

The Community of Jesus Luke 6:12-16

1. Hook: Start the Conversation

Imagine you're tasked with picking a team to complete a world-changing mission, like exploring a new land or starting a movement. Who would you choose? Would you pick your best friends, the most skilled people, or a mix of unlikely individuals? Why? In today's passage, Jesus chooses a surprising group to build His church. Let's explore why and what this means for us.

Teacher Hint: For middle schoolers, use a relatable example like picking a team for a school project or a sports team to make the hook engaging. For high schoolers, connect it to real-world scenarios, like choosing people for a community service project, to spark deeper discussion.

2. Outline and Summary of Luke 6:12-16

Summary:

In Luke 6:12-16, Jesus retreats to a mountain to pray all night before choosing twelve disciples to be His apostles. This deliberate act mirrors the formation of Israel's twelve tribes in the Old Testament, signaling that Jesus is establishing a new covenant community—the church. The apostles, including unlikely figures like Matthew (a Roman collaborator) and Simon (a revolutionary Zealot), are not chosen for their qualifications but for God's mission to spread the gospel and reconcile enemies. This passage reveals Christianity as a Christ-formed community, commissioned to proclaim the gospel globally, and empowered to unite diverse people through Christ's reconciling work.

3. Discussion Questions

- 1. Why do you think Jesus spent all night praying before choosing His apostles? What does this teach us about the importance of prayer in making big decisions?**
 - Prayer doesn't give us "secret answers" to life's tough choices. Prayer ensures that we are going to God to rest in him as we make decisions rather than trusting in our own wisdom.
- 2. The apostles included people like Matthew (a tax collector) and Simon (a Zealot), who would have been enemies. Why do you think Jesus chose such different people to work together?**

- The gospel of Christ is all about reconciling enemies. First, God reconciles his enemies (sinners) to himself, and by joining them to the church, he reconciles sinful men and women to himself.
3. **The sermon says Christianity is a community on mission. What does it mean for us to be “on mission” in our daily lives?**
- **Application:** What's one way you can share Jesus' love with someone this week (e.g., at school, with family, or in your neighborhood)?
 - **Teacher Hint:** Middle schoolers may need concrete examples (e.g., inviting a friend to church). High schoolers can discuss broader ways to live missionally, like serving others or standing up for their faith.
4. **The church is described as a place where enemies are reconciled through the gospel. How have you seen or experienced forgiveness and reconciliation in your own life or church?**
- **Application:** Is there someone you need to forgive or make peace with? How can Jesus' example help you take that step?
 - **Teacher Hint:** Consider relationship dynamics for middle and high school students. For example: reconciling with friends, enemies, parents, etc.

Additional Teacher Hints

- **Middle School:** Use interactive activities to make the lesson engaging. For example, create a “team-building” game where students pick a diverse group for a pretend mission, then compare it to Jesus' choices. Use visuals (e.g., a map of the apostles' future mission fields) to show the global spread of the gospel.
- **High School:** Encourage critical thinking by connecting the passage to current events or cultural divisions. Ask students to reflect on how the church can be a unifying force today. Consider a short writing activity where students journal about how they can live “on mission” in their context.