter another event. Jesus has just finished telling them how hard it is for a rich man to get into the Kingdom:

2. (Luke 18:28-34 NKJV) "Then Peter said, "See, we have left all and followed You." (29) So He said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or parents or brothers or wife or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, (30) "who shall not receive many times more in this present time, and in the age to come everlasting life." [Matthew includes this additional statement: (**Mat** 19:28 NKJV) "So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." YES! Here was that promise of power again, and the opportunity to rule with Him] (31) Then He took the twelve aside and said to them, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be accomplished. (32) "For He will be **delivered** to the Gentiles and will be mocked and insulted and spit upon. (33) "And they will scourge *Him* and put Him to **death**. And the third day He will rise again." (34) But **they understood none of these things**; this saying was hidden from them, and they did not know the things which were spoken."

Luke ends his account there, but Matthew and Mark tell us what His words triggered:

(**Mat** 20:17-28 NKJV) "Then Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them, (18) "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, (19) "and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to **crucify**. And the third day He will rise again." (20) Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him. (21) And He said to her, "What do you wish?" She said to Him, "Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom." [Are they totally insensitive to what He just said? That He was going to be killed? As we just read again in Luke, they didn't understand this. Again I suggest it was not insensitivity; it was the reality of the Kingdom that triggered these thoughts. Jesus couldn't possibly be killed. They could not understand that. But they did understand the promise of ruling over Israel. And that they were going to Jerusalem. And that things were moving forward. And James and John were wanting to secure top spots in this Kingdom] (22) But Jesus answered and said, "You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" They said to Him, "We are able." (23) So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but *it is for those* for whom it is prepared by My Father." (24) And when the ten heard *it*, they were moved with **indignation** against the two brothers. [and then comes the lesson, not unlike what they got before with the little child] (25) But Jesus called them *to Himself* and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them. (26) "Yet it shall not be so among you; but **whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant**. (27) "And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave; (28) "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." [Do you want to have one of the top jobs in the Kingdom? This is how you do it.]

Only days later:

(Luke 19:11-28 NKJV) "Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because **they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately**. (12) Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. (13) "So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten **minas**, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' (14) "But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this *man* to reign over us.' (15) "And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. (16) "Then came the first, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned ten minas.' (17) "And he said to him, 'Well *done*, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.' (18) "And the second came, saying, 'Master, your mina has earned five minas.' (19) "Likewise he said to him, 'You also be over five cities.' (20) "And another came, saying, 'Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. (21) 'For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.' (22) "And he said to him, 'Out of your own mouth I will judge you, *you* wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. (23) 'Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?' (24) "And he said to those who stood by, 'Take the mina from him, and give *it* to him who has ten minas.' (25) ("But they said to him, 'Master, he has ten minas.')" (26) 'For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. (27) 'But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay *them* before me.'" (28) When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem."

(Luke 19:37-40 NKJV) "Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, (38) saying: " 'Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!' Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" (39) And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." (40) But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

What was going through the apostles minds as Jesus made this triumphal entry into Jerusalem? Dare I suggest that they too may have seen this as their triumphal entry? Was He now going to establish the Kingdom? They may have been wondering this a day or two later as they spoke to Him on the Mount of Olives:

(Mat 24:3 NKJV) "Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what *will be* the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"

Jesus proceeds to tell them of the signs of the end, and while we can look back over 2000 years and see the passage of time, and which to us seems clearly stated by him in both His prophecy and the parables that follow, apparently the apostles still didn't get it, as the events of the next few days seem to show. Because at the last supper, Jesus again addresses His impending capture. He had talked about being betrayed before. Now He tells them it will be one of them:

3. (Luke 22:21-30 NKJV) ""But behold, the hand of My betrayer *is* with Me on the table. (22) "And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" (23) Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing. [again with that betrayal, capture and death story, whatever that is about. But that will trigger the establishment of the Kingdom, won't it?] (24) **But there was also rivalry among them**, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. [a mention of the upcoming betrayal. Followed by another dispute. Followed by a similar lesson] (25) And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.' (26) "But not so *among* you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. (27) "For who *is* greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? *Is* it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves. [but then He adds:] (28) "But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. (29) "And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed *one* upon Me, (30) "that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.""

[Heady stuff. What they wanted was being promised to them again. They were going to rule with Him in the kingdom. But after all that was said, they didn't fully grasp the when.]

(Luke 22:31-38 NKJV) "And the Lord said, "Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift *you* as wheat. (32) "But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to *Me*, strengthen your brethren." (33) But he said to Him, "Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death." (34) Then He said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me." [(**Mat 26:35** NKJV) "Peter said to Him, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And so said all the disciples."] (35) And He said to them, "When I sent you without money bag, sack, and sandals, did you lack anything?" So they said, "Nothing." (36) Then He said to them, "But now, he who has a money bag, let him take *it*, and likewise a sack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. (37) "For I say to you that this which is written must still be accomplished in Me: 'And He was numbered with the transgressors.' For the things concerning Me have an end." (38) Then they said, "Lord, look, here *are* two swords." And He said to them, "It is enough.""

Was this it? Were they going to fight to take over the Kingdom? They felt they were ready. They would not deny the King, they had swords, and they were going forth from that upper room. In the garden of Gethsemane, a great multitude approached, with swords and staves, from the high priest.

(Mat 26:51-56 NKJV) "And suddenly, one of those *who were* with Jesus stretched out *his* hand and drew his sword, struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear. (52) Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword in its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. (53) "Or do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? (54) "How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?" (55) In that hour Jesus said to the multitudes, "Have you come out, as against a robber, with swords and clubs to take Me? I sat daily with you, teaching in the temple, and you did not seize Me. (56) "But all this was done that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled." Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled."

What was going on? Jesus did not let them fight. He did not pray for twelve legions of angels. This is not how it was supposed to be. And over the next few hours, the reality of this horror was played out, and the man they looked to as the Messiah was crucified and killed. A glimpse into their thinking was related by two other disciples just after His resurrection, on the road to Emmaus:

(Luke 24:21 NKJV) ""But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel ..."

But Jesus was alive again now, and He appeared to them many times over the next 40 days. Surely by now the twelve understood:

(Acts 1:6-8 NKJV) "Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You **at this time** restore the kingdom to Israel?" (7) And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. (8) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

The apostles were anxious to assume their positions in the Kingdom. But as the years went by, James was killed. The church was scattered. Then others began to die, often at the hands of men. They undoubtedly talked about the parables and statements of Jesus, and realized now that He had told them all these things, but they just hadn't gotten it yet. And Paul comforted them by saying:

(1 Th 4:13-18 NKJV) "But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. (14) For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. (15) For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that **we who are alive** *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. (16) For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. (17) Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. (18) Therefore comfort one another with these words."

And this has been the way it is for the last 2000 years, with His people wondering. "Lord, will You **at this time** restore the kingdom to Israel?" None of these people knew when the Kingdom would be established. They thought it would be in their lifetimes. The difference for us is that we know it will be in our lifetimes, don't we. And just like them, we too are anxious to see the Kingdom established on the earth, and take our positions in that Kingdom. But there are things they, and we, have to learn first, including how to be like little children and properly govern. And until we learn that, we will not be given those positions in God's Kingdom.