

# Acts 1:11 – 26 | 11/29/15

- Introduction/Review
  - Luke is the author
  - The final instructions of Christ to His apostles to remain in Jerusalem
  - The promised Holy Spirit
    - The power of the Holy Spirit
  - Differences in the baptism of John the Baptist and that of the Spirit.
  - The purpose for the apostles.
  - The Ascension of Jesus Christ
- The gathering of the faithful | Acts 1:12-14
  - **Read Acts 1:12-14**
  - This is a critical time because it is the time immediately following the ascension of Jesus and His final instructions to the apostles.
    - Will they disperse and coward away or would they be obedient and stay in Jerusalem as Jesus had commanded?
  - Scripture shows us that His apostles and His disciples were in fact faithful to Jesus.
    - They returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives which was a Sabbath day's journey (half a mile) and went to an upstairs room.
    - In fact, they even seemed to be joyful according to Luke's recording in his Gospel
      - Luke 24:52
        - "After worshiping Him, they returned to Jerusalem with great joy."
    - They stayed together and returned to Jerusalem to pray just as Jesus had told them to do.
  - The returning party
    - Those mentioned here are:
      - 11 apostles (minus Judas Iscariot)
      - The Women
        - Included Mary the mother of Jesus (last mention of her in Scripture) and we assume Mary Magdalene and others.
      - Brothers of Jesus
        - Jesus had earthly brothers that were His half brothers from Mary and Joseph.
        - James, Joses (Joseph), Simon and Judas.
        - They did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah at first.
          - John 7:5
            - "For not even His brothers believed in Him."
        - But their perspective presumably changed after he appeared to them upon His resurrection.
          - 1 Corinthians 15:7
            - "Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles."
  - The unity of the faithful
    - Scripture shows us a special unity (Verse 14) that these early Christians had with one another.
      - They were "continually united" or "with one accord", there was not division among them.
        - **This is in fact used in 6 places throughout Acts which was very important for the early Christians."**

- They could have argued amongst themselves about what to do next, or who was the greatest among them.
- But Scriptures says that they were united as one. This example must not be overlooked or taken lightly.
- **How important do you think this unity was for the early church?**
- **This serves as the perfect example for us today, we as Christians must have unity in Christ.**
  - They were united as one in prayer
    - **They devoted themselves to prayer**
    - The belief of these apostles and disciples was strengthened by seeing the resurrected Jesus and even though He was now gone physically we see that they have remained faithful and continued in prayer.
    - They are obeying Jesus's last verbal instructions and are faithfully wait for God's gift that was promised.
- Apostles and disciples
  - Apostles –
    - An apostle is one who is a representative sent by authority of the sender, so in this case we have the 12 apostles (plus Paul) who were chosen by Jesus.
      - Mark 3:14
    - They were the ones that Jesus called and served as His close companions and they are also the ones who primarily were inspired to write the New Testament Scriptures.
    - They were the messengers and planters of the church
      - 2 Corinthians 8:23
    - An apostle had to witness the resurrection and take part in the ministry of Christ's earthly ministry.
      - Acts 1:22-23
      - Acts 10:41-42
    - There are no more apostles, Paul was the last.
  - Disciples –
    - A disciple from the Hebrew is translated "learned" or "taught" so a pupil.
    - In the full sense a disciple of Jesus is one who submits to the teaching (Scriptures) of Jesus Christ.
      - This is why we focus on making disciples and not just Christians. We want all to be spiritually mature.
    - All Christians are called to be disciples and as a follower of Christ all Christians are disciples although not all truly submit themselves.
- Matthias is chosen to replace Judas Iscariot | Acts 1:15-26
  - **Read Acts 1:15-26**
  - Now that Judas is no longer an apostle after having betrayed Jesus and committing suicide a replacement must be chosen.
  - Peter makes it clear that the action of Judas was ordained by God and they took place to fulfill the Scriptures.
  - It was clear finally to the apostles that everything that took place was ordained by God and for a great and holy purpose.
  - The field of Judas Iscariot
    - From reading the account of Judas in Acts 1:18 and the recording in the Book of Matthew one might at first think that there is perhaps a contradiction.

- In Matthew Judas threw the silver and went and hung himself.
    - In Acts we see a field that is denoted to belong to Judas that he purchased with the money that Matthew says he threw and then fell head first and his insides fell out.
  - However, one thing is certain that Scripture cannot and will not contradict itself, because it is the Word of God
    - So one thing is clear that in both cases Scripture is correct so yes Judas threw the money, yes Judas hung himself and he owned a field and his inside gushed out.
  - We can see how this fits together when we read the full account in Matthew
    - Matthew 27:3-10
    - Since the money Judas returned was “blood money” the priests could not use it so they purchased the field in Judas’s name (couldn’t be in theirs).
    - As for the spilling of his insides in Acts we can see that this would be something that took place after he hung himself so either the rope broke or perhaps when his rotting body was cut down that also would explain it.
  - Peter calls for a replacement for Judas
    - However, he also realizes that Judas must be replaced there needed to be a 12<sup>th</sup> apostle.
      - **This replacement is interesting because this is the only time a replacement apostle was chosen.**
      - Later in Acts when James is martyred he is never replaced. So the question as to why for Judas but not to replace the apostles as they passed away?
      - We can make sense of this if we go back and look at what eternal purpose for the apostles.
        - They had a place of promise to rule over the 12 tribes when Jesus returns to reign on Earth.
          - Matthew 19:28
            - “Jesus said to them, “I assure you: In the Messianic Age, when the Son of Man sits on His glorious throne, you who have followed Me will also sit on 12 thrones, judging the 12 tribes of Israel.”
          - Revelations 21:14 – New Jerusalem
            - “The city wall had 12 foundations, and the 12 names of the Lamb’s 12 apostles were on the foundations.”
        - Judas obviously was not going to be spending an eternity in Heaven so it was necessary to fill the vacancy.
  - Qualifications required of the next apostle
    - Had to be a disciple who was present during the Earthly ministry of Jesus
    - Had to have witnessed the resurrected Christ.
      - Acts 1:22-23, Acts 10:41-42
    - New believers need not apply 😊
    - **Why do you think these requirements were necessary?**
- Based on these requirements they found two candidates but could not choose between them so they cast lots to let God choose.
  - They began with prayer
    - No better example for Christians today than this to see that prayer is necessary before big decisions especially within the ministry.
  - Then they cast lots to see who God would choose.

- Now let's be clear that this is not the passage of Scripture that condones gambling, that is not what they were doing.
- This was a practice that took place in the Old Testament
  - Numbers 26:55
  - Proverbs 16:33
- This is also the last time they are mentioned in Scripture likely because with the presence of the Holy Spirit they were no longer necessary.
- With the lot and God's choice falling to Matthias he now replaces Judas Iscariot and they are now numbered once again at 12.
- What about Paul
  - We may wonder well what about Paul isn't he an Apostle? Is he not one of the 12 or perhaps he was who Jesus picked and this Mathis was picked out of the will of God.
  - We can discount this perspective on several grounds but when we see Paul himself say in His epistles that he most certainly is not one of the 12, he puts himself below them in rank.
  - He is an apostle because Jesus called him directly, however he could not be one of the 12 based on the previous requirements of having been with Jesus since the very beginning.
  - Additionally, Paul's primary calling was to witness to the Gentiles, while the other 12 obviously have a focus on the Jews.