

SIMON THE ZEALOT

DISCIPLE OF JESUS

WHO SIMON WAS

- The only time the Bible mentions Simon by name is in a list of the 12 disciples (Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13)
- He is not to be confused with other Simons in the Bible:
 - Simon Peter, one of Jesus' most well-known disciples (Matthew 4:18)
 - Simon, the brother of Jesus (Mark 6:3)
 - Simon, a leper (Mark 14:3)
 - Simon, a tanner (Acts 9:43)
 - Simon, a man who carried Jesus' cross (Matthew 27:32)
 - Simon, the father of Judas Iscariot (John 6:71)
- There's some confusion surrounding what the Bible means by calling Simon a "zealot"
 - Old Bible scholars like Eusebius (Saint Jerome) believed this was another term for a Cananean or a Canaanite; older translations of the Bible (KJV & NKJV) use "Canaanite" instead of "zealot" when describing Simon
 - Modern scholars believe "zealot" is related to the word "qan'an," which means "zealous one" in Aramaic
 - A zealot is generally defined as, "a person who has very strong feelings about something (such as religion or politics) and who wants other people to have those feelings"
 - Simon could have been zealous about his faith in Jesus, about his dedication to the Mosaic law, or like many scholars believe, he could have been part of a radical group of Jewish freedom fighters called the Zealots
 - Since the Bible isn't clear and historians have mixed opinions, we are left to speculate

SIMON AS A DISCIPLE

- If Simon truly was a Zealot, that meant Jesus called a political extremist to follow Him and become His representative
- Jesus' example must have challenged Simon's worldview
 - Simon would have learned that it was important to respect authorities like Caesar as long as it didn't conflict with his dedication to God (Mark 12:17)
 - Unlike the Zealots, who were known for their violent ways, Jesus called His disciples to turn away from violent actions (Matthew 26:52)
 - He eventually came to understand that most of the Jews—including the Zealots—misunderstood the Messiah's true mission
- Did not witness the crucifixion

SIMON AS AN APOSTLE

- Was present at Pentecost in Jerusalem, praying in the upper room to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-11)
- Helped the other apostles in making administrative decisions, such as when they selected a new disciple to take Judas Iscariot's place (Acts 1:12-26)
- Church tradition suggests that Simon might have become a missionary in Egypt and Persia
- Some traditions say he was killed in Samaria, others say he was killed in Persia or Britain, although no one knows for sure
 - Church tradition assumes that he was martyred for sharing his faith

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