

General Church Education



**Family Lesson: Mark 3**  
**The Twelve Apostles**

[Family Talk](#)      [Level 3](#)

[Level 1](#)              [Level 4](#)

[Level 2](#)              [Level 5](#)

**Family Lesson 31-C**

*The Twelve Apostles*  
*Mark 3*

**Family Talk**  
**THE TWELVE APOSTLES**

In Mark, Chapter 3, we see that from His disciples the Lord chose twelve that He would send forth to do His good work (verse 14). The twelve selected from the many disciples would be called apostles (Luke 6:13). For a disciple is a follower, and an apostle is one who is sent forth.

Let us for a moment picture what went before for these twelve who were now selected to be the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. Two of them, John and Andrew, had first met the Lord when they were followers of John the Baptist. When they saw the Lord, they did not know anything about Him, but John the Baptist pointed to Him and said, “Behold! the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29, 36). Those words must have affected them, for they began to follow the Lord. And they affect us, too. We think of the strong sphere of innocence that the Lord has and which has such a beautiful effect taking away what is wrong in the world. Indeed, each time we have a really happy time without any feelings of anger, or hatred, or ill-will to others, we should rejoice in the presence of the One who takes away the sin of the world.

We do not know what the Lord told those two young followers when they spent part of a day with Him, but it was enough that Andrew wanted to go and tell his brother Simon. And when Simon came to the Lord, it is said that the Lord looked at him. It is important to notice that the Lord looked at him, and then gave him a special name. For the Lord looks at all who are willing to follow Him, and knows just what their quality is. To Simon He gave the name of Peter, meaning the rock, or faith.

Next, the Lord found a disciple whose name means a lover of horses. This was Philip. Since a horse means an understanding of the Word, think of Philip as one who loves to learn. And he loved to tell others, for he went out and found another man to be a disciple. His name was Nathanael (sometimes called Bartholomew). It is said that Jesus saw this man Nathanael coming to Him, and said that he was a man in whom there was no guile. (John 1:47.) That means someone who is sincere and does not pretend to be what he is not. How surprised the man was to hear the Lord speak in this way. He said, “How do you know me?” (As we grow up, we come to realize how well the Lord knows us. And if we think about that disciple saying, “How do you know me?” we will really see ourselves.) Jesus told him that He had seen him even before Philip called Him. This gave those first few disciples an idea of the Lord’s knowledge of all people. And He said after this, “You shall see greater things than this.” And those five did see something soon, for they all attended a wedding where the Lord did the beginning of His miracles. He turned water to wine. By this miracle Jesus “manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him” (John

1:11). Manifesting glory means showing something of His wonderful power. Like someone seeing a flash of the sun's light within a cloud, the disciples then saw a flash of the Lord's inner glory, and they believed.

Something else they saw soon after that, they would not forget. They went with Him to Jerusalem, where He boldly went into the temple, and with a whip, drove out the moneychangers and overturned their tables. He did this with such force that it reminded the disciples of a Psalm about burning zeal for the house of God. (John 2:17.) To those who protested, Jesus then said, **"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."** But He was speaking of the temple of His body. And three years later, 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"** (John 2:22).

Some time after that, when the disciples urged the Lord to have something to eat, He said, **"I have food to eat of which you do not know"** (John 4:32). At first they said to each other, **"Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?"** But then He said, **"My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."**

When they came back into the land of Galilee, some of the disciples returned to their fishing, continuing this until the day that Jesus walked on the sea shore, first calling the brothers, Simon and Andrew. **"Come after Me, and I will make you become fishers of men. And immediately they left their nets and followed Him"** (Mark 1:18). When He had gone a little further, He saw John with his brother James in a boat, mending fish nets, and He called them to follow, too.

As those disciples followed, they saw the Lord do wonderful things. He commanded evil spirits to go away. He took the hand of Peter's wife's mother and made her well of her fever by the touch of His hand. They heard Him speak with power and saw crowds of people thronging to see Him.

Then another disciple was called, one who was not a fisherman. This was Matthew (or Levi). He had been sitting collecting taxes, and Jesus, as He passed by, simply said, **"Follow Me."** And he followed.

Up to now, you see, they had only been followers. But now Jesus chose twelve whom He would send forth. Thus they became not just followers, but doers and teachers. Those are the twelve that followed Him in the world. Those are the apostles that went and told the good news that He had brought into the world. Those are the apostles who established the Christian Church. Those are the twelve (several of whom died for their faith) who went to heaven, and centuries later were called together again by the Lord and sent to preach in the other world that the Lord Jesus Christ reigns.

## ***The Twelve Apostles***

### ***Mark 3***

#### **LEVEL 1 – THE LORD AND HIS APOSTLES**

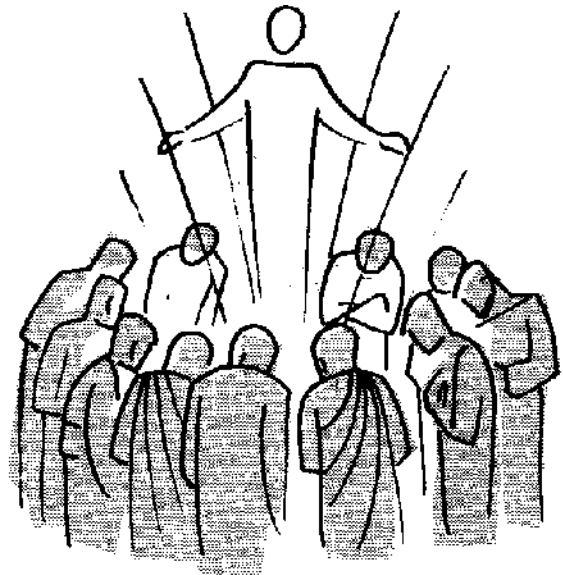


#### **Materials**

large (9" x 15") white paper

colored (11" x 17") paper to mount the drawing

1. Have your child draw a tall mountain with the Lord standing at the top. The figure of the Lord might be almost entirely shining light, created by strokes of yellow crayon radiating in all directions.
2. Then have your child choose twelve different crayon colors, one for each disciple, and draw the figures on the mountain. Remember, the figures may be mere scribbles, but in the child's eyes they will look fine.
3. Mount the picture on the enclosed 11" x 17" paper and display somewhere your home.



As he was blessing them (Lk.24.51)

## **The Twelve Apostles**

### **Mark 3**

## **LEVEL 2 – TWELVE APOSTLES MOBILE PROJECT**

The Lord called the twelve disciples to follow Him in the world. We can all be the Lord's disciples too. You can make a mobile to show that you, your family, and friends can all be His disciples.

### **DIRECTIONS**

A. Making the mobile frame:

#### **Things you will need:**

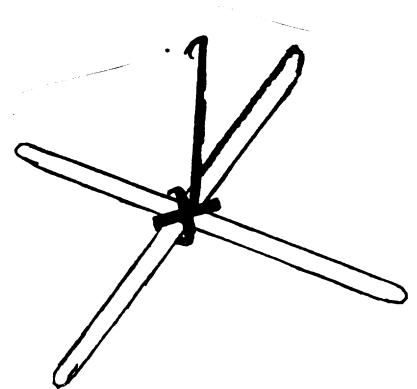
Scissors

String or yarn

2 sticks or dowels (dowels are inexpensive and can be purchased at hardware stores or building supply stores.)

Tie the crossed sticks together in the middle with string or yarn. Be sure to leave string to hang the mobile from the intersection.

Now the mobile is ready to have the picture sections tied to it.



B. Making the pictures:

1. Take the papers that are marked in four parts and draw a picture in each section. Draw yourself, your family and your friends on different sections.
2. Cut out each section along the lines.  
Write the name of each person on the back of your pictures.  
Write "Disciple of the Lord" under each name. (*You may need help with this.*)

C. Assembling the mobile

1. Make holes in the top of the pictures about 1/2" from the edge. Some clear tape across the hole will help to keep it from tearing.
2. Tie one end of a piece of string or yarn through the hole. Tie the other end to the crossed mobile sticks. The pictures will spin if hung at different levels.

O

O

O

O

## The Twelve Apostles

### Mark 3

#### LEVEL 3 – DISCIPLES OF THE LORD

You are going to make a mobile of the twelve men who had the privilege of being the Lord's disciples while He was in the world.



Later, the twelve became apostles for the Lord, helping to spread the WORD.

**“And they went out and preached everywhere.”**

We can all be disciples of the Lord if we listen to His teachings and obey His commandments.

#### **DIRECTIONS for MOBILE PROJECT**

A. Making the mobile frame:

##### **Things you will need:**

Scissors

String or yarn

2 sticks or dowels (*dowels can be purchased inexpensively at hardware stores*)

Tie the crossed sticks together in the middle with string or yarn. Be sure to leave string to hang the mobile from the intersection.

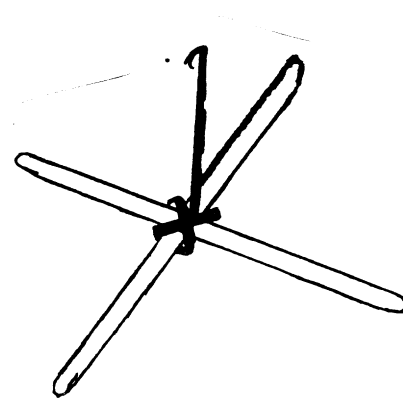
Now the mobile is ready to have the picture sections tied to it.

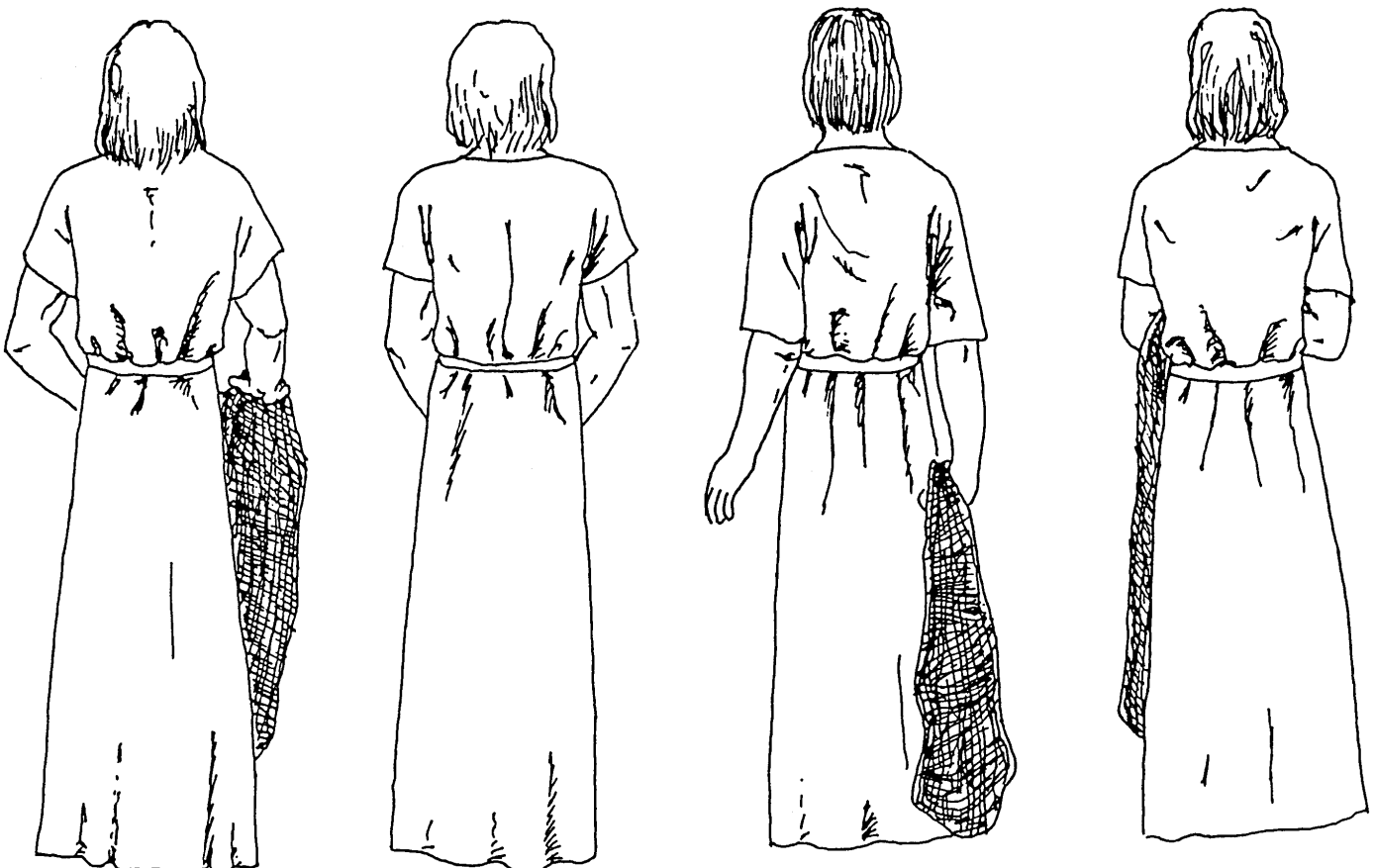
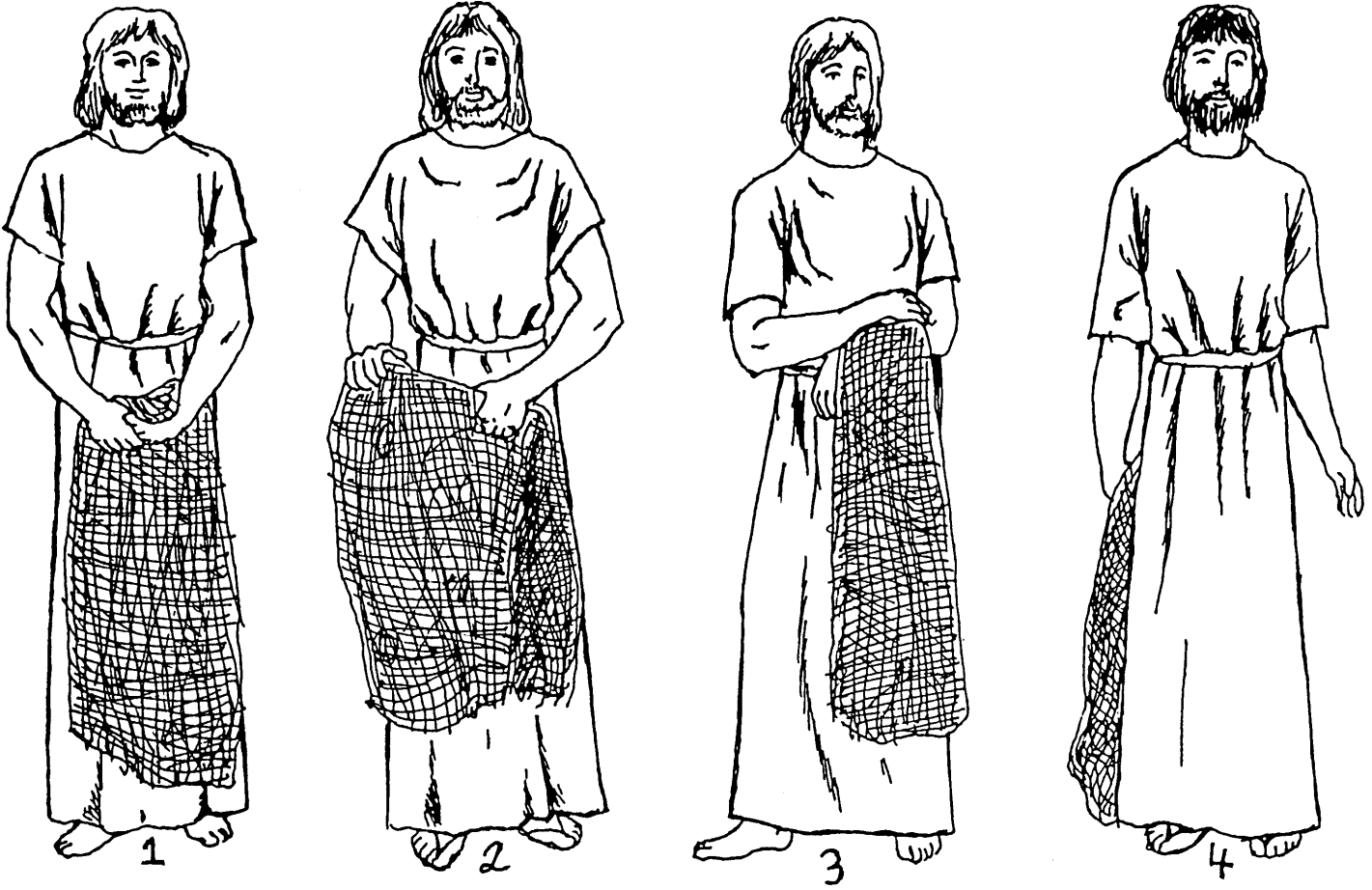
B. Making the pictures:

1. Color the pictures of each of the twelve apostles – on both the back and the front (pages 2 and 3).
2. Cut out each section. Glue the “fronts” to the “backs”.
3. Write the name of each disciple on the front or the back. (Copy the names from the WORD.)

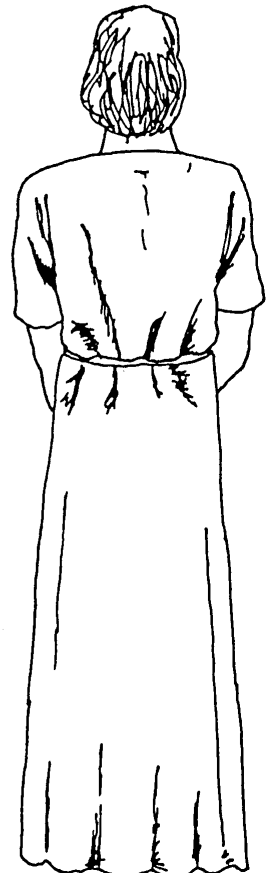
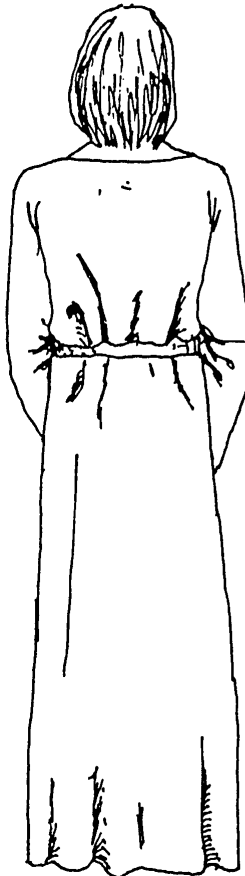
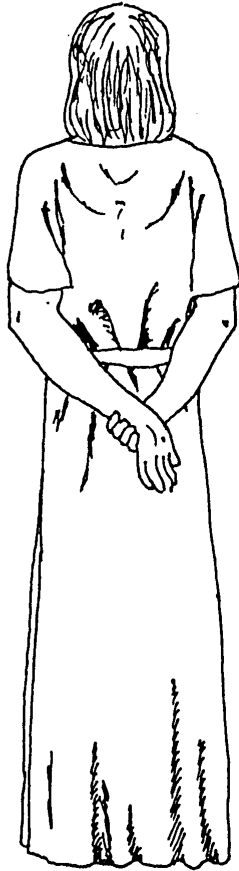
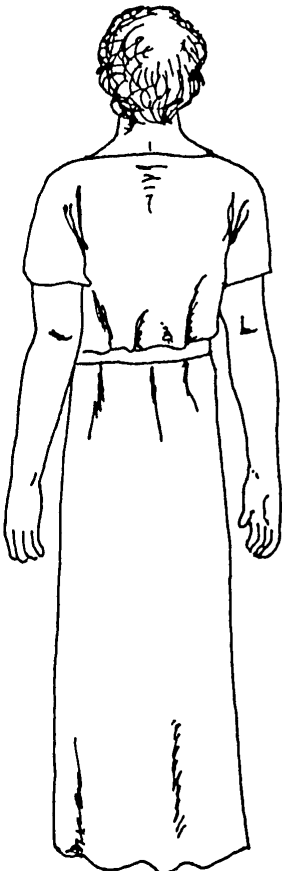
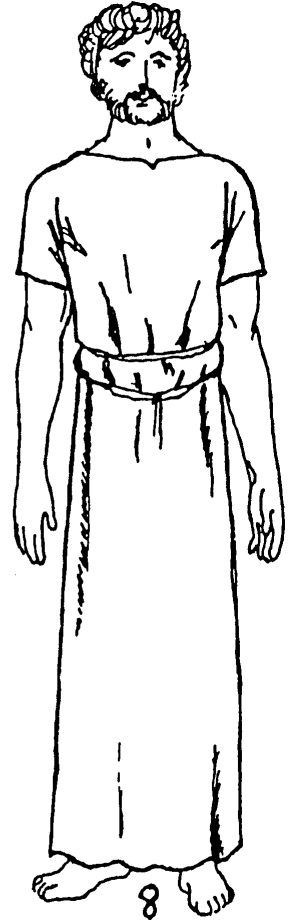
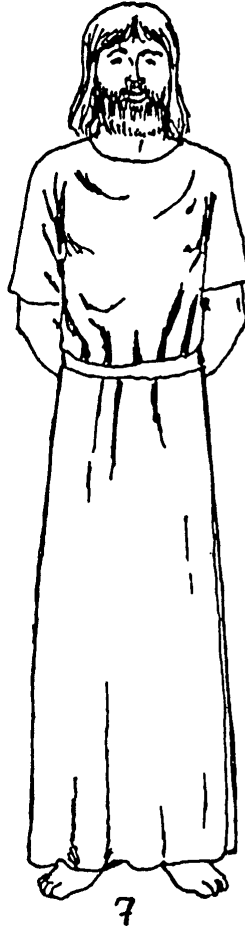
C. Assembling the mobile:

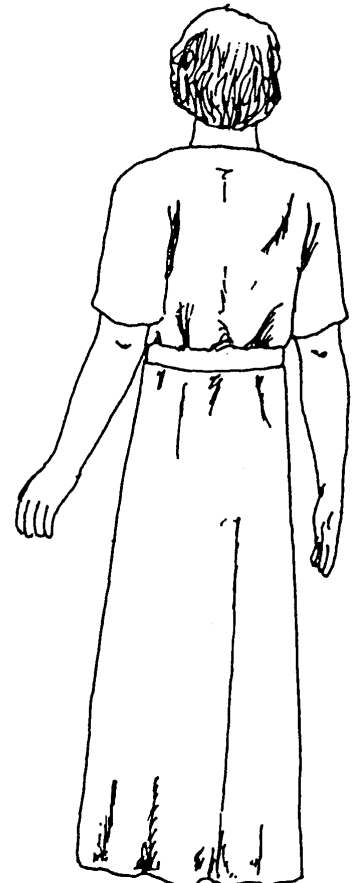
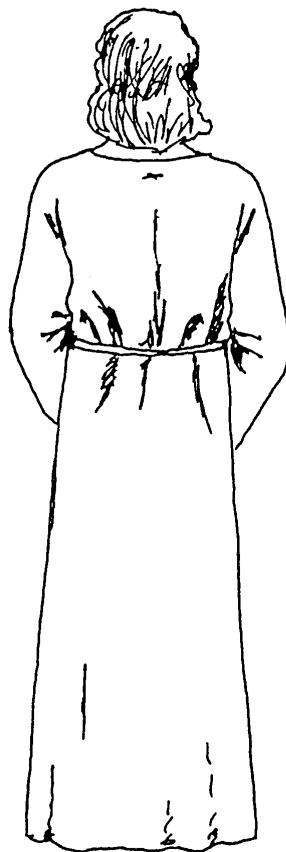
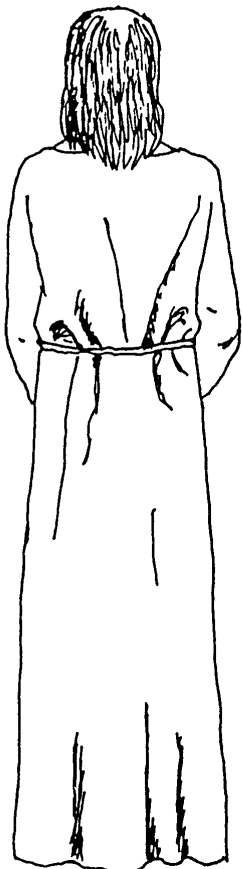
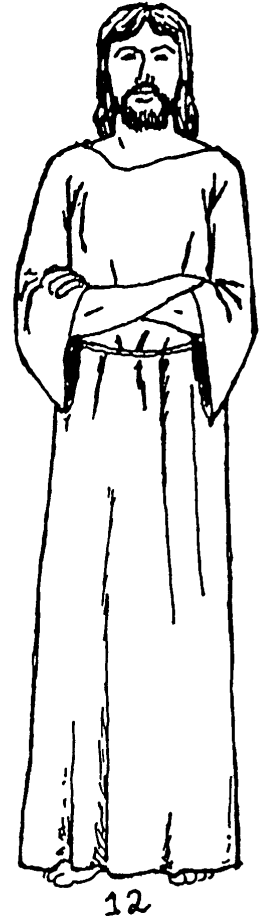
1. Tape each “apostle” to one end of a piece of string or yarn. (You could punch a small hole to thread the yarn through if you prefer)
2. Tie the other end to the crossed mobile sticks.
3. The pictures will spin if hung at different levels.











## The Twelve Apostles

### Mark 3

#### LEVEL 4 – FOLLOWING THE LORD

Have you ever wondered what it would have been like to be the Lord's mother or one of His disciples? The Jewish people were waiting for the Messiah for many years, and every Jewish woman was taught that she might get to be the mother of the Messiah.

Now, we all know the story of Mary, the one woman chosen for that important use. We also know the stories of John, Peter, Andrew, James and the others among the Lord's twelve disciples. All those uses were performed long ago before any of us were alive. We can't know what it would have been like to see the Lord.

Or can we? The Word tells the story of the Lord's life on earth 2,000 years ago, but every part of it also tells something about His life in each one of us as He tries to lead us to heaven. We *can* experience Mary's innocent joy when the Lord is born to us. We *can* respond to the Lord's call to discipleship, just as the twelve did so many years ago. Just as He says at the end of this chapter, verse 35:

For whoever does the will of God is My brother and My sister and mother.

Right now, just as He called His disciples, He is calling some good loves in each of us to follow Him, receive His power and do His work.

Then He appointed twelve, that they might be with Him and that He might send them out to preach. And to have power to heal sickness and to cast out demons. (verses 14 & 15)



In the Writings, the Lord teaches us that the twelve apostles represent all the true and good things that we know and love.

Some examples are:

Peter = trust in the LORD (our faith)

James = our care for other people (our charity)

John = the good we do because we care

We are not told specifically what each of the others represents, although wise men will undoubtedly be able to figure it out someday from what we are taught.

## **Application**

Can you imagine nine other true and good things that you know and care about in your own life?

Some hints might be to think about what is taught in the Ten Commandments and Ten Blessings.

### **The following project can be used in several different ways:**

1. On page 3, under the name of each disciple, write one example of something true and good that you can do, or want to do.  
Cut out the “window” around the outer edge.

On page 4, color the pictures of the disciples in the “stained glass window.”  
Cut out the “window” around the outer edge.

Now you can:

- a. Staple the “window” from page 4 over chart from page 3 along the left side so it can open like a book.

OR

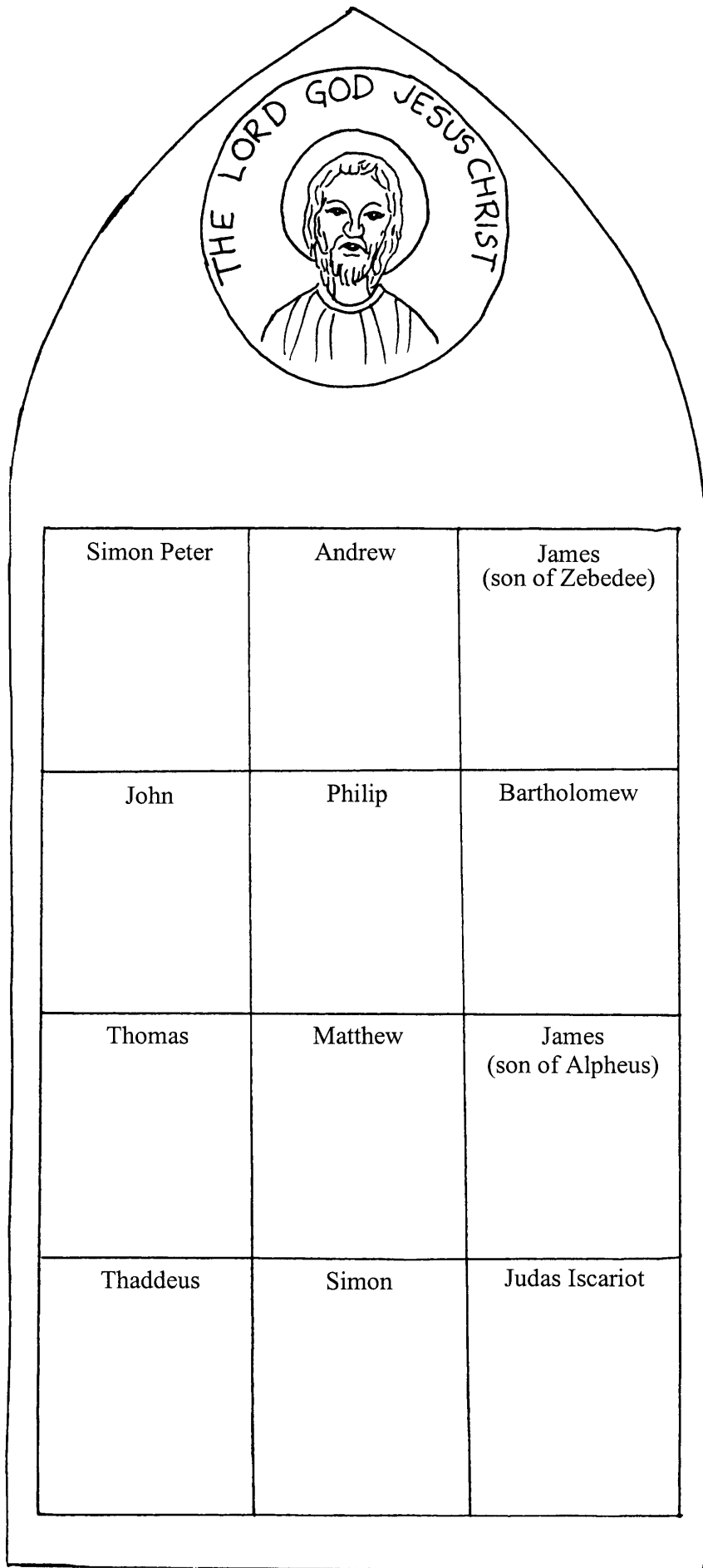
- b. Find a large (11 X 17) piece of colored construction paper, and fold it in half. Glue the colored picture of the disciples from page 4 on one side, and the chart with your ideas from page 3 on the other side (so they are facing each other). The finished project can stand up for display.

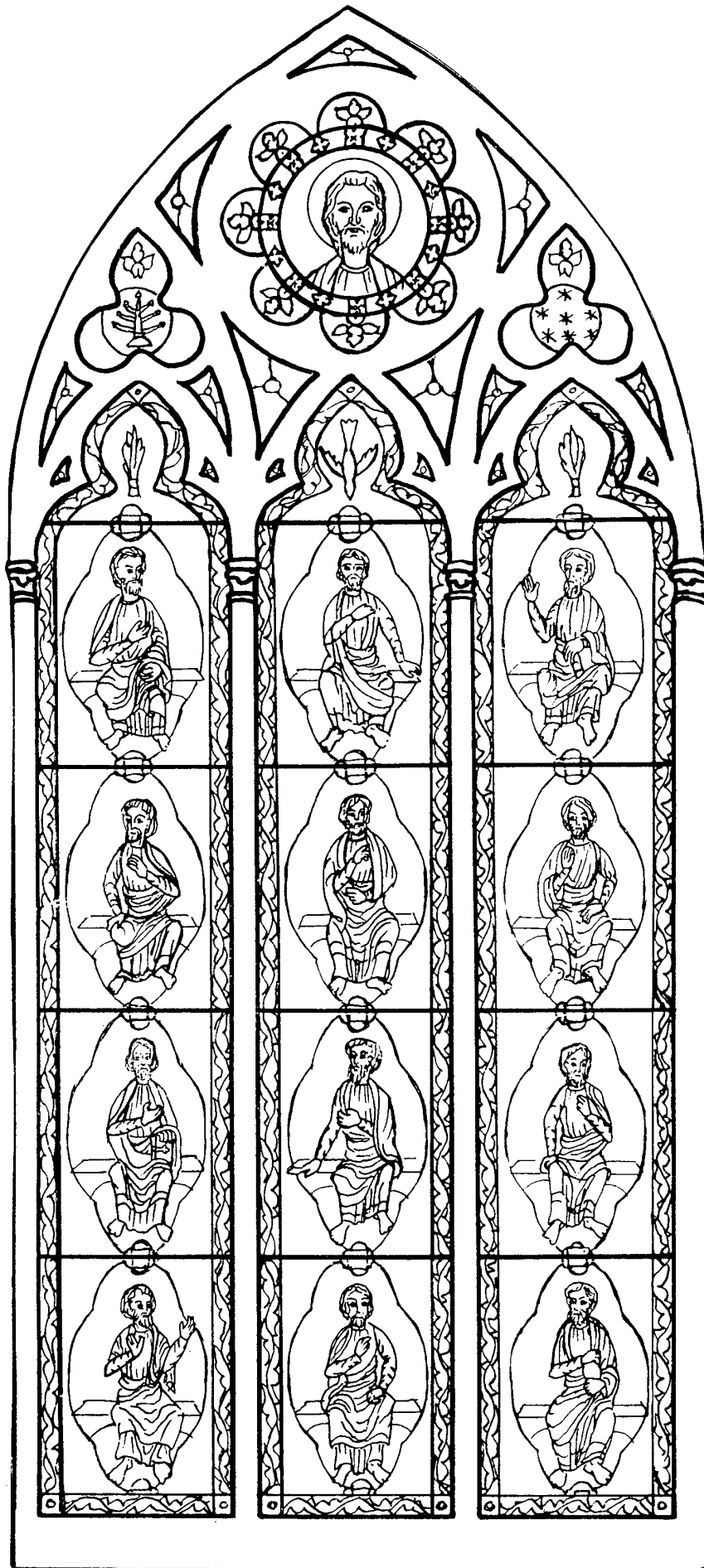
2. Use markers to color the pictures of the twelve disciples on the transparency.
  - a) *color on the rough side of the transparency*
  - b) *to avoid getting fingerprints on the transparency, hold it at the edges*

Cut it out around the outer edge and display on a window.  
The light shining through will give a lovely “stained glass” effect.



Display your finished project  
to remind you  
that the Lord is calling TWELVE  
(which means ALL)  
the true and good things *you* know  
and love  
to follow Him and do His work.





## **The Twelve Apostles**

### **Mark 3**

#### **LEVEL 5 – JAMES, ONE OF THE SONS OF THUNDER**

Around the year 44 A.D. Herod Agrippa put to death one of the Lord's twelve apostles. (This is recorded at the beginning of the 12th chapter of the book of Acts.)

#### **Disciples and Apostles**

The third chapter of Mark lists the twelve selected to be apostles (the “disciples” followed the Lord during his ministry—they became “apostles” when the Lord *sent them out* to preach the gospel). We are selecting one (James) to concentrate on in this lesson, noting something about him that typified all of the apostles. The goal in a few paragraphs is to help you learn things you did not know before.



#### **James**

In English we read this man's name as “James.” If you saw the name of James in Greek or Hebrew you would say his name was Jacob. Yes, he was one of the many Jews named after the Jacob of the book of Genesis. Sometimes names are changed quite a bit when they move from one language into another. The change into English in this case was considerable. (Some have supposed that translators made it “James” to please King James in England. However this cannot be substantiated, since the name goes back earlier than King James.)

The Writings refer to him as “Jacobus,” and teach that Peter means “faith,” and John means “good works,” and James means “charity or love”.

#### **One Who Grabs a Heel**

The name “Jacob” is in itself strange, although for centuries it has been so widespread that we think of it as quite common. No individual was named Jacob before the day that twins were born to Isaac and Rebekah, one of them clutching in his hand the heel of his brother. It was because of this that he was named after the word “heel” or one who grabs a heel. (*Arcana Coelestia* 259) “Jacob” means someone so eager to get ahead that he would grab someone in front of him and supplant him (take his place). When the brothers grew, Esau said,

**Is he not rightly named Jacob? For he has supplanted me these two times.**  
(*Genesis* 27: 36)

Remember that **eagerness to get ahead** as we look at the life of “James,” as we call him in English.

### Information about James

1. James was the brother of John. In *Mark* 3 we read that this pair of brothers was given the name “Boanerges,” which means the “sons of thunder.”
2. Their father’s name was Zebedee. Scholars assume the family was well to do. We read in *Mark* 1 that they left their father and the hired servants in their fishing boat and followed the Lord.
3. There is evidence that James, along with Peter and John, were the three most important disciples. They were singled out to be with the Lord when others were not—at the raising of the daughter of Jairus, at the time when the Lord’s face was seen to shine as the sun, and in the secluded spot in the Garden of Gethsemane following the Last Supper.

### Sons of Thunder

In the story in *Luke*, chapter 9, some people did not receive the Lord. The disciples James and John showed a zealous and impetuous spirit, saying:

Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven  
and consume them, just as Elijah did?

But the Lord rebuked their thunderous attitude and said:

You do not know what manner of spirit you are of.

### The heel grabbing characteristic

The incident in which the heel grabbing characteristic (symbolized by Jacob) may be seen is recorded in *Mark* 10.

James and John approached the Lord saying:

We want You to do for us whatever we ask. (verse 35)

And what do you suppose they would ask? It was something that would displease the rest of the disciples. They asked if one of them could be on the Lord’s right and the other on His left in the kingdom which they were looking forward to.

***They wanted to be the two top men in the Lord’s kingdom.***

You see, the Lord allowed those men to have the idea that one day they would sit on thrones, and when there was strife among the disciples, it was over which of them would be the greatest. Of this the Writings say,



They could not think otherwise than that His kingdom in heaven is altogether like a kingdom on earth. And therefore, James and John asked that in His kingdom the one might sit on His right hand and the other on His left; and the rest of the apostles, who also wanted to be great in that kingdom, were indignant, and disputed among themselves which of them should be the greatest there. (*Arcana Coelestia* 8705. See also 8573)

The desire to get ahead was a typical “heel-grabbing” incentive with the disciples. The disciples at first had no other idea of the kingdom of heaven than that it was similar to kingdoms on the earth. They thought that they would become great there by exercising authority over others.

### **Serving Others Without Thought of Reward**

The Lord at first used this simple motive to get the disciples going in the right direction (see *Arcana Coelestia* 3417), and then He gradually both taught them and illustrated to them that life is not a matter of just grabbing and getting ahead. Gradually they learned that the delight of heaven is the delight of serving others without any thought of reward.

It is really a tremendous thing to see, for we know that these men went to heaven. An ambition to be number one was used to inspire them to do useful things, and then the Lord gradually gave them a new heart and the realization that heaven is service to others. If they had not at first had the partly selfish incentive, the Writings say, they would not have followed the Lord, but would have returned to their occupations. (*Arcana Coelestia* 3857:7)

### **Application**

What are the implications for you and me? If our motives are partly selfish at first, it is wonderful to consider that as we go along, the Lord improves our motives until we are not even worried about reward. It is a hopeful reality for all who would be disciples of the Lord.

In the chart on the next page, fill in some things that people do or strive for. Then try to think of both selfish motives and unselfish motives that might move people to do these things. Discussing this topic with your parents or friends will help you develop ideas. If you like, you can make this a personal exercise about your own choices.

But always remember, we are on a wonderful journey, a journey in which the Lord is leading us from selfishness to a state of charity “**which is void of all self-seeking, and is averse to everything that is for the sake of self**” (*Arcana Coelestia* 3419).

