

Matthew 10:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican;
James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname
was Thaddaeus;

Analysis

The list continues with diverse figures: 'Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus.' Matthew identifies himself as 'the publican' (ο τελωνης), acknowledging his despised former profession. This self-designation reveals humility and awareness of grace—Jesus called him from tax collecting to apostleship. The others remain relatively obscure in Scripture, reminding us that faithful service doesn't always mean public recognition. God uses both prominent and hidden servants. These men represent ordinary people transformed by extraordinary calling. Their selection demolishes merit-based thinking: Jesus chose not the qualified but those He would qualify through His presence and Spirit.

Historical Context

Tax collectors were collaborators with Rome's oppressive system, extracting revenue plus profit. For Matthew to include his shameful past in his own Gospel demonstrates remarkable transparency. Philip came from Bethsaida, same town as Peter and Andrew. Thomas, famous for doubt (John 20:24-29), illustrates that questioning doesn't disqualify from apostleship. Thaddaeus may be the same as Judas son of James (Luke 6:16). The relative obscurity of several apostles reminds us that church history often elevates some while forgetting others equally faithful.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What does Matthew's inclusion of his shameful past teach about honest testimony?
2. How does the obscurity of several apostles challenge our desire for recognition?
3. What does Jesus' choice of 'unqualified' apostles teach about grace and calling?

Interlinear Text

Φίλιππος	καὶ	Βαρθολομαῖος	Θωμᾶς	καὶ	Ματθαῖος
Philip	and	Bartholomew	Thomas	and	Matthew
G5376	G2532	G918	G2381	G2532	G3156
ὁ	τελώνης	Ἰάκωβος	ὁ	ὁ	Ἀλφαίου καὶ
the son of	the publican	James	the son of	the son of	Alphaeus and
G3588	G5057	G2385	G3588	G3588	G256 G2532
Λεββαῖος	ὁ	ἐπικληθεὶς	Θαδδαῖος		
Lebbaeus	the son of	whose surname was	Thaddaeus		
G3002	G3588	G1941	G2280		

Additional Cross-References

Acts 1:13 (Parallel theme): And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.

Mark 3:18 (Parallel theme): And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite,

Matthew 9:9 (Parallel theme): And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

Mark 2:14 (Parallel theme): And as he passed by, he saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him.

John 11:16 (Parallel theme): Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

John 21:2 (Parallel theme): There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.