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*"Christ caring for People
through People"*

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Luke 6

2-16 *At about that same time he climbed a mountain to pray. He was there all night in prayer before God. The next day he summoned his disciples; from them he selected twelve he designated as apostles: Simon, whom he named Peter, Andrew, his brother, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James, son of Alphaeus, Simon, called the Zealot, Judas, son of James, Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him.*
17-20 *Coming down off the mountain with them, he stood on a plain surrounded by disciples, and was soon joined by a huge congregation from all over Judea and Jerusalem, even from the seaside towns of Tyre and Sidon. They had come both to hear him and to be cured of their ailments.*

Dear Friends in Christ,

Are you facing any important decisions today? Have you been weighing the possibilities? Do you have all the background information you need to help you? Are you concerned about what negative outcomes might be the result if you don't chose correctly? Then you will be able to understand how Jesus might have felt when he was about to select which among the hundreds who had begun to follow him around the countryside should become his primary team to work with him in his God-given assignment and to continue in this work when he was no longer able to do it himself. This was a major and very important decision to be made. Some of the persons that he might chose didn't seem particularly well suited for the task. Simon, who later was called Peter, for example, was a bit of a hot-head. It didn't take a lot to upset him, and when he did get upset, his temper was explosive. How could he preach gentleness and love and forgiveness? Then there were the fishermen. Yes he had called them from their nets to be with him, but really? They were coarse and uneducated. Could they be relied on to teach the finer points of the reality of a God who was forgiving and loving, infinite and holy? Could they ever really hope to understand why he would have to die and that he would then be raised to life again. And Simon who was called the Zealot? He was always taking everything to the extreme. The smallest thing became an all-consuming issue, overshadowing everything else to the point of the ridiculous. And what about Judas? Money was his all consuming interest. Jesus could see that he could even make this concern a personal matter by taking an extra share of the cash for his own pocket. Could he later even seek to profit by the cruelty of betrayal?

Jesus certainly was faced with some major choices! So what did he do? "At about that same time he climbed a mountain to pray. He was there all night in prayer before God. The next day he summoned his disciples. He sought to know God's will in these choices. There were no perfect persons available for the jobs. But Jesus knew that his Father, God, could work with these imperfect ones to achieve his purposes. And God did. More than that He still does! I recall a man who when asked if he had ever considered entering pastoral ministry replied that he didn't think he was good enough. The questioner's response? "I'd hate to be in the congregation of a minister who thought he was good enough." The beautiful truth is that God uses us, yes, even you and me, imperfect though we are. Have you spent time in prayer this week to seek what his assignment for you might be?

Father God, show us what to, tell us what to say, teach us how to live, that your name might be glorified. Amen.

(Rev.) John McGurrin