

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

MARCH 10, 2022

Jesus calls another set of brothers to be his disciples, James and John. These men are the sons of Zebedee and Salome and they are also fishermen who live in Capernaum by the Sea of Galilee. There are some theologians who believe that they were actually cousins of Jesus because of the genealogical network between their mother and Mary. Perhaps this gave their mother the courage to ask Jesus to give them a special place with Him in glory.

At one point Jesus gave James and John the name “the sons of thunder” (Mark 3:17). Peter, Andrew, James, and John often were a foursome with Jesus. Today we will look at James. Because there are a number of men named James referred to in scripture, this James is referred to as James the Great.

It is clear that James and his brother had a special relationship with Jesus. James was one of the three disciples who Jesus invited to witness his transfiguration (Matthew 17:1). James was permitted to go with Jesus when he raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead (Mark 5:37; Luke 8:51). He was one of those who accompanied Jesus to Gethsemane (Matthew 26:37). He was one of those who asked questions of Jesus about his coming again (Mark 13:3). Sometimes James did have problems with practical application of the Gospel. When a village in Samaria would not receive Jesus because He was on his way to Jerusalem, James asked Jesus if He wanted them to call down fire upon the village and consume them (Mark 9:51-56).

His ministry included both Spain and Jerusalem. According to Spanish tradition, while James was preaching at Caesaraugusta on the Ebro River, he had a vision of the Virgin Mary and returned to Jerusalem. Shortly after the stoning to death of Stephen for his faith, James became the first disciple to be martyred by King Herod. Perhaps James had spoken out against the evil King Herod Agrippa, but we know from scripture that Herod wanted to persecute the church as a way of making himself more popular with some of his followers. Following the beheading of James in AD 44, Herod arrested Peter and imprisoned him, but it was the Passover so he waited to execute Peter. That was when Peter was released by an angel (Acts 12:1-17). James is entombed in the Santiago de Compostela Cathedral in Spain.

Lord, may we be faithful to You until death. Pastor Louise