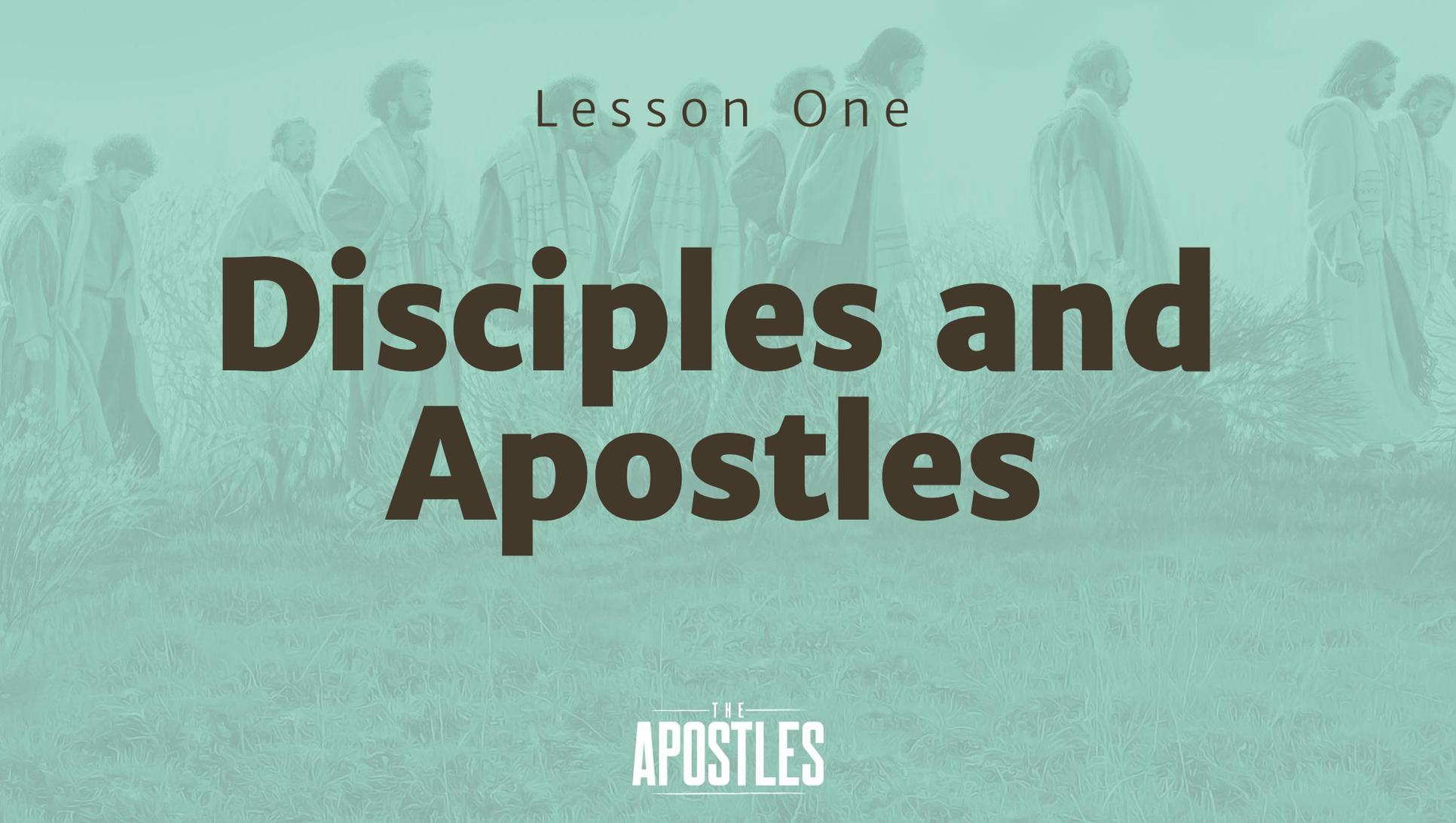


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Lesson One

# Disciples and Apostles

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# Disciple

- **Definition of a Disciple**
  - A disciple is a learner.
  - From *mathetes* (Gr.) and *discipulus* (Lat.)

# Characteristics of Disciples

- A new identity
  - Christ stated that people would treat His followers worse than they treated Him (Matt. 10:24–25).
  - When trained, a disciple will be like his teacher (Luke 6:40).

# Characteristics of Disciples

- **A new way of life**
  - Christ has priority over...
    - Family (Matt. 8:21)
    - Home (Matt. 8:20)
    - Personal gain (Matt. 19:21–22)
  - A disciple must be willing to endure hardship and death (Luke 14:27).

# Characteristics of Disciples

- **A new purpose**
  - A true disciple will abide in God's Word (John 8:31).
    - Allowing God's Word to transform the heart
    - Teaching God's Word to others

# Examples of Disciples

- **Moses' Disciples (John 9:28)**
- **John the Baptist's Disciples (Luke 7:18)**
- **Jesus' Disciples (John 6:66; Acts 6:1)**

# Apostles

- **Definition of Apostle**
  - “Sent one”
  - A messenger or delegate who is dispatched on a mission  
(*Strong’s Concordance*)
  - From *apostolos* (Gr.)

# Apostles (cont.)

- ***Apostolos* Denoted God's Messengers**
  - Christ (Heb. 3:1)
  - Jewish preachers (Luke 11:49)
  - Missionaries (2 Cor. 8:23)

# Qualifications for God's Special Apostles

- A Witness to the Resurrection of Christ (1 Cor. 9:1)
- A Follower and Disciple of Christ (Acts 1:21–22)
  - From Christ's baptism to His ascension
- One Chosen Directly by God (Matt. 10:1–2)

# God Gave Special Gifts

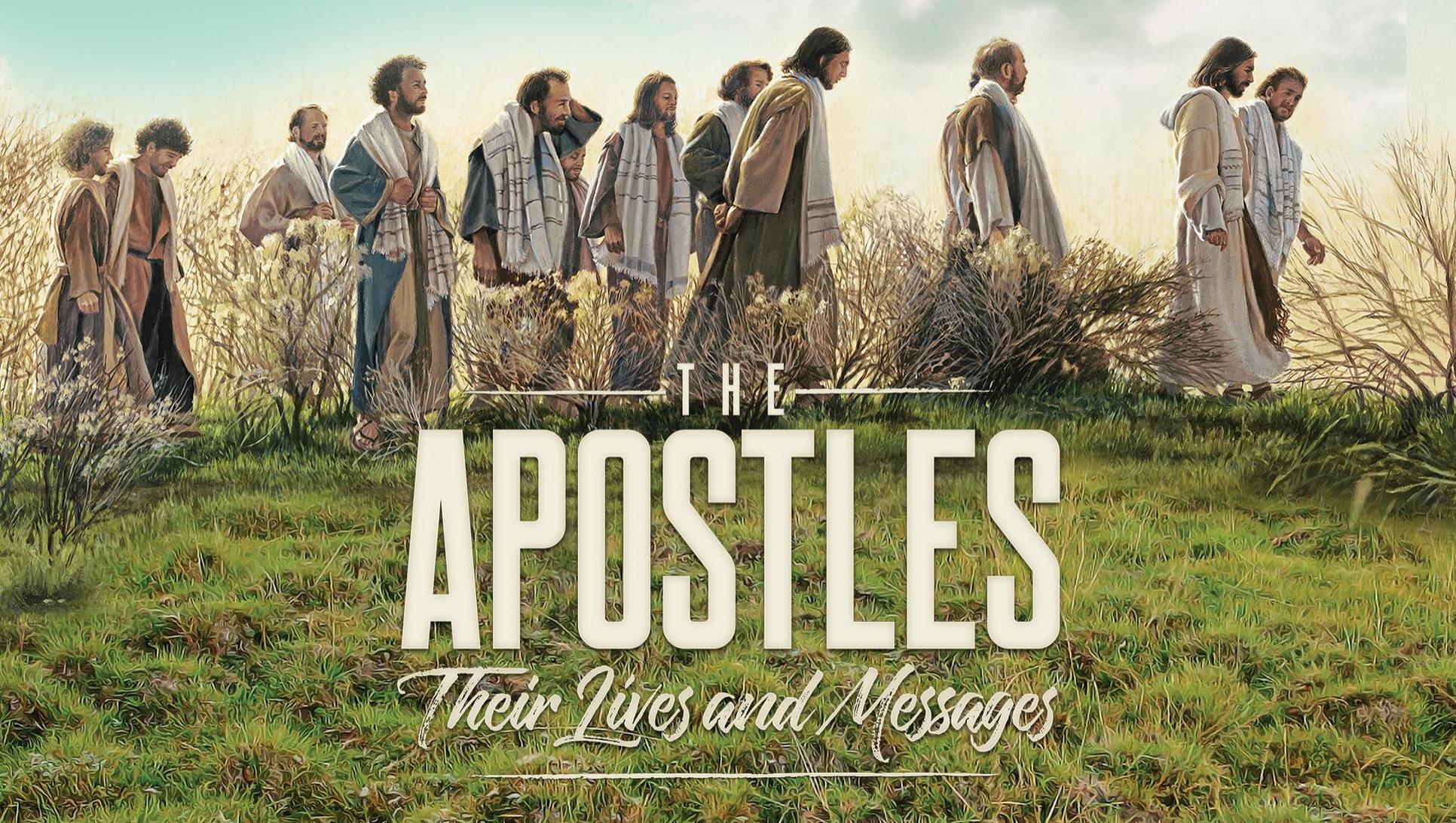
- To Christ's Apostles  
(Matt. 10:5–15)
- To Apostles in the Early Church  
(Acts 19:11; 1 Cor. 12:27–28)

# Duties of All Apostles

- To Witness (Rom. 10:14–15)
- To Authenticate Doctrine  
(1 John 4:1–6)
- To Remain Loyal to God  
(2 Tim. 2:1–7)
- These Duties Are for Every Believer

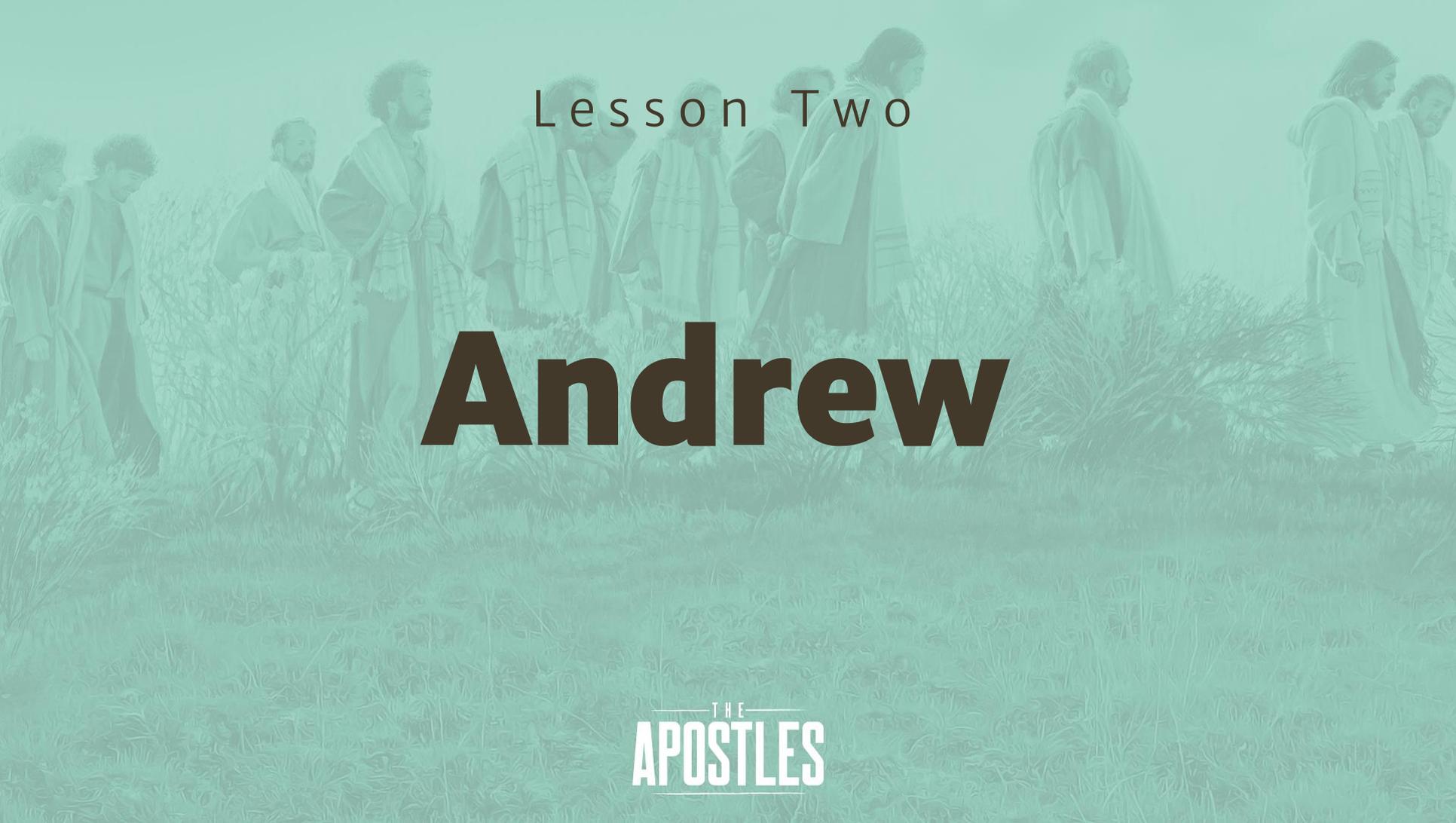


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Lesson Two

# Andrew

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# Andrew's Background

- From Bethsaida, on the Northwest Shore of the Sea of Galilee (John 1:44)
- Brother of Simon Peter
- A Disciple of John the Baptist (John 1:35, 37)

# Andrew's Faith

- **His Discovery of the Messiah (John 1:41)**
  - Andrew identified Jesus as Messiah.
  - He brought Peter to see the Messiah.
- **His Call to Discipleship (Matt. 4:18–19)**

# Andrew's Ministry

- Brought His Brother to the Lord (John 1:41)
  - He found Simon immediately after he spent time with Jesus.
- Brought a Young Boy to the Lord (John 6:8–9)
- Brought Greeks to the Lord (John 12:20–22)

# Andrew's Continuing Witness

- Carried the Gospel into Southern Russia (Eusebius)
- Died a Martyr's Death by Crucifixion on an X-Shaped Cross (Foxe)

# Sharing Jesus with Others (Rom. 10)

- **Definition of Witnessing**
  - Witnessing means to tell others about something you have experienced.
  - Example: a witness in court

# Motives for Witnessing

- To share the gospel with those who have never heard (Rom. 10:14–15)
  - Our sin condemns us to hell (Rom. 6:23).
  - Christ is the only true way of salvation (John 14:6).

# Motives for Witnessing

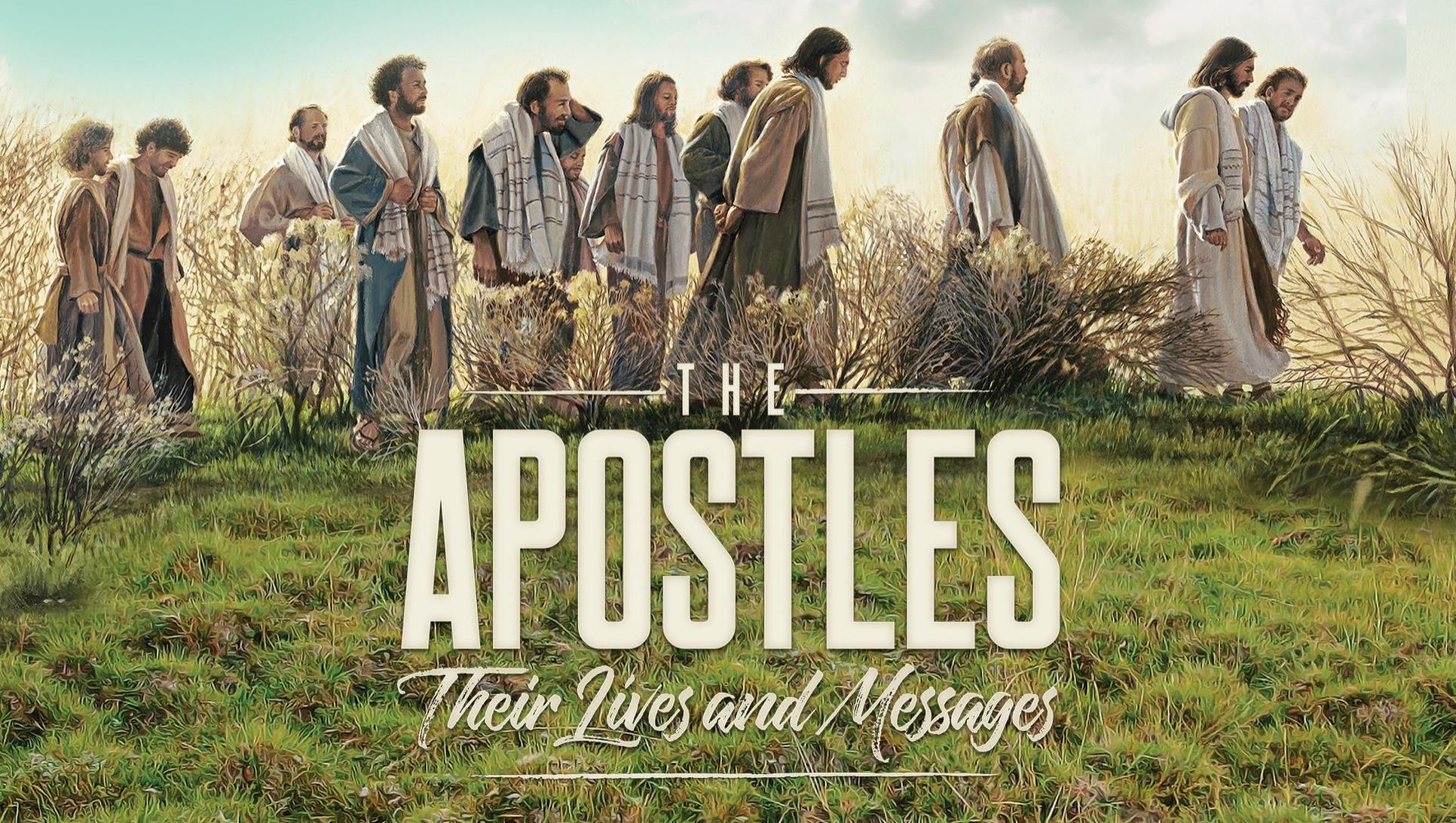
- To fulfill Christ's commission (Matt. 28:16–20; Acts 1:8)
- To glorify God (John 17:20–26)

# Methods for Witnessing

- Witnessing requires intentional communication.
- Relying on behavior to share the gospel isn't enough.

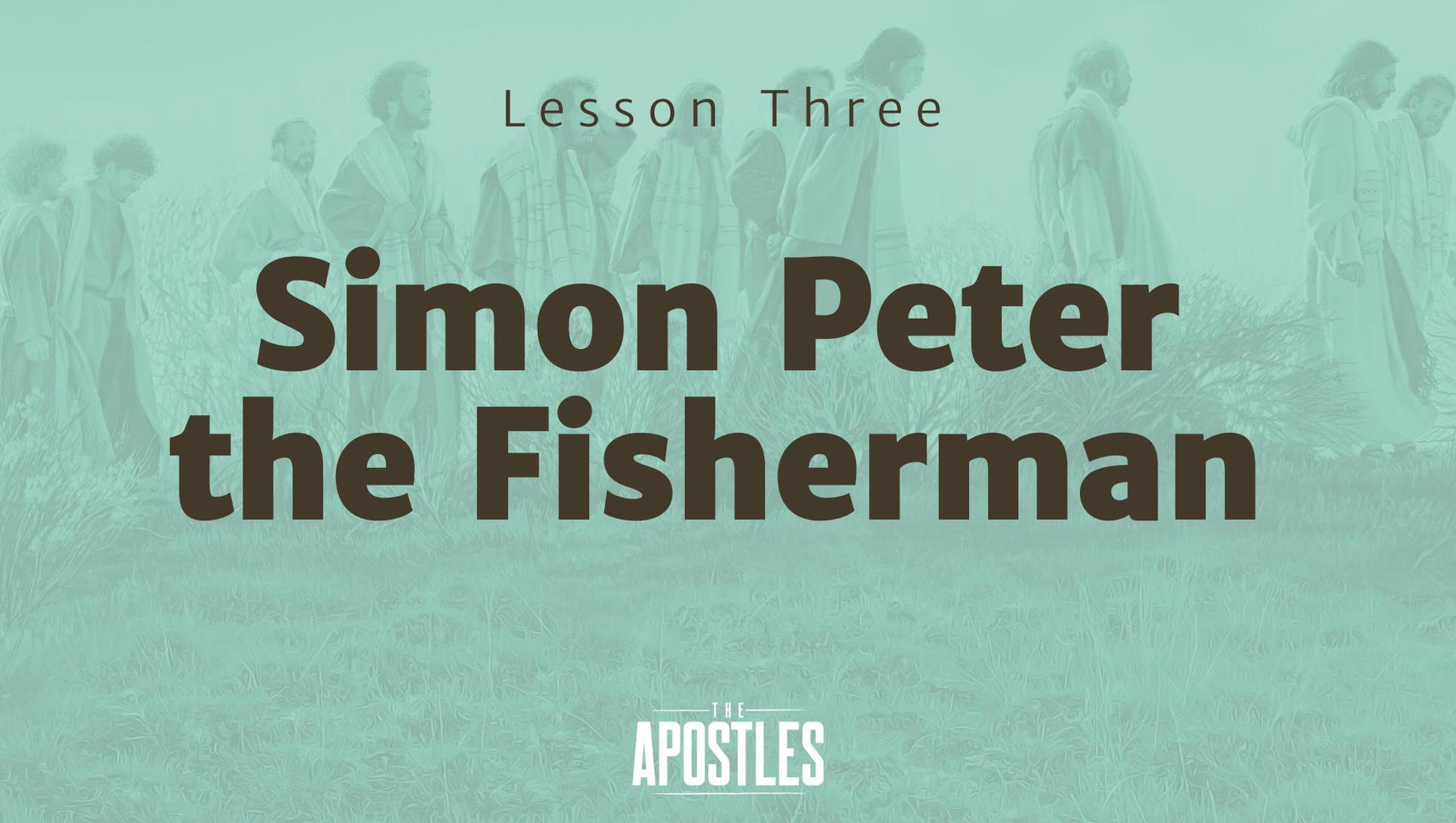


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Lesson Three

# Simon Peter the Fisherman

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# Peter's Background

- **Name and Family**
  - Hebrew Name—Simeon
    - Greek form—Simon
  - Brother—Andrew
  - Father—Jonah, sometimes spelled Jonas (Matt. 16:17)

# Name and Family (cont.)

- From Bethsaida (John 1:44)
  - Had a north country accent (Mark 14:70)
- Later Lived in Capernaum (Mark 1:21, 29)
  - City where Peter's mother-in-law lived (Mark 1:29–30)

# Name and Family (cont.)

- A Fisherman
- Religion and Education
  - Followed Jewish Law (Acts 10:14)
  - No formal education (Acts 4:13)

# Peter's Call

- **To Meet Christ (1:41–42)**
  - Christ gave Simon a new name—Cephas, meaning “Rock”
    - "Peter" comes from the Greek word *petros*, meaning "rock."
    - Christ told Peter that he would be foundational in building the church (Matt. 16:18–19).

# Peter's Call (cont.)

- **To Discipleship (Luke 5:1–11)**
  - Peter personally witnessed two miracles.
    - Mother-in-law healed (Luke 4:38–39)
    - Unusually large catch of fish (Luke 5:4–11)
  - Peter was a close disciple (Mark 9:2).

# Peter's Conflicted Trust

- In Christ's Mission
  - Peter's misunderstanding of Christ's kingdom (Matt.19:27)
  - Peter's refusal to believe Christ's death (Matt. 16:21–23)

# Peter's Conflicted Trust (cont.)

- In Christ's Identity
  - Jesus washing Peter's feet  
(John 13:6–16)
  - Peter's denial at Christ's arrest  
(Matt. 26:69–75)

# Peter's Conflicted Trust (cont.)

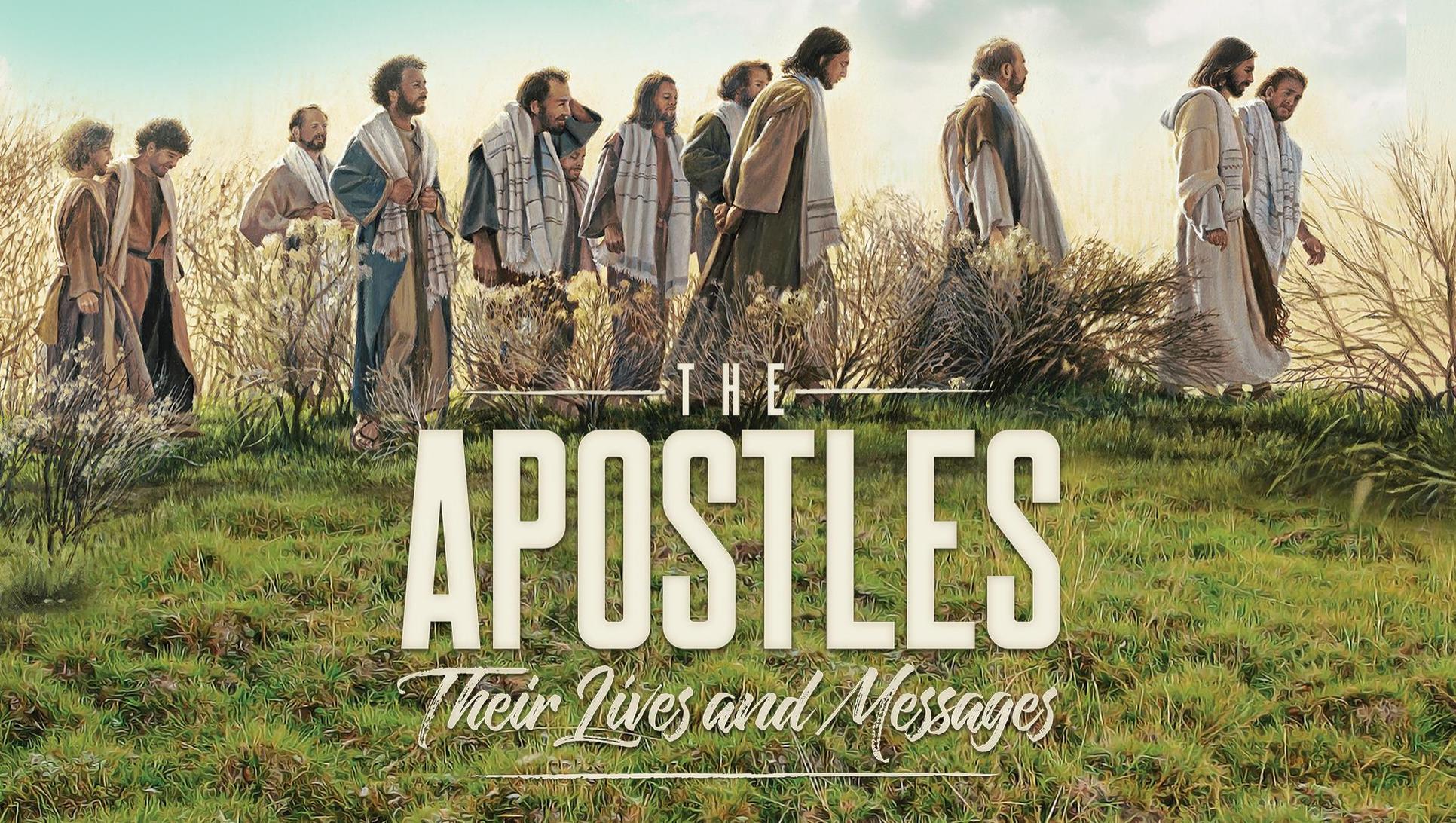
- In Christ's Power
  - Peter's walking on water  
(Matt. 14:22–33)
  - Peter's disbelief at Christ's resurrection  
(John 20:8–9)

# Peter's Conflicted Trust (cont.)

- **Dealing with Doubt**
  - The key to this struggle isn't found in trying harder or ignoring our doubts—it lies in meditating on God's character.

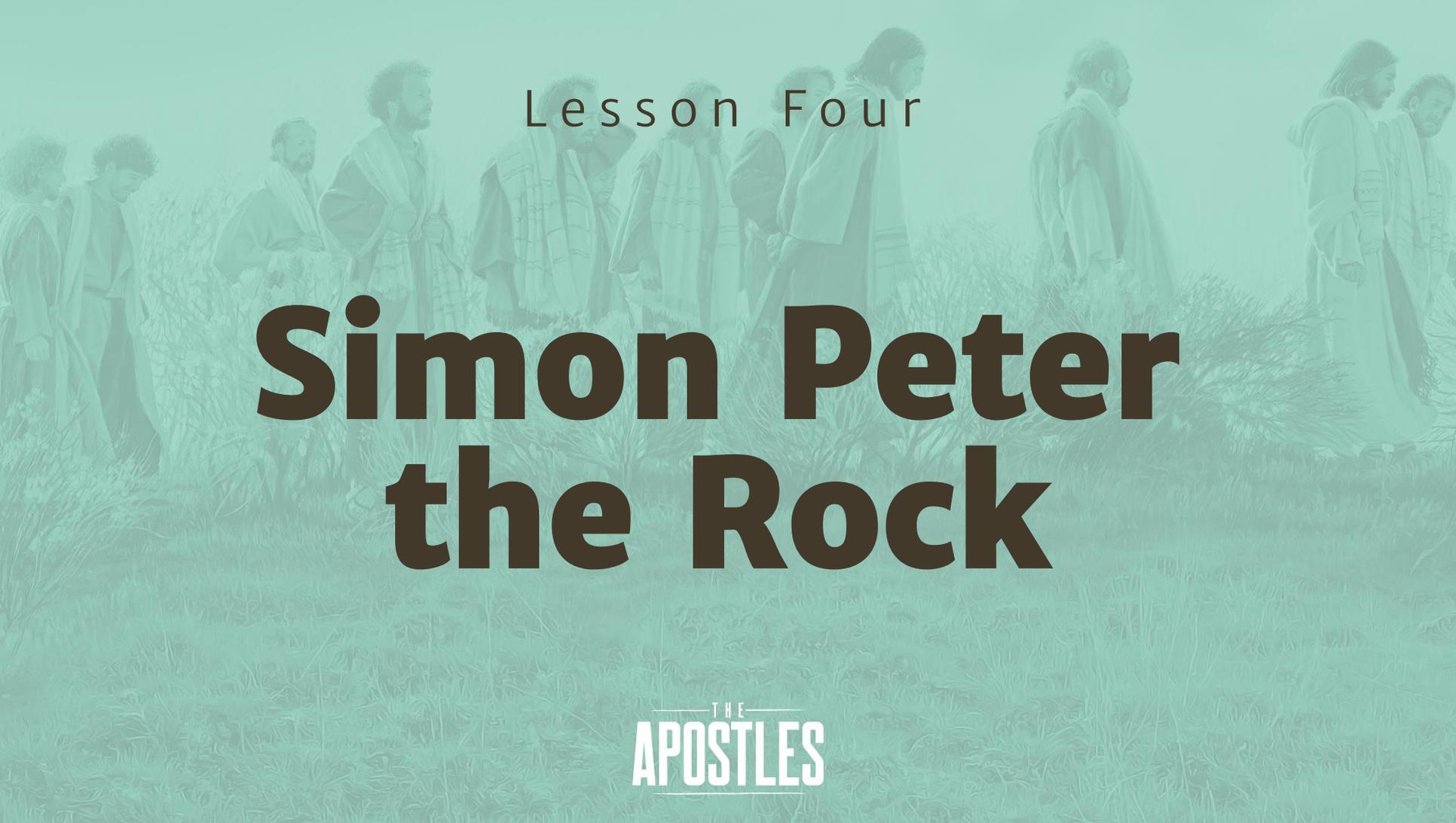


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Lesson Four

# Simon Peter the Rock

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# Peter's Character Transformation

The Fisherman  
(Gospels)

The Rock  
(Acts 1–2)

Haughty, bold

Humble, confident

Inconsistent

Consistent

Self-motivated

Spirit-motivated

Quick to speak

Quick to suffer for Christ

# Causes for Change

- The Resurrection of Christ (Matt. 28)
- Christ's Post-Resurrection Meeting (Acts 1:3)

# Causes for Change (cont.)

- A Week of Prayer  
(Acts 1:4, 13–14)
- The Holy Spirit's Indwelling  
(Acts 2)

# **Peter After Pentecost**

- **Focused on Christ's Resurrection (1 Pet. 1:3).**

# Christ's Resurrection

- It signifies God's acceptance of Christ's sacrifice (Rom. 4:25).
- It gives us hope for the future (1 Cor. 15:12–22, 49).
- It establishes Christ's victory over sin (1 Cor. 15:56–57).

# **Peter After Pentecost (cont.)**

- **Knew the Scriptures**  
**(Acts 2:16, 25; 3:24)**
- **Led (Acts 1:12–26)**
- **Showed Boldness (Acts 4:13)**

# Peter's Ministry

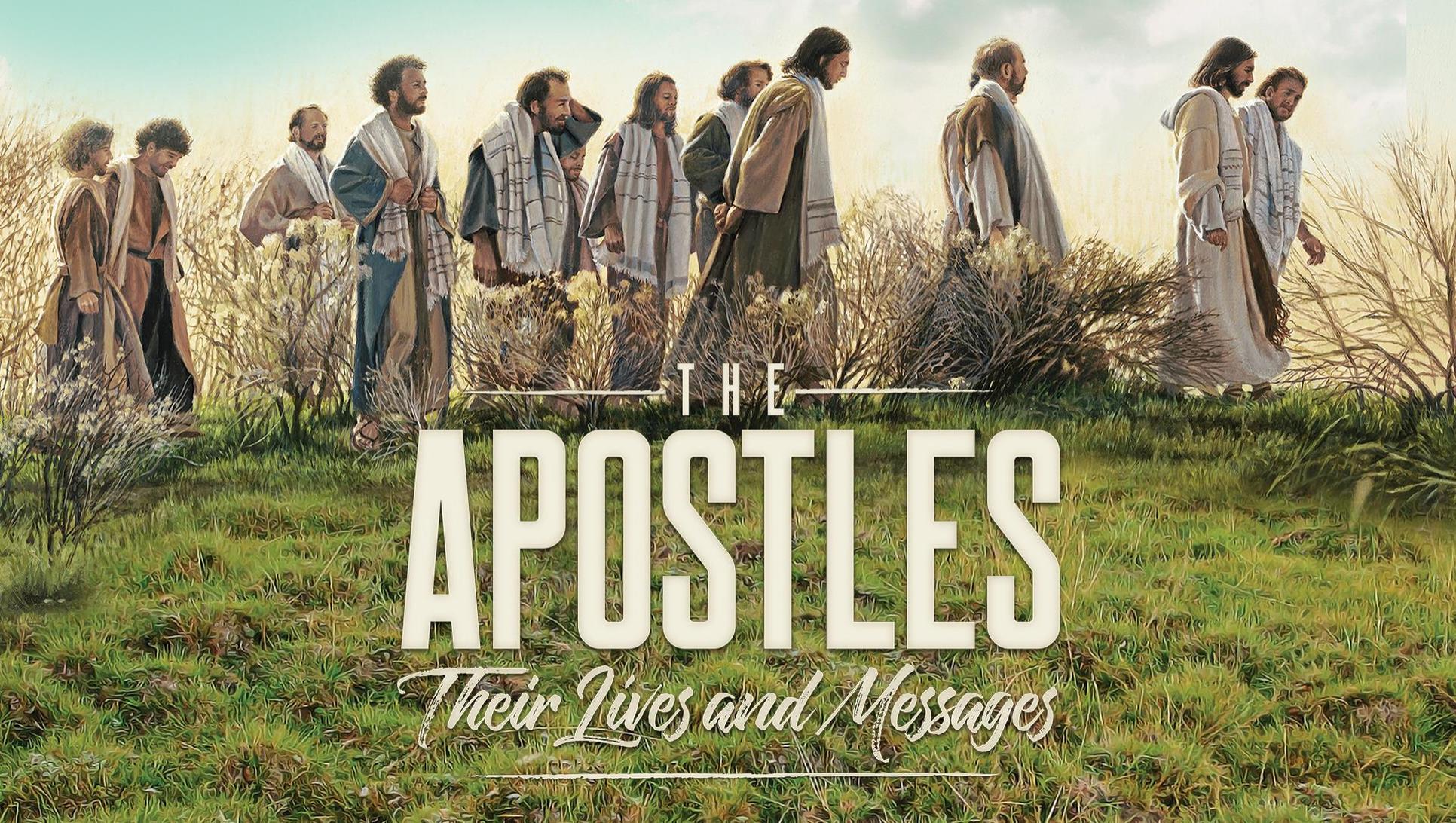
- Had a Worldwide Burden to Preach the Gospel (Acts 10:34–35)
- Wrote Letters to Early Churches
- Died at Rome by Upside-Down Crucifixion (Foxe)

# **Marks of Spiritual Maturity (2 Pet. 1:3–11)**

- **Virtue, or  
Goodness**
- **Knowledge**
- **Self-control**
- **Patience**
- **Godliness**
- **Kindness**
- **Love**

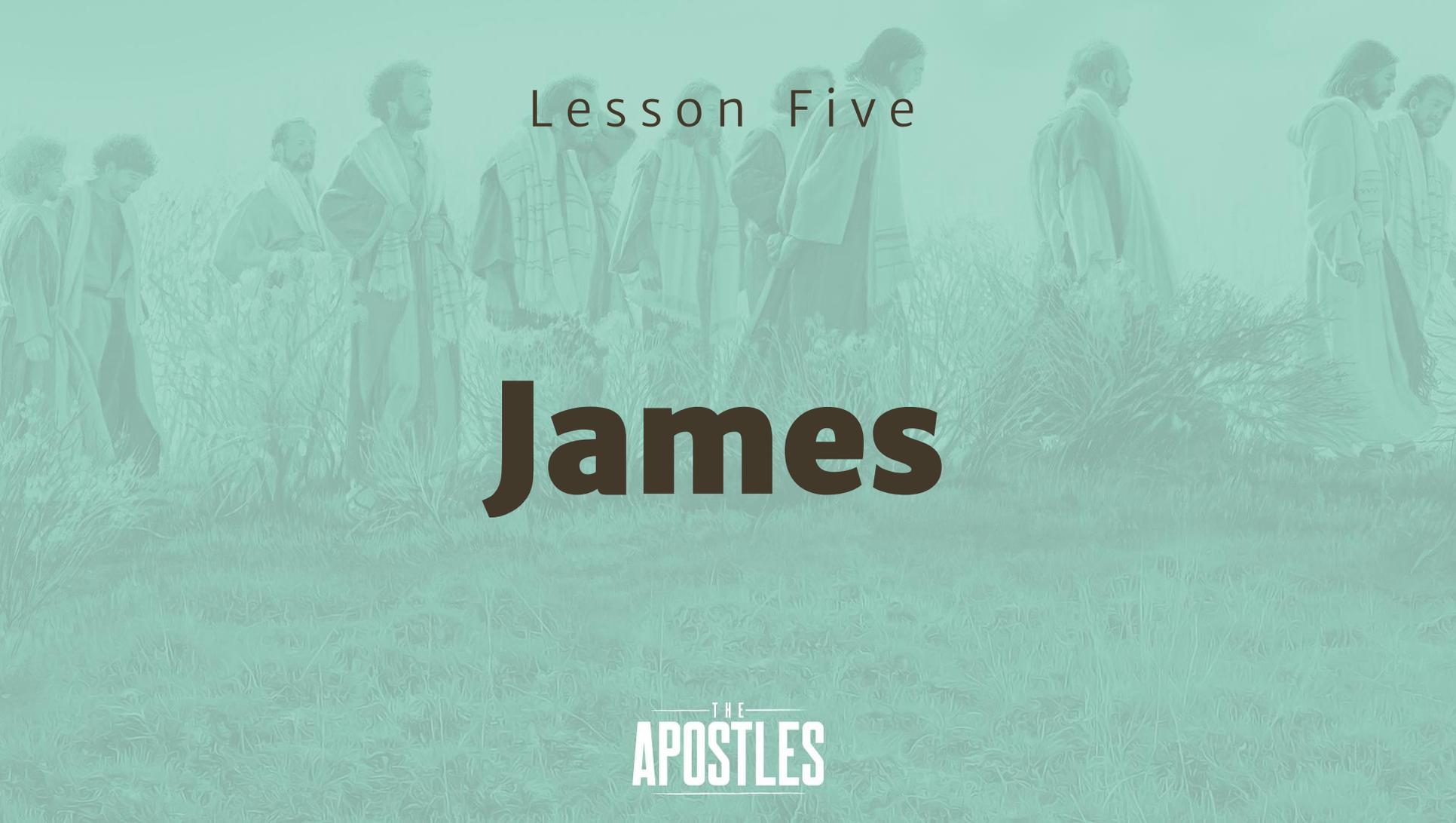


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Lesson Five

# James

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# James's Background

- Lived in Galilee
- Fisherman by Occupation

# James's Background (cont.)

- **Family**
  - Brother—John (Mark 1:19)
  - Father—Zebedee (Mark 1:20)
  - Mother—Salome (Mark 15:40; Matt. 27:56)
    - She followed Christ and witnessed His crucifixion

# James's Leadership

- **A Close Disciple**
  - Witnessed parts of Christ's ministry that other disciples didn't
  - Assigned a special surname by Christ (Mark 3:17; John 1:42)
- **More Prominent Than John**

# James's Character

- Received a Special Name from Christ
  - *Boanerges* (Gr.)—“Sons of Thunder”  
(Mark 3:17)
- Known for Zeal

# Two Kinds of Zeal

- Vengeful Zeal (Luke 9:54)
  - Retribution for a perceived wrong
    - When the Samaritan village rejected Christ, James and John wanted to destroy the village.
  - This zeal lacked love.

# Two Kinds of Zeal (cont.)

- Ambitious Zeal (Matt. 20:20–28)
  - Ambition is a strong desire to achieve a personal goal.
    - James and John desired places of honor in God's kingdom.
    - At one point, all the disciples had argued about who was the greatest (Luke 9:46). Jesus used a child to demonstrate the kind of attitude the truly great must have—humility.

# Two Kinds of Zeal (cont.)

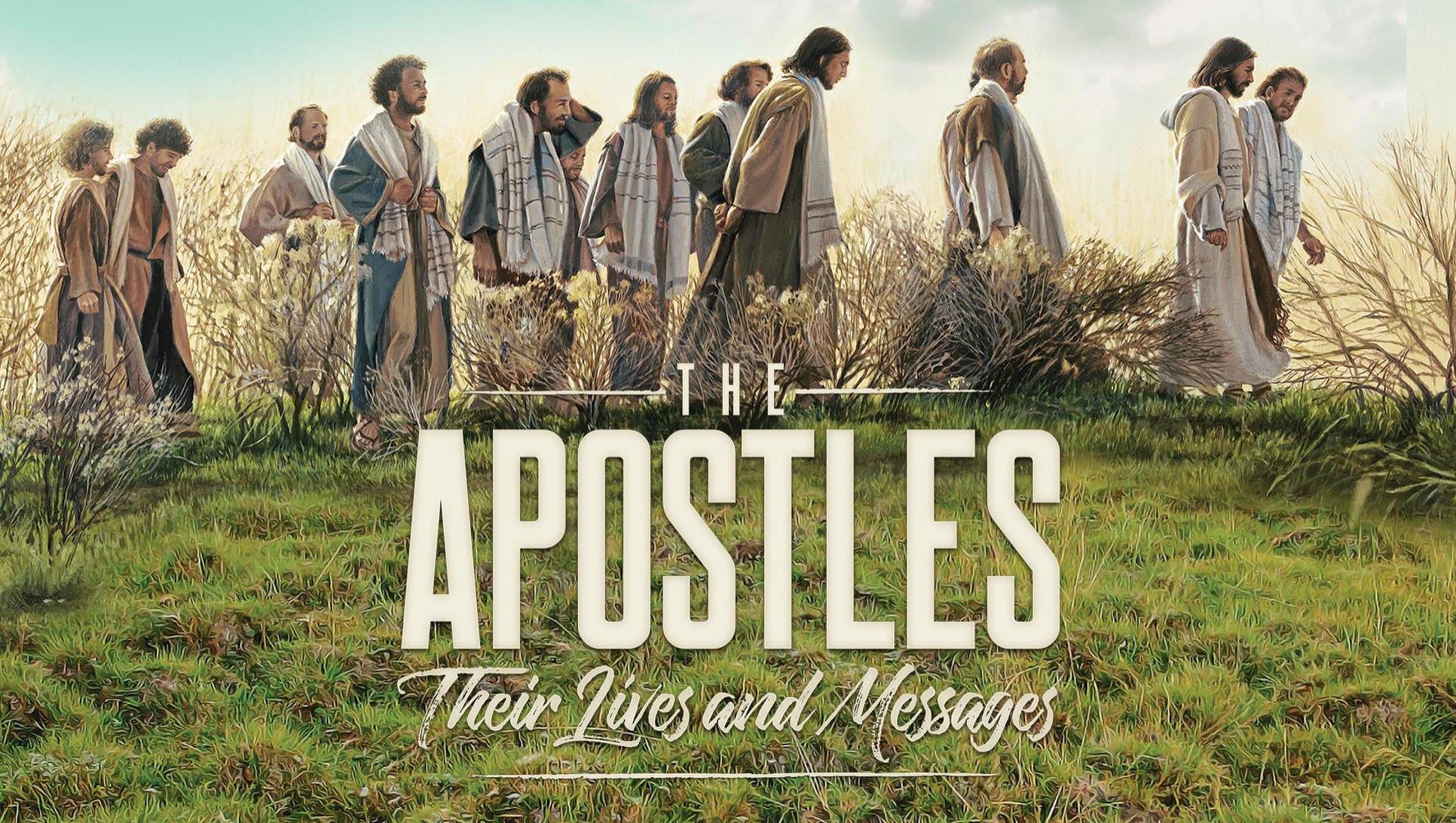
- **Ambitious Zeal (cont.)**
  - This zeal lacked knowledge.
    - They did not understand what they requested because they didn't understand Christ's teaching.

# James's Ministry

- Served in the Early Church
- Beheaded by Herod (Acts 12:2)
- James was the first of the Twelve Disciples to die for Christ.

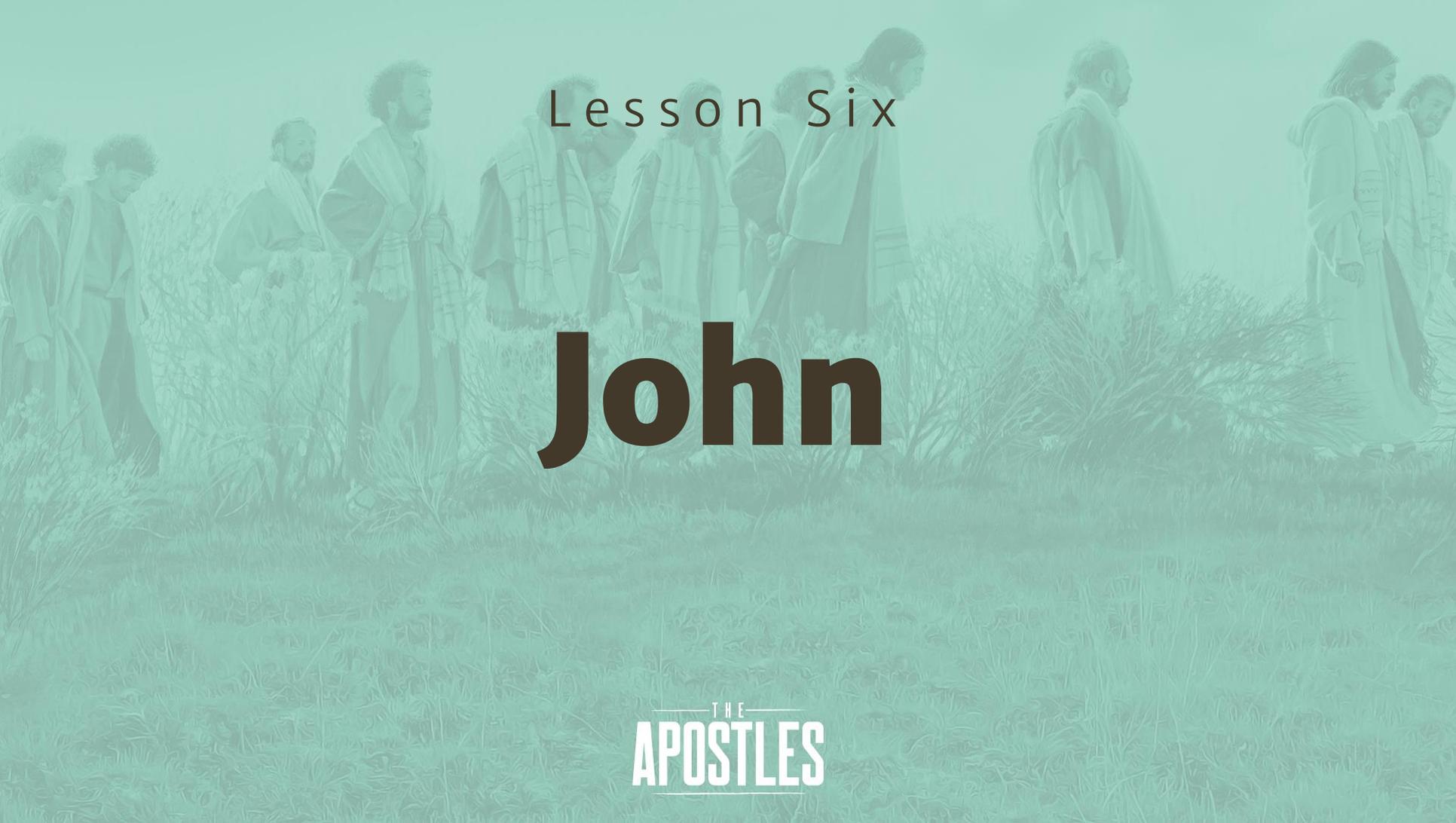


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Lesson Six

# John

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# John's Background

- **Brother of James**
  - Less prominent than James
- **Hebrew Name—Jonah**
  - Means “dove”
  - Denotes peace and gentleness
- **Greek Name—Johanin**
  - Means “The Lord is gracious”
  - Suits John's character

# John's Character

- **During Christ's Ministry**
  - Enthusiastic—one of the "Sons of Thunder"
  - Ambitious—desired honor for himself

# John's Character (cont.)

- **After Christ**
  - Humble
    - John the “servant” (Rev. 1:1)
    - The disciple Jesus loved (John 13:33, 19:26, 20:2, 21:7, 21:20)
  - Desired to honor Christ

# John's Faith

- Followed Christ Immediately  
(Mark 1:20)
- One of the First to Believe  
Christ's Resurrection  
(John 20:4-9)
- One of the First to Recognize  
Christ (John 21:1-7)

# A Lesson in Love

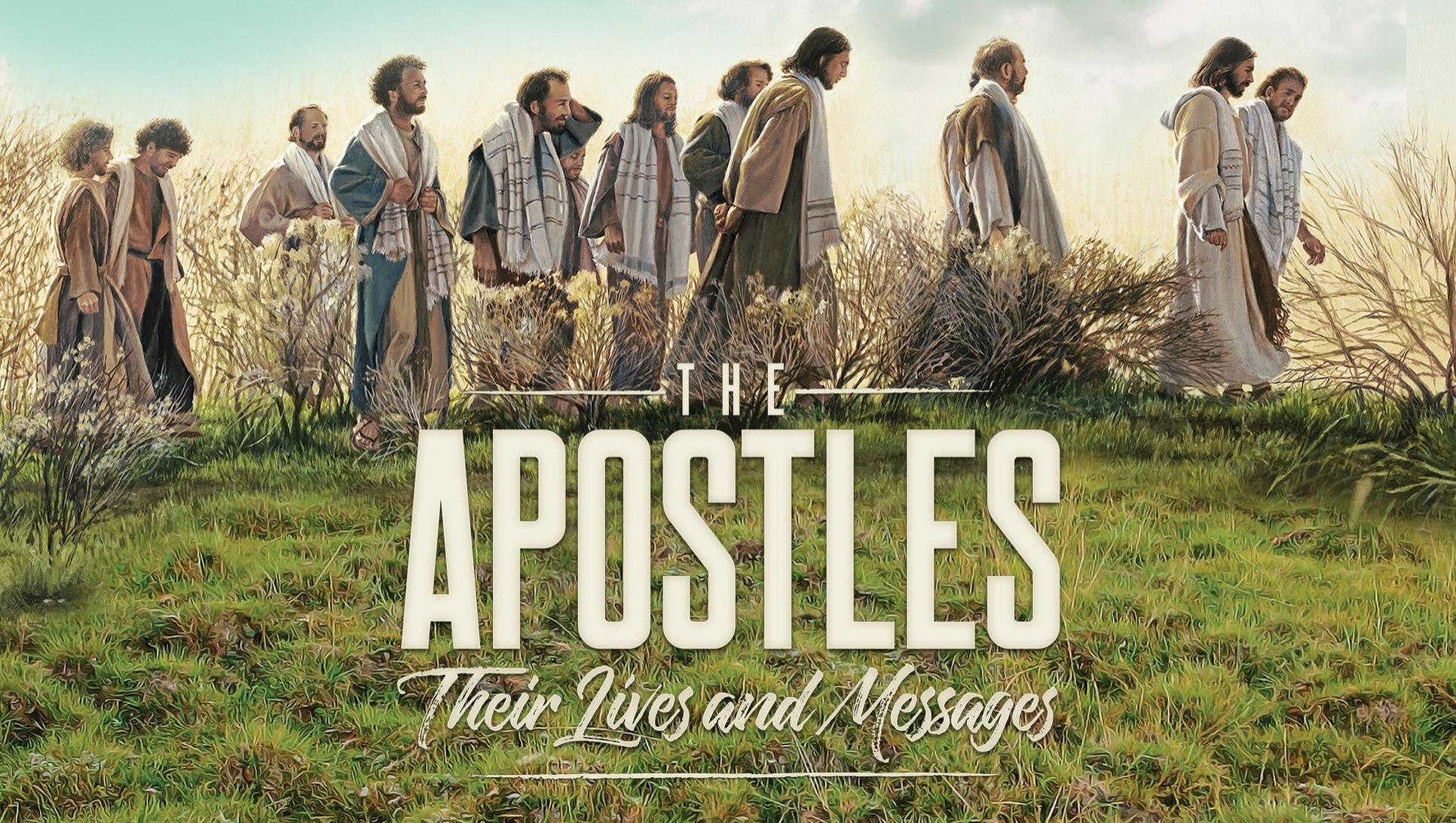
- Christ Taught John Love and Truth
  - John encouraged Christians to reflect love to each other (1 John 4:7–11).
  - John gave warnings about error and false teaching (1 John 4:1–6).

# John's Ministry

- Wrote John, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> John, and Revelation
- Preached in Asia (Eusebius)
- Founded Churches (Foxe)
- Exiled to Isle of Patmos
- Escaped a Violent Death (Foxe)

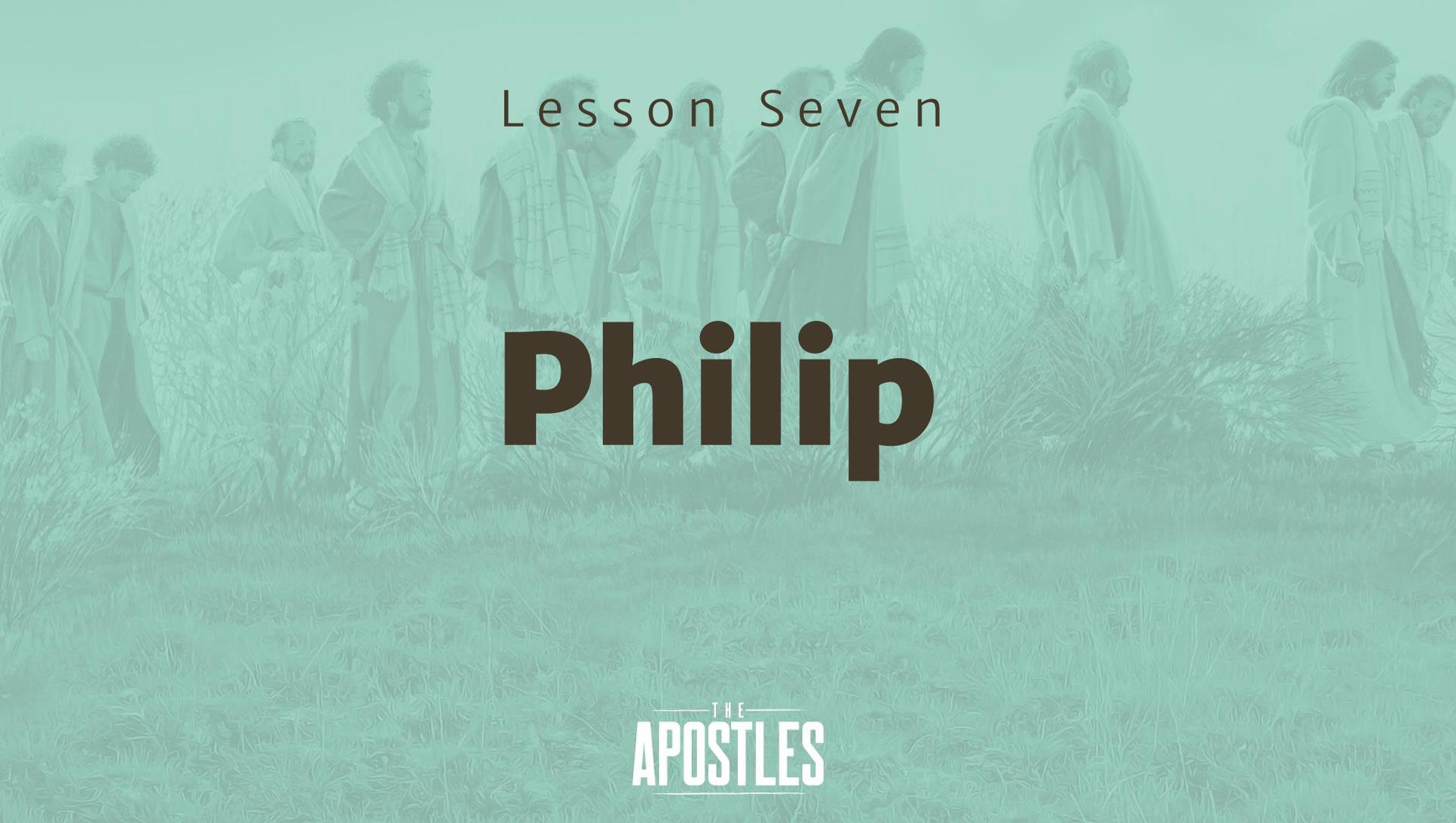


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Lesson Seven

# Philip

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# Philip's Background

- From Bethsaida (John 1:44)

# Philip's Character

- Relied on Personal Experience
- Struggled with Faith

# Philip's Call

- Christ Chose Philip Personally (John 1:43)
- Philip Identified Christ as the Prophesied Messiah (John 1:45)

# Philip's Faith

- The Test of Feeding over 5,000 People (John 6:5–6)
  - Philip calculated how much food they could buy (v. 7).

# Philip's Faith (cont.)

- The Greeks Who Came to See Jesus (John 12:20–22)
  - Philip's uncertainty
  - Philip's caution (v. 22)

# Philip's Faith (cont.)

- Christ Shows the Father  
(John 14:4–11)
  - Philip wanted physical evidence (v. 8).

# Philip's Faith (cont.)

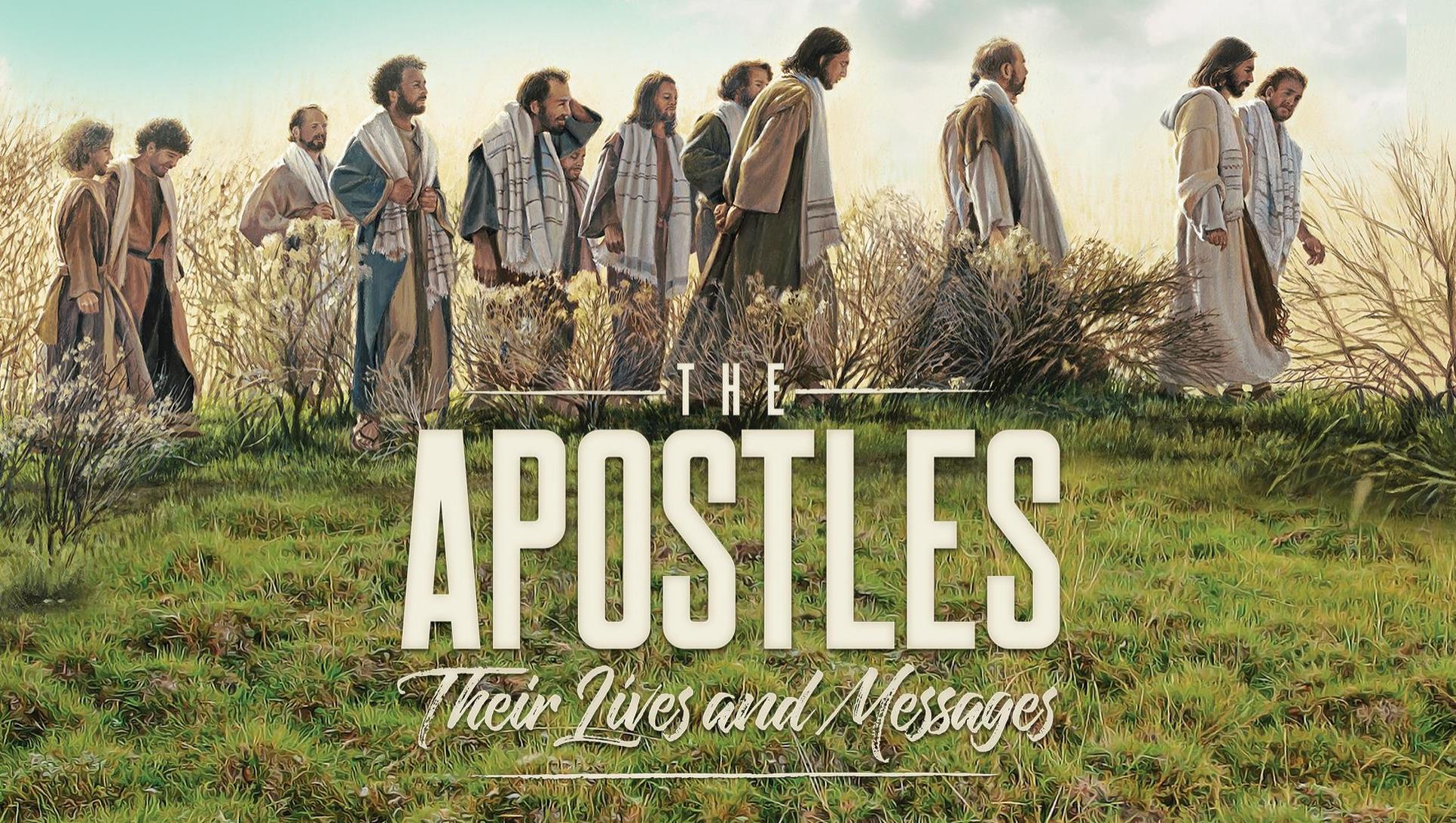
- **Two ways to see the Father (John 14:10–11)**
  - Through Christ's words (Matt. 11:27; John 10:30)
  - Through Christ's works (John 5:19–23)

# Philip's Faith (cont.)

- Christ Challenged Philip to Believe

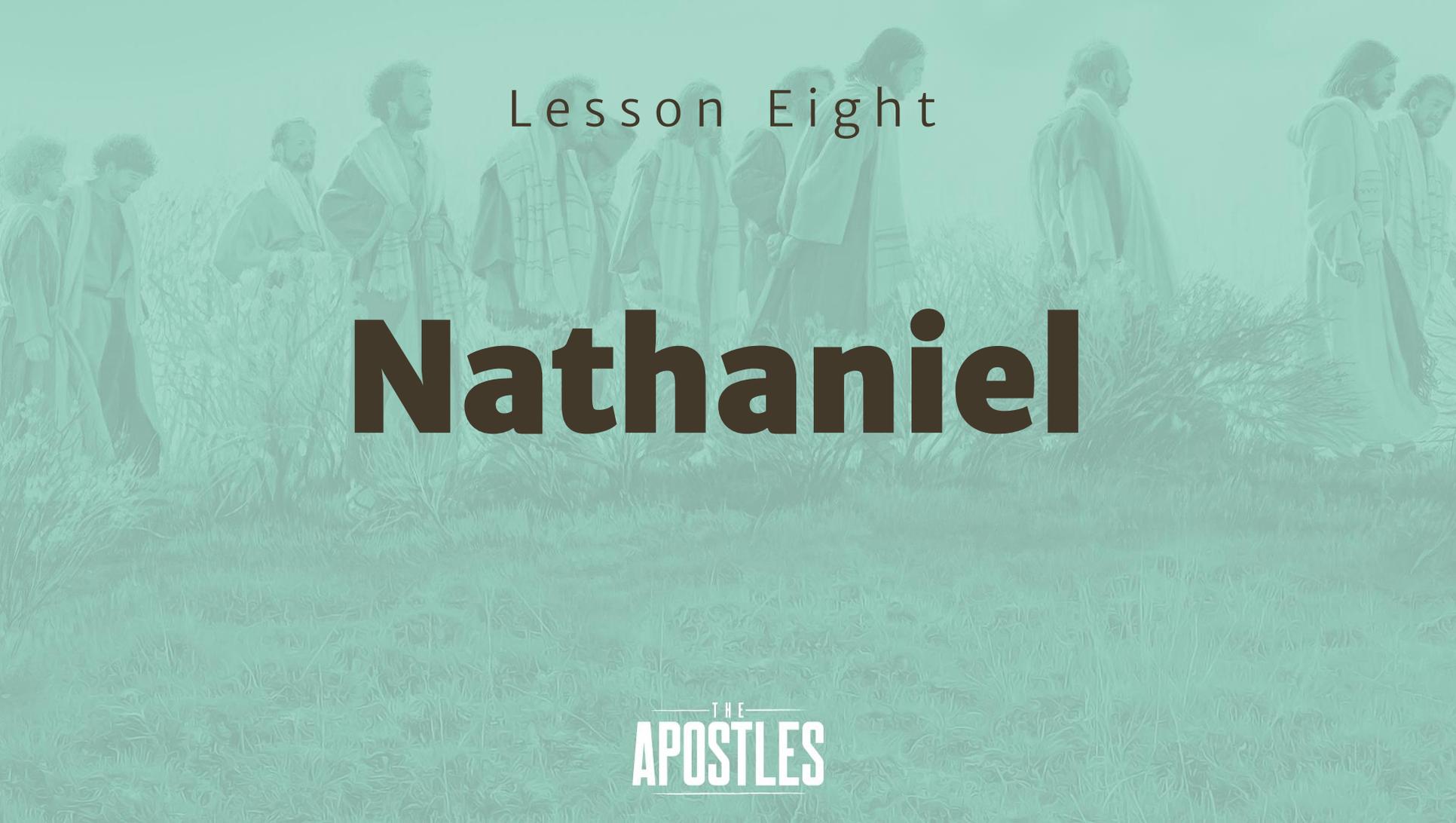


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Lesson Eight

# Nathaniel

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# Nathaniel's Background

- From Cana, in Galilee (John 21:2)
- Name Means “God Has Given”
  - Also known as Bartholomew
  - Always listed with Philip (Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:14)

# Nathaniel's Background (cont.)

- **Family**
  - Father—Talmai  
(Bar-Talmai = Bartholomew)

# Nathaniel's Character (John 1:45–51)

- Knowledgeable (vv. 45–46)
  - Knew the Messiah was prophesied to come out of Bethlehem (Micah 5:2)
  - Jesus was born in Bethlehem, although He grew up in Nazareth.

# Nathaniel's Character (cont.)

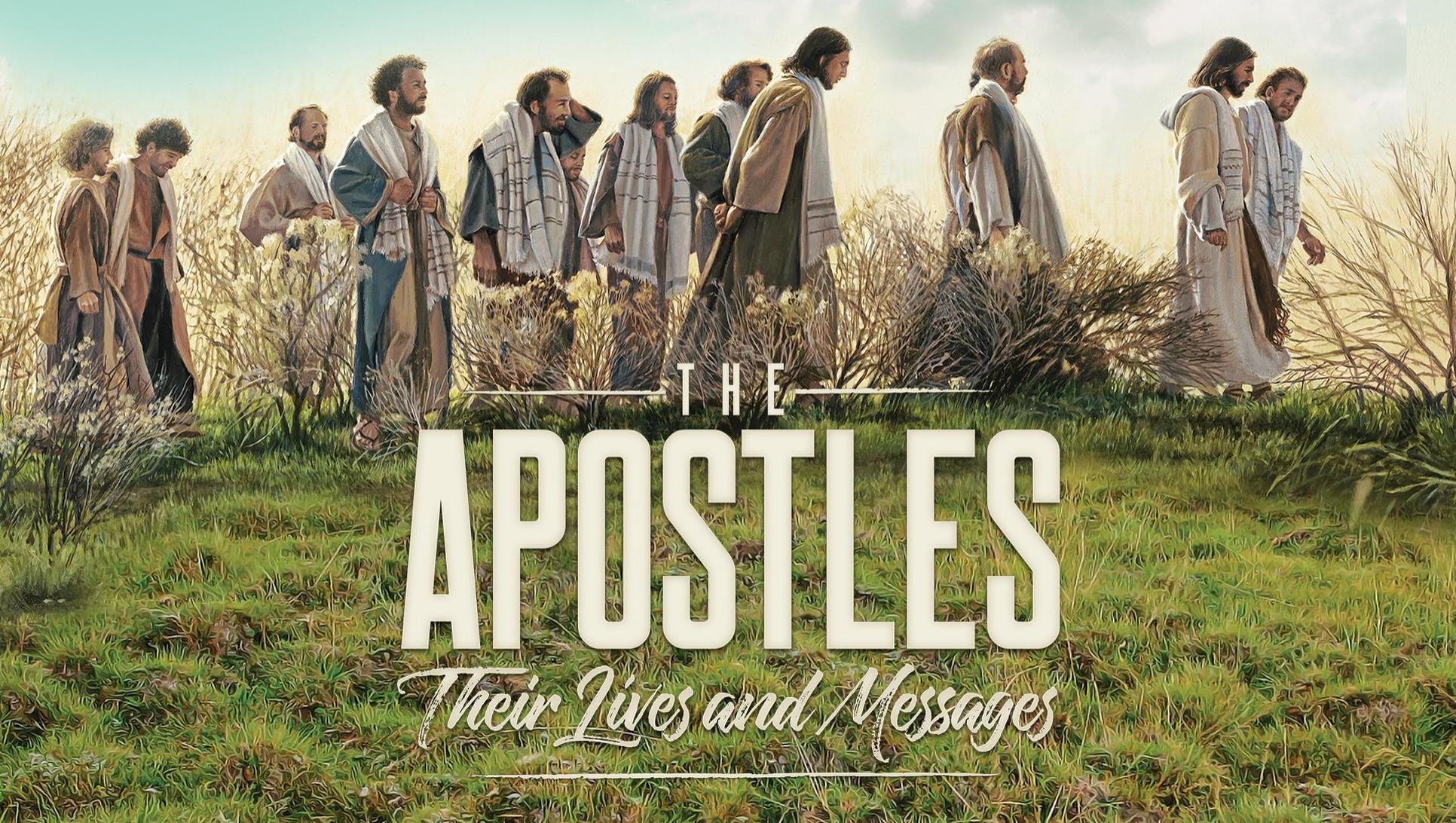
- **Honest, Without Deceit (v. 47)**
  - Trusted a *Messiah*, not the Law
  - Asked an honest question (John 1:46)

# **Nathaniel's Ministry**

- Preached in India

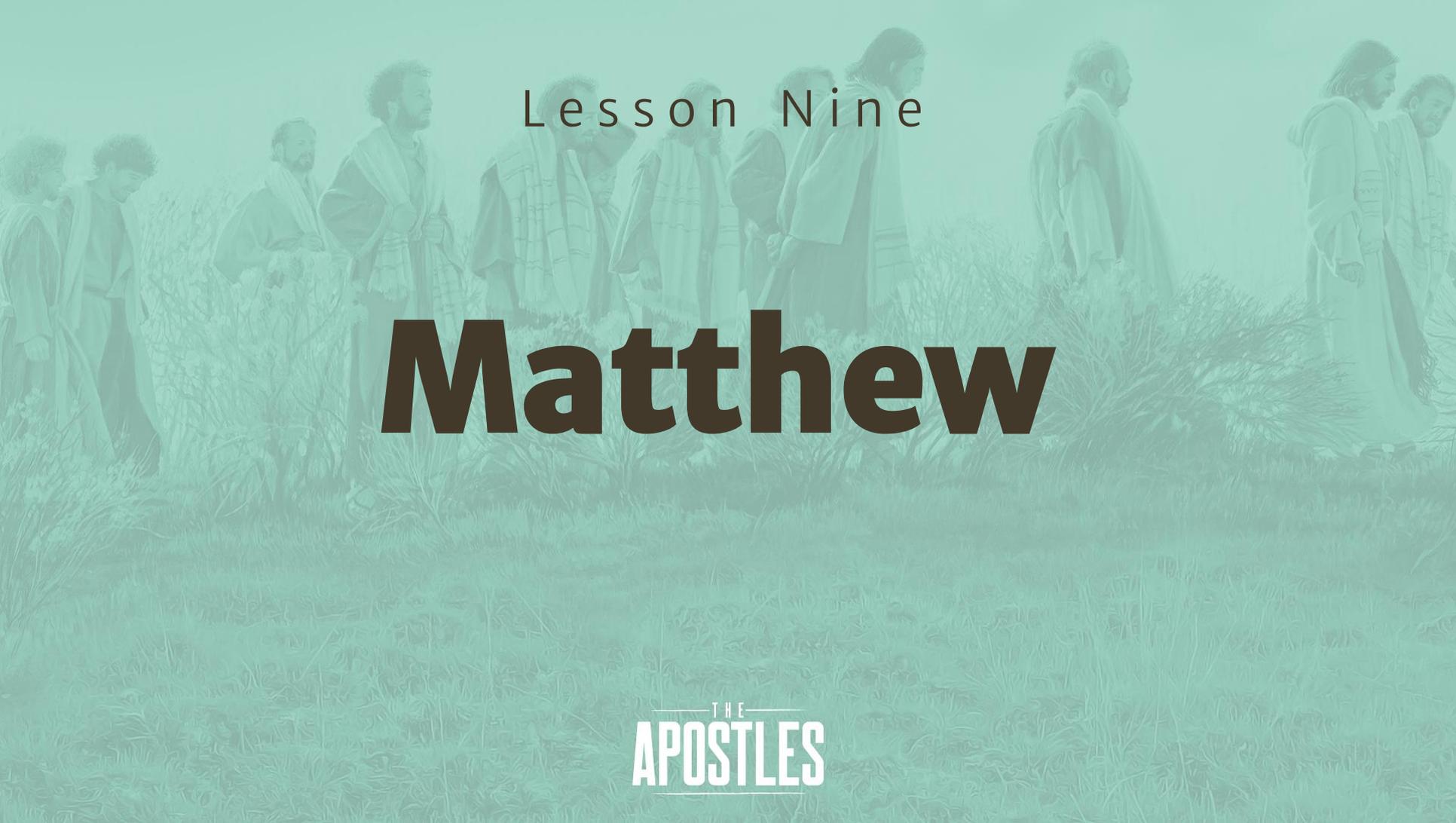


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Lesson Nine

# Matthew

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# The Publicans

- Jews Who Collected Tax for the Romans
- Bad Reputation from overtaxing the people and pocketing the difference (Luke 3:12–13)

# Bad Reputation

- Leeches—lived off of other people's resources
- Sinners—practiced dishonesty and theft
- Social outcasts—no one wanted to associate with them
- National traitors—allied with Rome and oppressed their own people for personal gain

# Matthew's Background

- Matthew's Father—Alphaeus
- Jewish Name—Levi
  - A descendant of the Levites, the Hebrew tribe that served as priests

# Matthew's Character

- **Loved Money**
  - He wanted riches even if it meant throwing away family, country, conscience, and religion.
  - Money itself is not evil, but loving money is responsible for all sorts of evils (1 Tim. 6:10). Loving money brings sorrow and causes people to abandon their faith in God.

# Matthew's Call

- **Its Solemnity**
  - Matthew would have to sacrifice what he loved.
- **Its Mercy**
  - Christ treated Matthew with compassion.

# Matthew's Call (cont.)

- **Its Promise**
  - Matthew sacrificed little in comparison to what he gained in Christ.
- **Its Transforming Power**
  - Matthew invited his friends to meet Christ.

# Matthew's Faith

- **Incorruptible Treasure in Heaven**  
**(Matt. 6:19–34)**
  - Valuing the spiritual over the material
  - Trusting God, not money, to provide for our needs

# Matthew's Faith (cont.)

- **The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Most Valuable Pearl (Matt. 13:44–45)**
  - Leaving everything behind to pursue that which is most valuable of all—  
Christ

# Matthew's Ministry

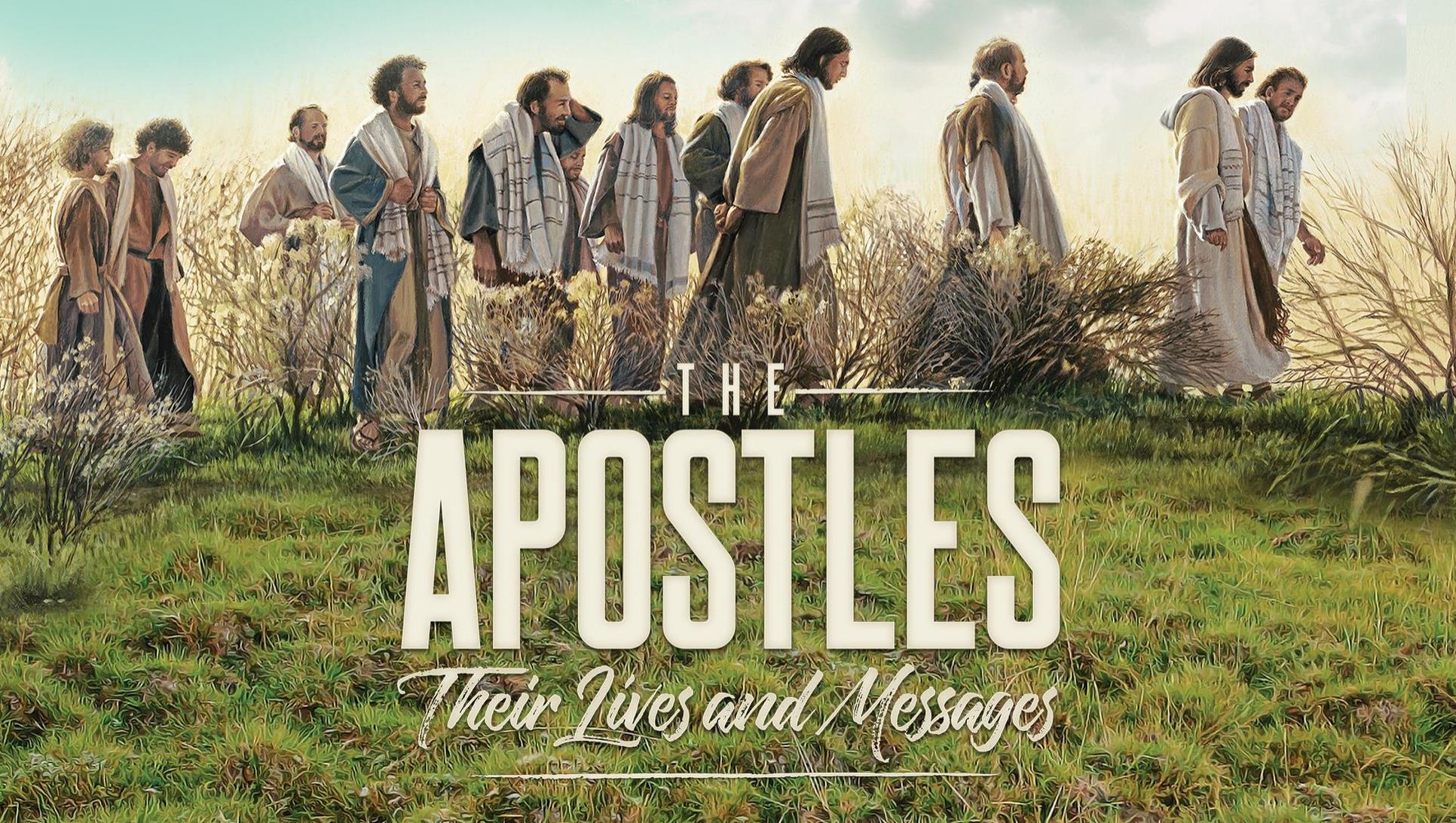
- Wrote the Gospel of Matthew
  - Offered a unique, Jewish perspective of the Messiah's kingship

# Matthew's Ministry (cont.)

- **Provided details that the other Gospel books omit**
  - The visit of the wise men (Matt. 2)
  - Jesus' royal genealogy through Joseph (1:1–17)
  - Several parables (Matt. 22:1–14; 25:1–30)
  - Details of the Sermon on the Mount

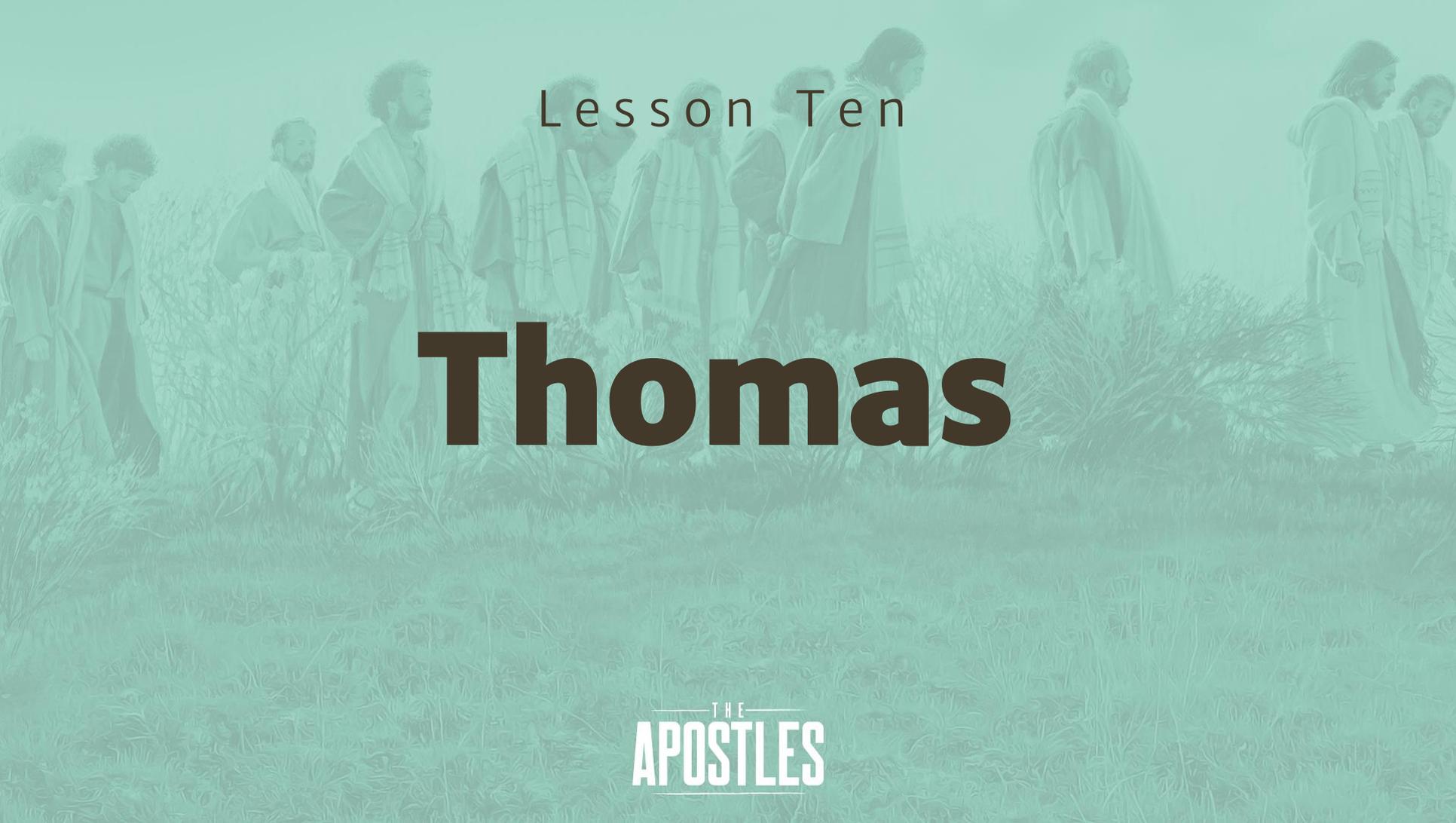


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Lesson Ten

# Thomas

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# Thomas's Background

- Nickname Meaning "Twin"
- Greek Name: Didymus (John 20:24)

# Thomas's Love for the Lord

- Willing to Die with Christ  
(John 11:6–16)
  - Responded with loyalty and courage
  - Lacked understanding of Christ's purpose

# Thomas's Love for the Lord (cont.)

- Desired to Follow the Lord (John 14:1–6)
  - Expressed his confusion about Christ leaving
  - Didn't understand Christ's words

# **Thomas's Faith (John 20:25–28)**

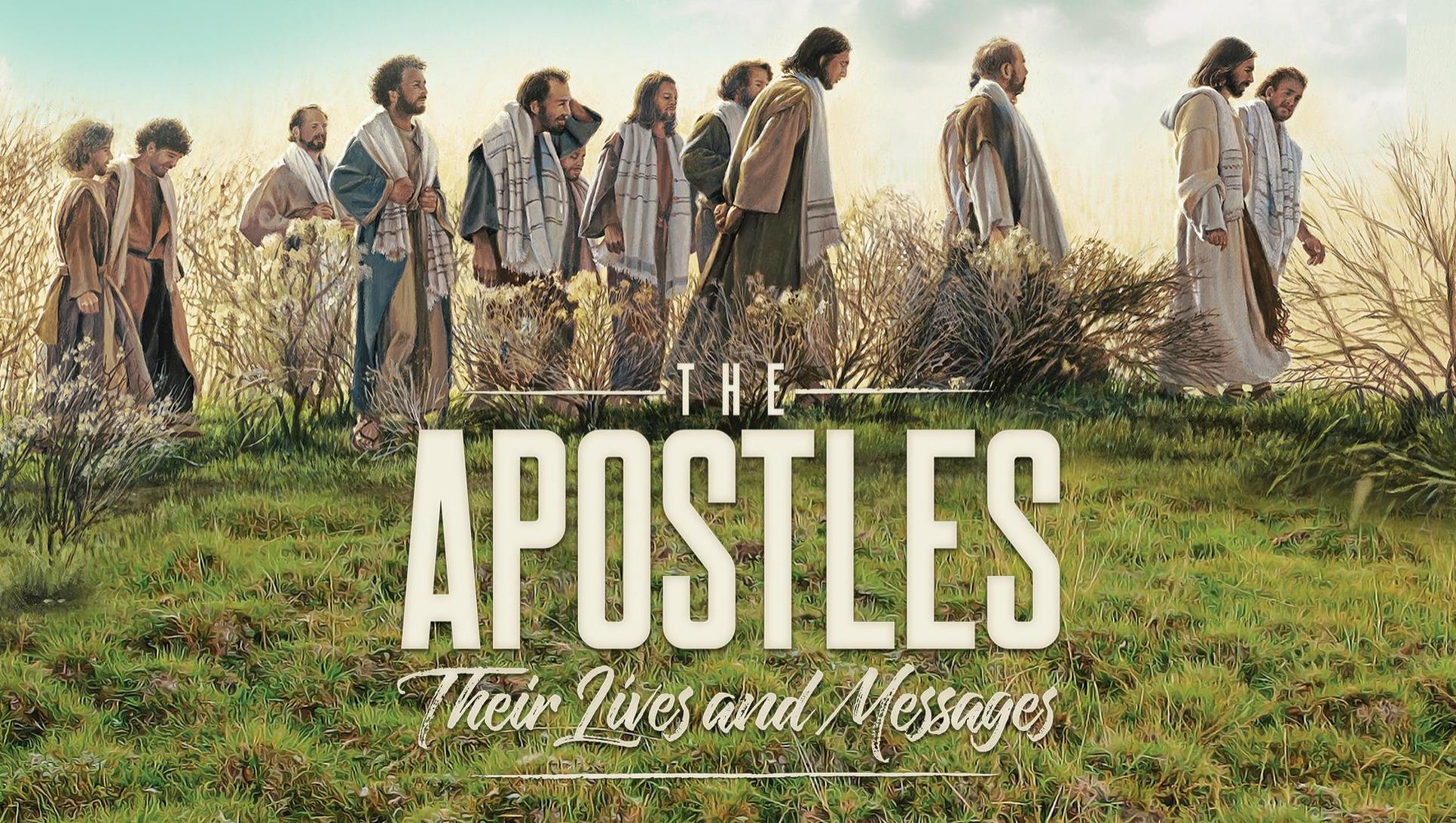
- His Declaration of Belief (v. 28)

# Thomas's Ministry

- Preached in Parthia, a region of northwest Iran (Eusebius), and India (Foxe)

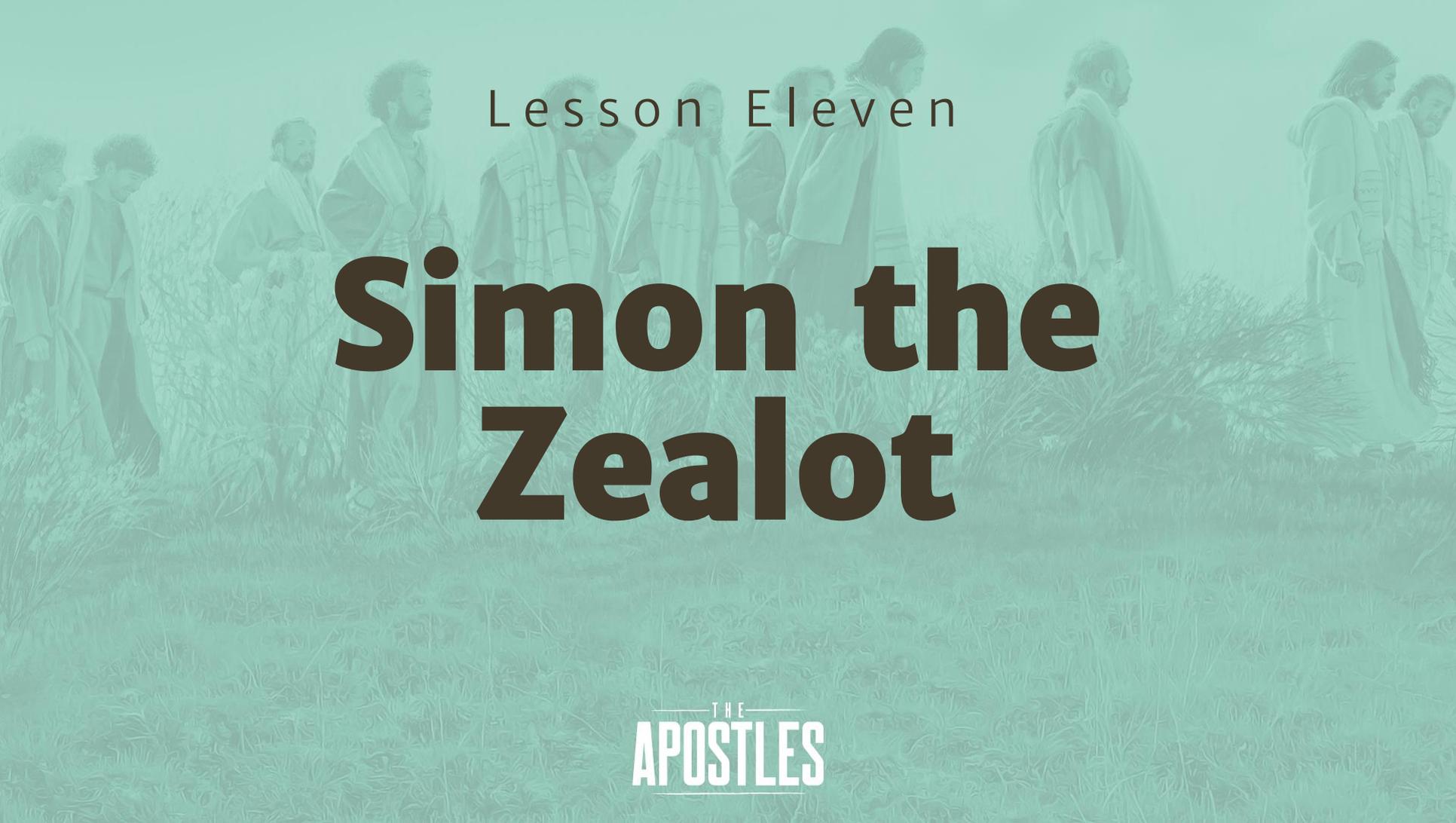


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Lesson Eleven

# Simon the Zealot

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# **The Zealots**

- **Jewish Terrorists Who Fought Political Subjugation**

# Simon's Background

- **Simon's Name**
  - Known as “the Zealot” or “Zelotes”
  - Canaanite from *kananaios* (Gr.), meaning “zealous”

# Simon's Character

- Looked for a Messiah to Overthrow Roman Oppressors
- Hoped that Christ Would Physically Free Israel (Acts 1:6)

# Simon's Faith

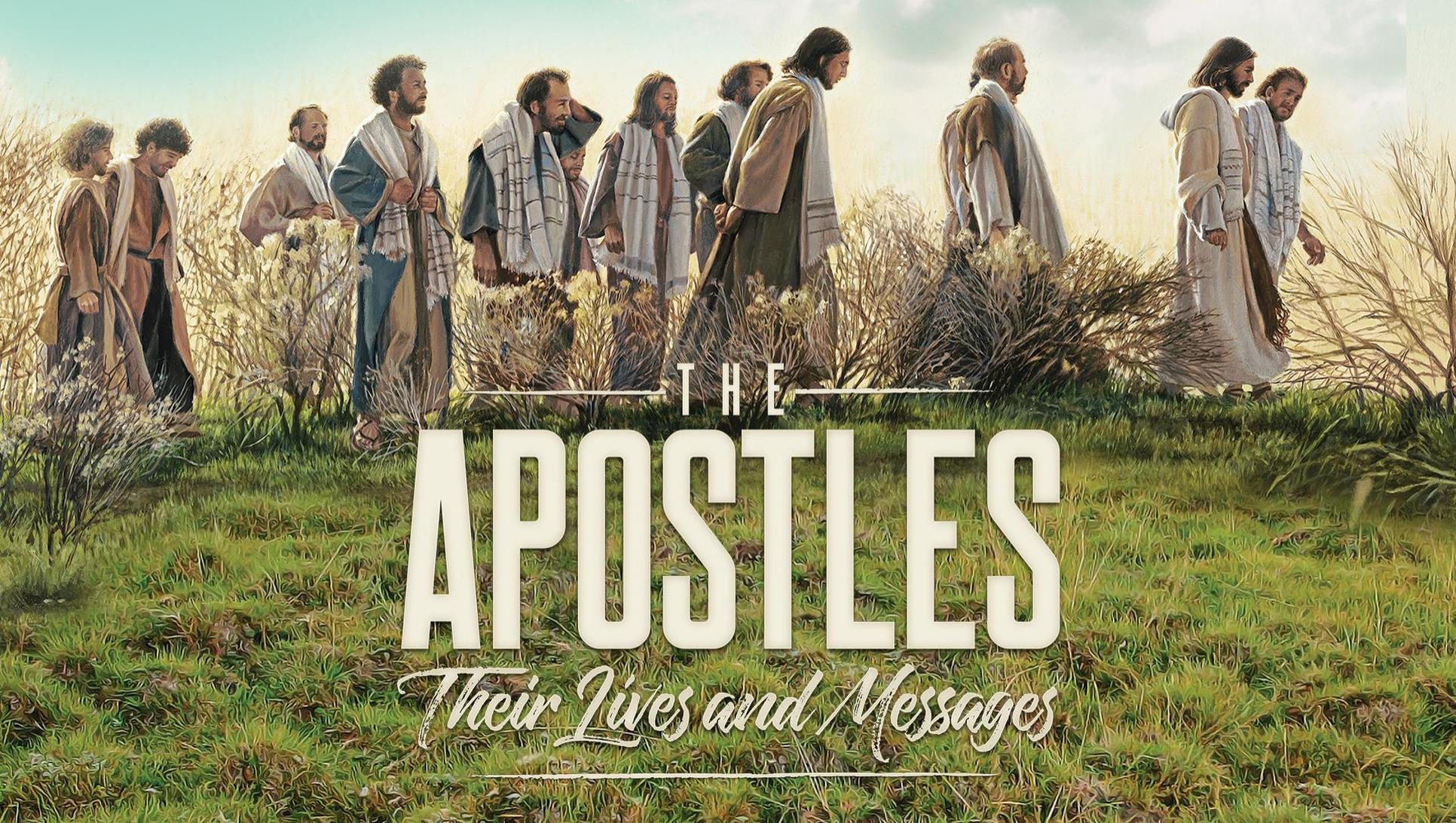
- His Surprising Decision to Follow Christ
  - Christ's teaching on paying taxes (Matt. 22:15–22)
  - Christ's teaching on fighting by the sword (John 18:10–11)

# Simon's Ministry

- Listed with the Other Apostles After Christ's Resurrection (Acts 1:13)
- No Longer a Zealot (Luke 6:15)
  - Simon “who *was* called the Zealot”



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Lesson Twelve

# Judas Iscariot

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# Judas's Background

- **Name**
  - Hebrew name—Judah, “Praise the Lord”
  - Judas is now synonymous with “traitor”

# Judas's Background (cont.)

- **City**
  - From Kerioth, in Judea
    - The Moabites, who founded Kerioth, opposed God.
    - Judas was in the minority among many disciples who came from Galilee.
- **Family**
  - Father—Simon (John 13:2)

# Judas's Discipleship

- Listed with the Apostles (Matt. 10:4)
- Deliberately Chosen by Christ (John 6:70)
  - Jesus prophesied that Judas would betray Him (John 17:12).
  - Judas's actions were prophesied in the Old Testament (Jer. 19:1–13; Zech. 11:12–13).

# Judas's Greed

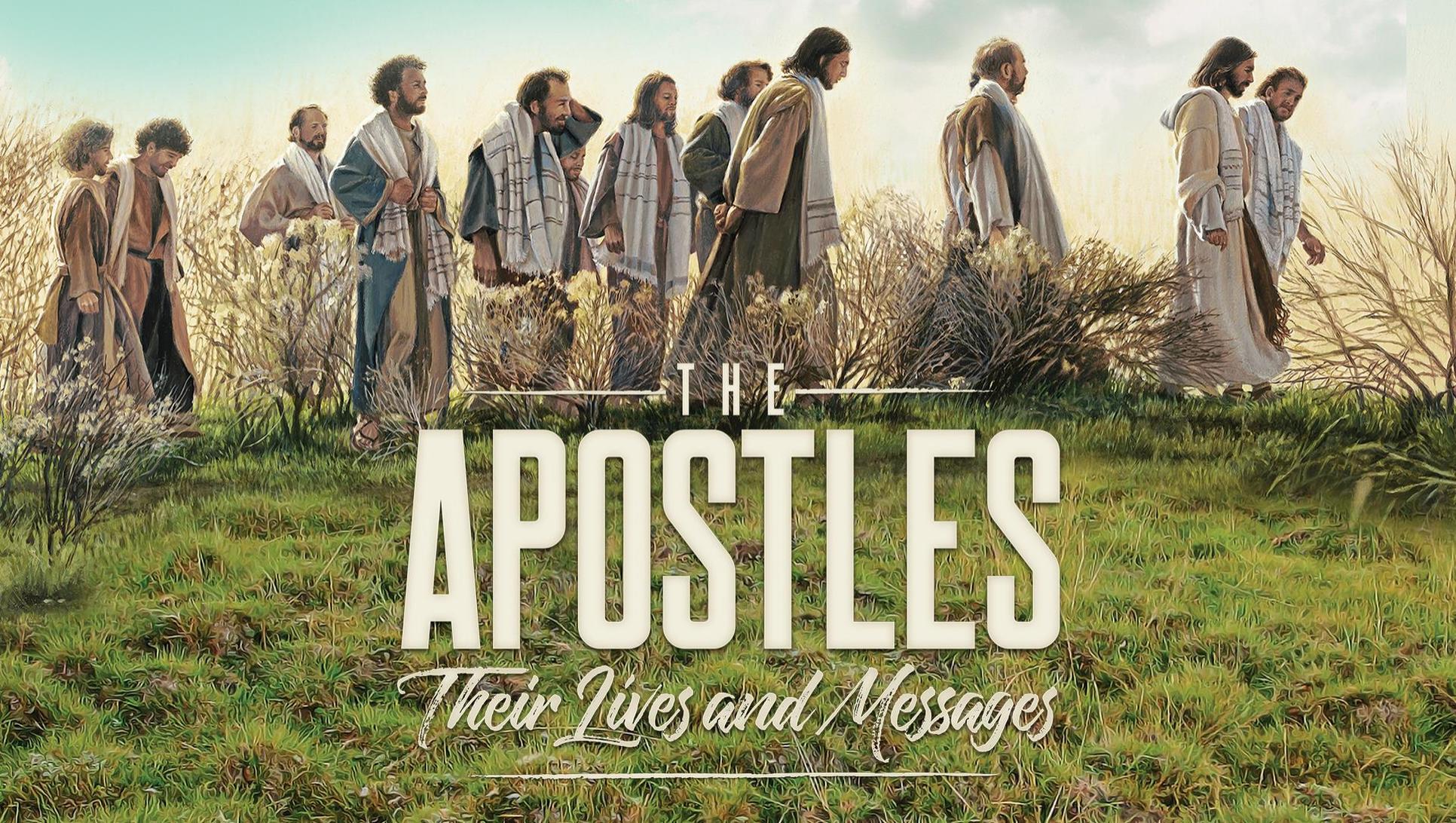
- **Moralized His Criticism**
- **Tried to Disguise His Greed with a False Concern for the Poor (vv. 5–6)**
- **Did Not Think Jesus Was Worth Such a Generous Gift**

# Judas's Betrayal (John 13:21–30)

- **Controlled by Greed**  
(Matt. 26:14–16)
- **Stopped Loving the Lord**
- **Consumed with Remorse**  
(Matt. 27:3–10)

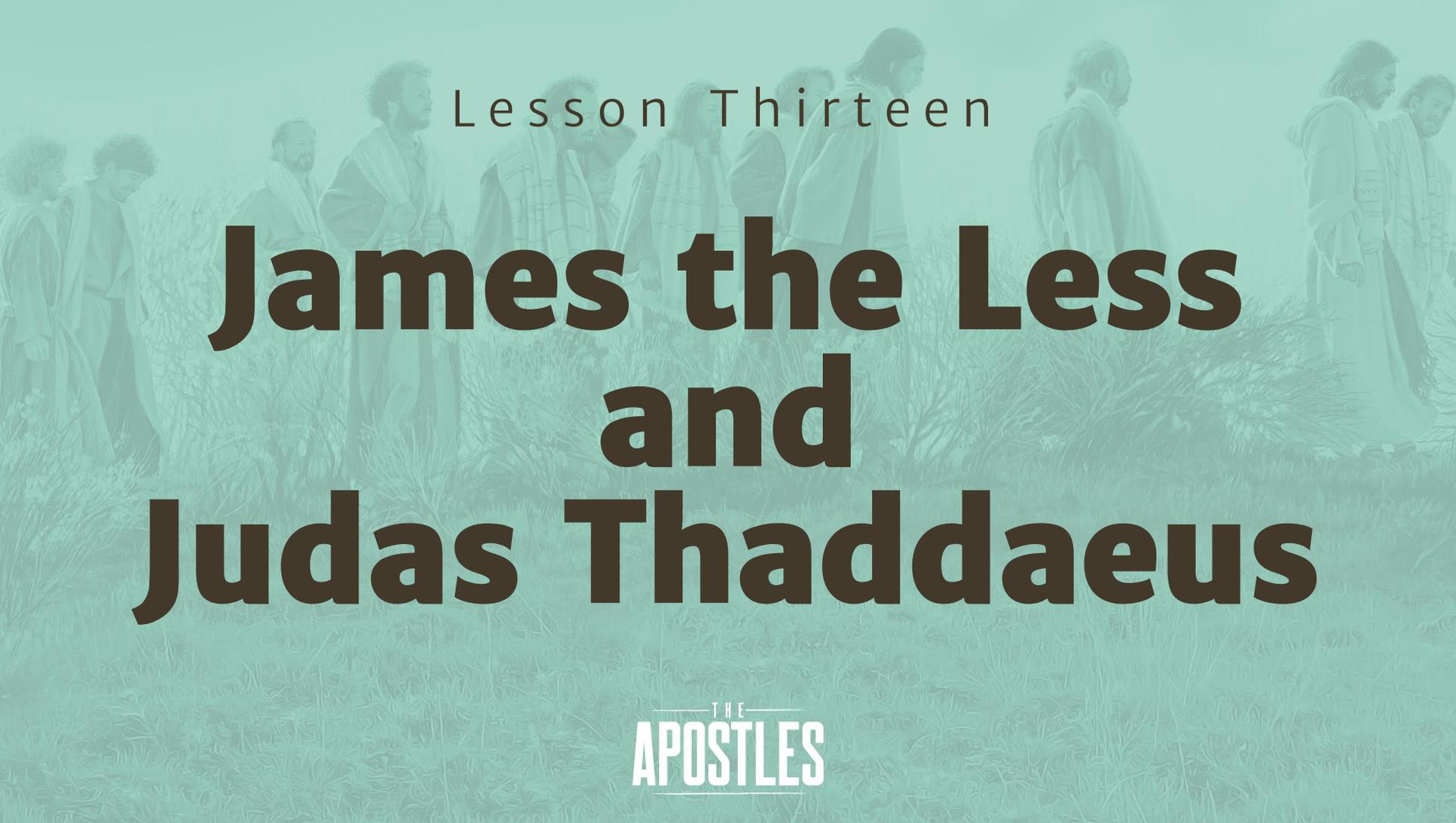


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Lesson Thirteen

# James the Less and Judas Thaddaeus

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# James the Less

- **Known as “the Less”**
  - *Mikros* (Gr.)
    - Short in height
    - Younger in age
    - Low in rank or influence

# James the Less (cont.)

- **Family**
  - Father—Alphaeus (Matt. 10:3)
  - Mother—Mary (Matt. 27:56; Mark 15:40)
    - Followed Christ and witnessed His crucifixion (Mark 15:40)
  - Brother—Joses (Mark 15:40)

# Judas Thaddaeus

- **Background**

- Two Names

- Judas (Luke 6:16)
    - Lebbaeus (Matt. 10:3), meaning “man of heart”
    - Surname—Thaddaeus, meaning “large-hearted, courageous”

# Judas Thaddaeus (cont.)

- **Family**
  - Father—James (Luke 6:16)
- **Discipleship**
  - Only one recorded statement (John 14:22)
    - Judas Thaddaeus asked why Christ would show Himself to the Apostles but not to the world.
    - Christ said that He would show Himself to the person who loved Him and kept His commandments.

# Lessons from James and Judas

- Everyone Is Important to God
  - God uses all kinds of people.  
(1 Cor. 1:26–31)
  - All credit belongs to God.

# Lessons from James and Judas (cont.)

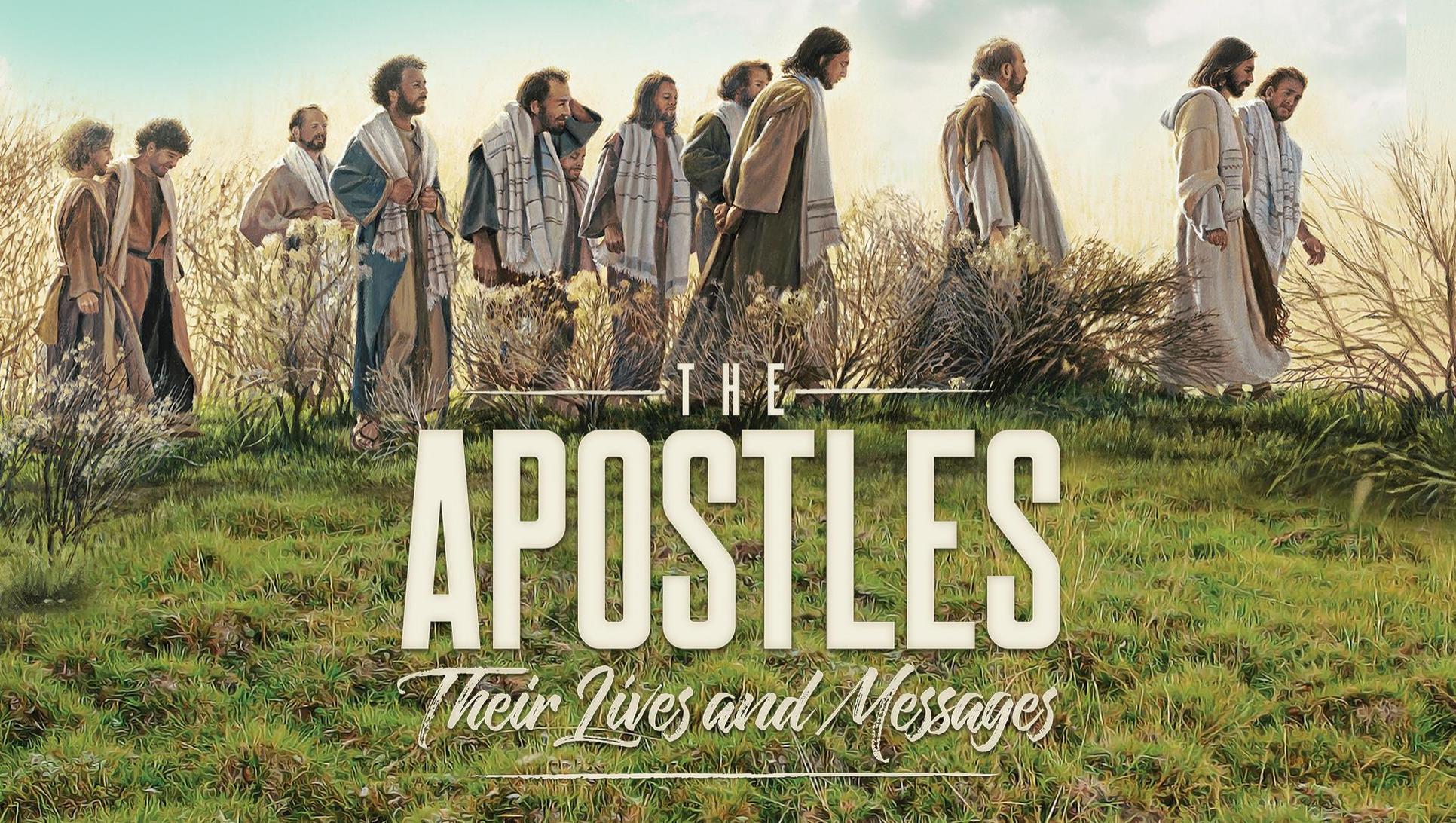
- **The Bible Glorifies God**
  - Resist the temptation to worship people.
  - Don't attribute God's work to people's abilities.
  - The apostles chose to glorify God, not themselves.

# Lessons from James and Judas (cont.)

- God Notes Obscure Service
  - People may forget you, but God won't.

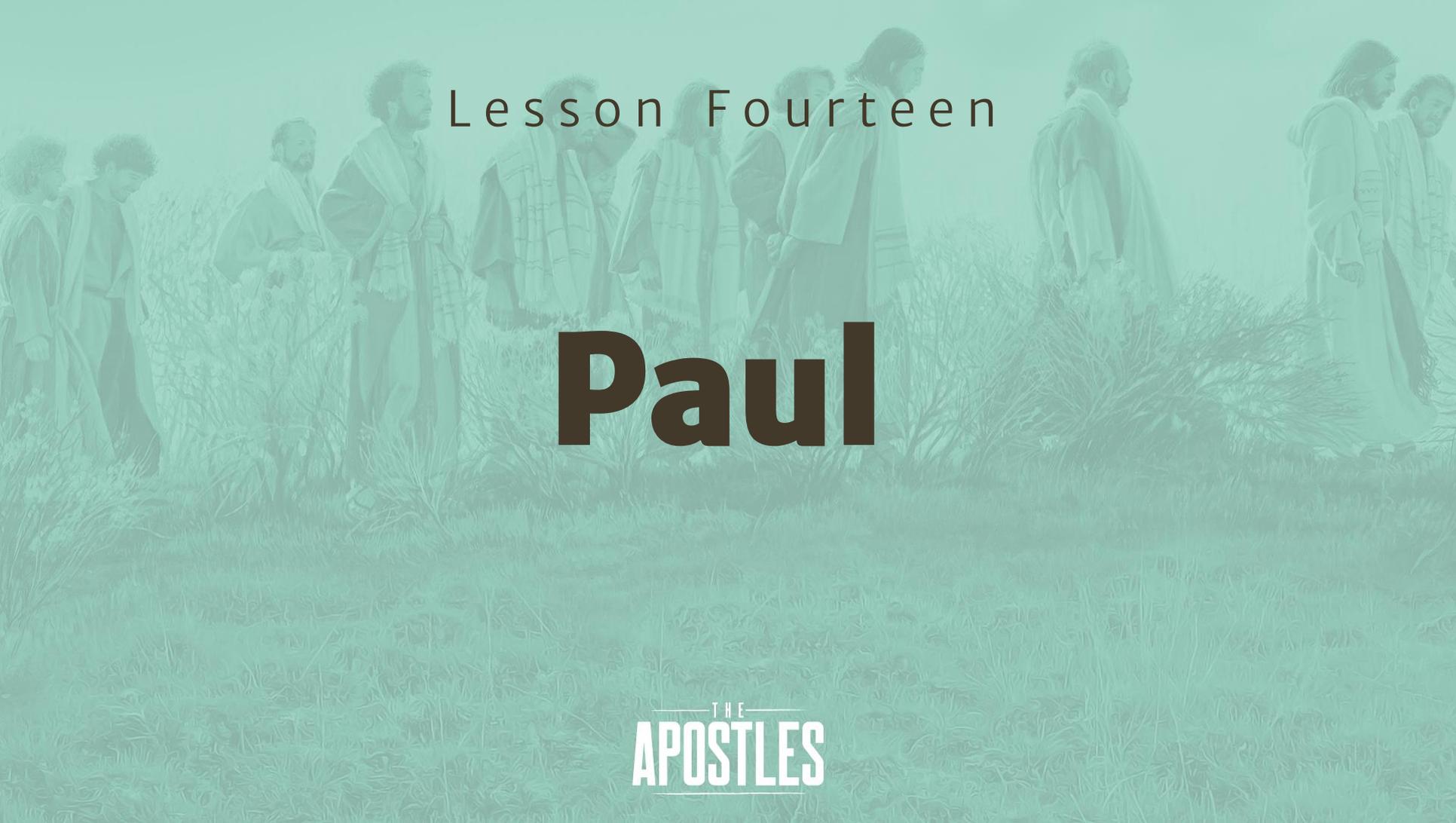


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Lesson Fourteen

# Paul

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# Paul's Background

- **Family**
  - Little known about Paul's family
  - Was unmarried
    - Singleness allowed Paul greater flexibility in ministry.

# Paul's Background (cont.)

- **City**
  - Born in Tarsus (Acts 22:3)
  - Possessed Roman citizenship (Acts 22:27–28)

# Paul's Background (cont.)

- **Education**

- Learned from Gamaliel and studied Jewish Law (Acts 5:34; 22:3)
  - Chose to enter the service of the High Priest (Acts 9:1–2)
- A tentmaker by trade (Acts 18:2–3)

# Paul's Background (cont.)

- **Name**
  - Hebrew name—Saul
  - Roman name—Paulus
  - Used interchangeably, though "Paul" appears more often in his writings

# Paul's Call

- On the Way to Persecute Christians in Damascus (Acts 9:1–2)
- Called Directly by God (Acts 9:5–6)

# Paul's Faith

- Believed Christ (Acts 9:17–18)
- Shared His Testimony  
(Gal. 1:11–24)

# Paul's Ministry

- Preached the Gospel  
(Rom. 15:20–21)
  - He had a burden for preaching to people who had not yet heard the gospel.

# Paul's Ministry

- Tested Doctrine (2 Cor. 11:12–15)
  - He corrected unbiblical doctrine that crept into the early churches.

# Paul's Ministry (cont.)

- Remained Loyal to God
  - Beatings (Acts 16:37; 21:32)
  - Imprisonment (Acts 16:25; 23:18; 24:27)
  - Slander (1 Cor. 4:9–13)

# Paul's Ministry (cont.)

- Persecution from religionists  
(Acts 21:27–28)
- Threat of death (Acts 26:21)
- Personal struggles (2 Cor. 12:7)
- Abandonment (Phil. 4:15; 2 Tim. 4:10)

# Paul's Qualifications as an Apostle

- Saw the Post-Resurrection Christ
- Chosen Directly by Christ
- Received Teaching Directly from Christ
- Fulfilled the Duties of an Apostle

# Paul's Spiritual Gifts

- Healing (Acts 14:10; 28:8)
- Miracles (Acts 13:11; 16:18; 19:11–12)
- Prophecy and Visions (Acts 9:3–7, 12; 22:17; 2 Cor. 12:1–5)
- Supernatural Ability to Speak in Other Languages (1 Cor. 14:18)

# Purpose of These Spiritual Gifts

- To Preach Christ

# Cessation of the Revelatory Gifts

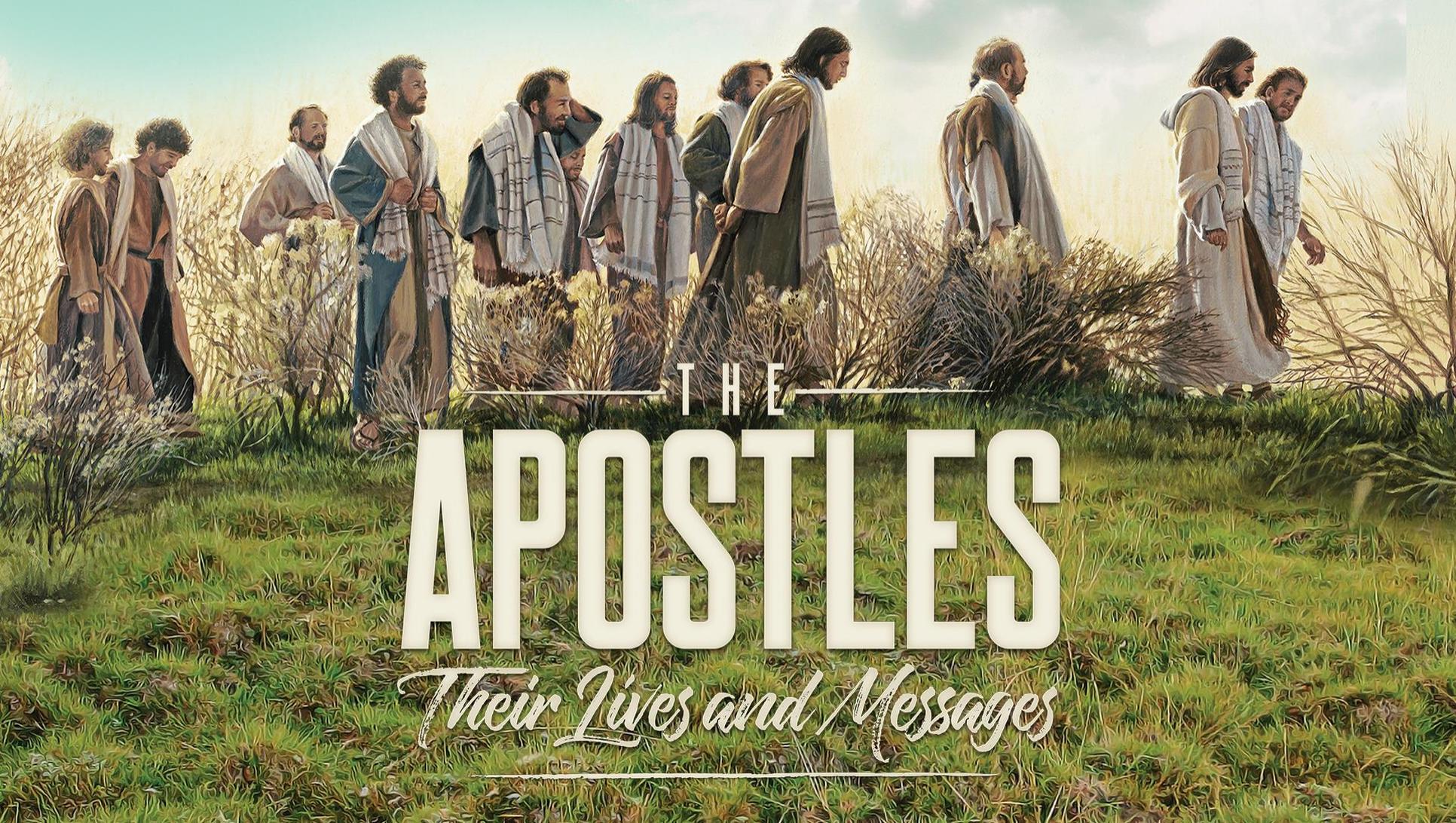
- God No Longer Gives Direct Revelation (Rev. 22:18–19)
- God's Word Is Sufficient (2 Tim. 3:16)

# **Paul's Death**

- **Eventually Beheaded by Nero, the Roman Emperor**



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Lesson Fifteen

# Christ's Messengers Today

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# Following Christ

- Knowledge Alone Doesn't Save Us  
(John 3:1–21)
- We Choose to Believe Him  
(Rom. 4:3, 5)
- God Changes Our Lives (2 Cor. 5:17)

# God's Messengers

- All Christians Are "Sent Ones" — Apostles (Acts 1:8)
- Qualifications of God's Messengers
  - Salvation
  - Spirit-control

# God's Messengers (cont.)

- **God Does Not Disqualify Us Based on...**
  - Nationality (Eph. 2:11–22)
  - Gender (Gal. 3:28)
  - Training or education (1 Cor. 1:20–21)
  - Social status (1 Cor. 1:26)
  - Past sins (1 Cor. 6:9–10)

# God's Commission

- Preach the Gospel  
(Matt. 28:18–20)
- Test Doctrine (Acts 17:10–11)
- Remain Loyal to God  
(Jude 20–25)



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