

– Continued from page 1 –

saying, *“Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John to that day when He was taken up from us, one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection”* (Acts 1:21-22). The criterion for an apostolic candidate was that the man was a witness of the Lord’s resurrection. This condition was so strict that, even in those early days, just two men could be found who met them (Acts 1:23). Those who claim to be modern-day apostles ignore the severely limiting qualifications of the original.

Furthermore, apostles were chosen by Christ (Luke 6:13). Even Judas Iscariot’s replacement was decided by the Lord. *“They cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles”* (Acts 1:26). Scripture affirms this was God’s doing, for *“The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord”* (Proverbs 16:33). None who claim modern apostleship can substantiate the notion that they were chosen by Jesus.

The apostleship of Paul was exceptional. He wrote, *“Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle”* (1st Corinthians 15:8-9). Paul claimed to have been the last person to witness the resurrected Christ. Not even his detractors disputed this (1st Corinthians 9:1). Certainly, none since him can accurately claim this most essential qualification. If dozens, scores, even hundreds of apostles have walked the earth since Paul, his claim to have been *“born out of due time”* is altogether meaningless. In fact, if the claims of the so-called modern-day apostles are true, then those *“born out of due time”* were the original twelve! Modern claimants must turn the scriptures upside-down or ignore them altogether to assert their contrived apostolic authority.

Beware of false apostles! Just as Satan, the master of deception and father of lies, can transform himself into an angel of light, so those who serve him can transform themselves into righteous ministers, even apostles of Christ (1st Corinthians 11:13-15). *“Those who say they are apostles and are not”* will be found liars when tested (Revelation 2:2).

HOW SERIOUSLY SHOULD WE TREAT JUST ONE SIN?

Joshua Welch, adapted

Preachers must not be soothsayers, telling people what they want to hear, nor fearmongers, using false threats to manipulate. We must *“speak as the oracles of God”* (1st Peter 4:11), providing a balanced approach to *“the goodness and severity of God”* (Romans 11:22), while being careful to *“declare the whole counsel of God”* to hearers (Acts 20:27). Consider the title question from the perspective of:

Adam and Eve. Just one sin had them cast out of the Garden (Genesis 3). In fact, *“by the one man’s offense death reigned”* (Romans 5:17).

Nadab and Abihu. *“Then Nadab and Abihu... offered profane fire before the Lord, which He had not commanded them. So fire went out... and they died”* (Leviticus 10:1-2).

Uzzah. *“Uzzah put out his hand to hold the ark... Then the anger of the Lord was aroused against Uzzah, and He struck him because he put out his hand”* (1st Chronicles 13:10).

The Rich Ruler. Jesus said to him, *“One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven”* (Mark 10:21).

Ananias and Sapphira. *“Why has Satan filled your heart to lie? ...Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear come upon all”* (Acts 5).

Simon. *“Your heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven”* (Acts 8:21-22).

Paul. *“Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!”* (Romans 6:15). Do not abuse God’s grace.

Esau. *“Lest anyone fall short of the grace of God... lest there be any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for **one morsel of food** sold his birthright”* (Hebrews 12:15-16).

While just one sin should be taken seriously, thankfully, the one-time sacrifice of Jesus Christ gives us great hope. *“Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many”* (Hebrews 9:28). If we continue walking in the light, confessing our sin along the way, *“He is faithful and just to forgive us”* (1st John 1:7-10). Let us treat every sin soberly and vigilantly and address it urgently, having full confidence in the forgiveness and grace of Jesus Christ.

"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER"

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN ANY TRESPASS... RESTORE SUCH A ONE"

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

CORRECTION

In last week's issue, in the brief article The New Testament Concealed, the second paragraph began "On the sixth day, God incarnate died as a man." That should have read, "On the sixth day, God incarnate lay dead as a man."

GIVE ME THE BIBLE

KDNF 840AM

Sunday @ 9:00 a.m.

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION

Bryan Matthew Dockens

A number of religions practice so-called apostolic succession. Roman Catholics believe the man they call "Pope" is the successor of the apostle Peter. Mormons claim twelve to fifteen apostles at all times. Many Pentecostal congregations identify their preachers as apostles. Such claims are totally inconsistent with the scriptures.

The apostles of Christ were not replaced upon their deaths. It is written, "Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword" (Acts 12:1-2). There is absolutely no record, not even the slightest implication, that a replacement apostle was named when James was murdered.

Judas Iscariot was succeeded, but it was not his death which prompted the vacancy. In the process of replacing him, the eleven prayed and spoke of the "apostleship from which Judas by *transgression* fell" (Acts 1:25). It was not his death, but his sin which removed Judas from office. Therefore, to suggest a need for modern apostles is to incriminate all previous apostles.

The qualifications of apostleship are no longer attainable. When the eleven sought out Judas's successor, they identified the qualifications, – Continued on page 2 –

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