

and his disciples. There were also ambitious. Other than the vengeful attribute of these men's zeal, there is really nothing wrong with being excited about what is going on in your life and ambition is a desired attribute of employees and leadership alike. What are your initial thoughts about what has been described as the vengeful zeal and excessive ambition of Christ's first disciples? What do you think about these attributes of members in the church today? Write your ideas here.

Thursday, August 3

I (Pastor Jack) used to put my name forward for consideration to go to our General Conference every four years when our Annual Conference here in Detroit elected delegates. I never won any of those elections; I've never joined a caucus or specific interest group but rather interacted with people, both laity and clergy from a wide diversity of race, gender, political views and theological beliefs. I was a little bit frustrated one year while running to be a delegate when I asked one of my colleagues who I deeply respected and thought had been a delegate in the past. I learned that he had never been a delegate to the General Conference nor had he run to be a delegate. I asked him why not and he simply responded that he wasn't called to go to General Conference. It was then that I decided that I wasn't really called to go to either. Ambition is a good thing but it must be directed with a clear sense of identity and call from God. What are your ambitions? Are they centered on your core beliefs and identity? Ponder these thoughts and write your reflections here.

Friday, August 4

Read Luke 9:51-56. We've talked about a certain zest for life and ambition by which to live. One of the things that may have resulted in James' early martyrdom was his anger-driven zeal, even if he had changed through his relationship with Jesus. Has anger ever derailed your best efforts? Think about that question and write your ideas here pray for a calm and loving spirit.

Message Notes – July 30, 2023

*The Twelve – James the Hothead**

- I. What we have are four fishermen, two sets of _____ who may actually have been in business together and for sure were fishermen in the same region.
 - A. James and John came from _____; they were _____ for their day.
 - B. James is never mentioned apart from his brother _____ in the Gospels.
 - C. It's a surprise however, that in the gospels' lists of the names of the disciples, James is mentioned _____ of John.
 - D. James the brother of John is sometimes called James the _____, James Senior or James _____.
 - E. James was a part of what is commonly called Jesus' _____ made up of Peter, James and John.
- II. Jesus called James and John "Sons of _____" as they also possessed a vengeful _____ and _____ toward those who opposed Jesus.
 - A. Being angry along with a vengeful spirit is never a _____ combination.
 - B. Most assuredly, James' hotheadedness played a _____ part in his life.
- III. Three episodes which identify James as one of the sons of thunder and how his predisposition led to his early _____.
 - A. The first episode comes from our scripture for this morning in Luke's Gospel – James' _____ zeal.

*Luke 9:51-56 and Mark 10:32-45

B. The second episode that sort of illustrates the hotheadedness of James is their _____ ambition.

C. So James the greater being the _____ brother and perhaps one of the more _____ disciples of Jesus becomes the hothead.

IV. The third and final element of James' life that indicates that he might deserve the nickname of hothead is the fact that he was the _____ of The Twelve.

A. Tradition says James made a voyage covering the entire Mediterranean, landing in _____ for a lengthy residence, where he founded many churches.

B. One symbol for James is scallop shells, representing his pilgrimage by _____.

C. There is also a pilgrim's staff indicating the _____ journey of James to Spain.

D. It is a great life lesson to let go of our _____ as we seek to be the people God created us to be.

Daily Devotional Guide

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, July 30

The message began by identifying the four brothers – two sets of two who were fishermen in the same area of the northern end of the Sea of Galilee and they were possibly business partners. Like

many of The Twelve, Andrew, Peter, James and John were ordinary, imperfect men. They were blue-collar working men in jobs that required physical ability and strength. They were people a lot like us! What attribute do you think they all possessed that we might share with them as people of faith? What drove them to follow Jesus? What hunger did Jesus satisfy within them the Jesus satisfies in each of us today? Think about these men as well as followers of Christ today. What commonalities do we possess that inspires our faith and our lifestyle? Write your thoughts here.

Tuesday, August 1

Read Mark 1:14-20. This passage is identified as the calling of Jesus' first disciples but it was not their first time meeting Jesus. It is likely that James and John (as well as Andrew and Peter) followed Jesus around the region, listening to him and marveling at his loving manner bringing healing and health to many in the region. In this passage we read that James and John left their nets immediately but the fact is they were already very aware of who Jesus was and what it would mean to follow him as one of his chosen twelve. In this passage we also meet the brothers' father, Zebedee. Their mother is Salome who was a sister of half-sister to Mary the mother of Jesus. So not only were James and John potential followers of Jesus, they were his cousins! The movement begun by Jesus was a family affair in some ways; remember that John the Baptist was Jesus Cousin also. Does your knowledge of these relationships change your view of Jesus and the beginning of the Christian faith? Meditate on that question and write your reflections here.

Wednesday, August 2

Read Mark 3:13-19. Jesus' nickname for James and John were "Sons of Thunder." They were impetuous and possessed a certain vengeful zeal toward anyone who opposed Jesus. They wanted to wipe out an entire village who would not offer hospitality to Jesus