

Journey Through Acts
“Ye Shall Be Witnesses”
Acts 1:15-26

Introduction:

1. Last Sunday Night - We Began Our:
 - “Journey Through Acts” - And Were Introduced:
 - To The Small Band Of Believers:
 - Who Remained In Jerusalem:
 - After Jesus Commissioned Them:
 - And Then - Ascended Back Into His Heavenly Home:
 - As “A Cloud Received Him Out Of Their Sight!” (1:9)
 - But The Commission He Gave Them:
 - Kept Ringing In Their Ears!
 - Because It Revealed To Them:
 - Jesus Special Provision!
 - Jesus Special Presence!
 - And Jesus Special Plan!
 - 1:8 - “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth!”
 - These Words ***Still*** Ring:
 - In The Ears Of ***All*** His True Disciples!
2. Tonight - We Meet Back Up:
 - With Those Same Disciples:
 - Who - According To 1:14 - “Continued With One Accord In Prayer And Supplication!”
 - And - According To 1:15 - Numbered - “About An Hundred And Twenty!”
 - Some Believe This Could Have Been Just The Number Of Men:
 - But It Seems More Likely To Include Both Men & Women - Since They Are Both Mentioned In 1;14!
 - Now - Were There Other Disciples?
 - Probably - Yes - But Not In Jerusalem:
 - Which Is Where Jesus Promised To Send The Holy Spirit:
 - And “Endue” Them “With Power From On High!” (Luke 24:49)
 - So - The Church Began:
 - With Just These 120 Members!
 - And So - There They Were:
 - Somewhere Between 40 - 50 Days After:
 - Jesus Resurrection - Waiting In, What Was Likely:
 - The Same “Upper Room” Where Jesus Had His “Last Supper” With His Disciples!
 - The “Upper Room” Is Believed:
 - * To Have Been In The Southern Part:
 - Of The Old City Of Jerusalem!
 - And Here Is A Map Where It Was Believed To Be!
 - As We Go Through Our “Journey Through Acts” - We Are Also Going To Use Some Visual Aids To Help Us Picture What Is Taking Place!
 - * And Here Is A Picture Of The Traditional:
 - “Upper Room” - That - Even Though It Dates Only Back To The 12th Century:
 - Many Of The Same Stones Have Been Dated To Around The Same Time As Christ, And The Room Might Have Looked Very Similar To This!
 - And It Was In This “Upper Room” Where:
 - We Read In 1:15-17 - Peter’s Admonition:
 - “And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) / Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. / For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry!”
 - Peter Became The Leader & Spokesman Of This Little Band Of Believers:

- And Was Moved To Fill Back Up The Number Of Apostles That Jesus Himself Had Selected!

- Now - Since The Death Of Judas - There Were Only Eleven!

- And Using Some Verses From The Psalms, Peter Shows That The Fall Of Judas Was Something Prophesied In The Scriptures!

- And Then:

- We Read In 1:18-19 - Luke's Explanation:

- Which, In Some Translations, Is Shown In Parenthesis - "Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. / And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood!"

- Of Course - What Happened To Judas Can Also Be Found In The Gospels! Especially:

- In Matthew 27:3-10 - "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, / Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. / And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. / And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. / And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. / Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. / Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; / And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me!"

- Matthew Points Out That Even The Purchase Of The Potter's Field Was A Fulfilment Of Prophecy!

- * This "Potter's Field" Has Been Identified:

- Since The Day It Was Purchased With:

- Judas' Blood Money! It Too Is South Of The Old City Of Jerusalem:

- And Was - Even Then - A Place That Was Good Only For Clay & For A Burial Ground!

- Now - There Is A Monastery:

- On The Same Site!

- But Then - Picking Back Up On 1:20:

- We Continue To Read - Peter's Application:

- And The Selection Of The New Apostle:

- Who Would Take The Position Vacated By Judas!

- "For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take!"

- This Comes From A Combination Of Psalm 69:25 & Psalm 69:25 - Which Says - "Let their habitation be desolate; and let none dwell in their tents." / And / "Let his days be few; and let another take his office!"

- Then - Peter Goes On In 1:22-26:

- "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, / Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. / And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. / And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, / That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. / And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles!"

- This Was, What We Might Call:

- The First "Business" Or "Members Meeting" Of The Church!

- In Which The Lord Directed His Disciples To Affirm The New Apostle Jesus Himself Would Choose!

- And That New Apostle Was Matthias!

3. Now - For The Rest Of Our Time Tonight:

- I Would Like To Focus On:

- Just Two Things About The Selection:

- Of Matthias As An Apostle!

* First:

1. The Purpose Of His Selection:

- Which Peter Describes Back In:
 - 1:22 - “Must One – Or – One Must Be Ordained To Be A Witness With Us Of His – Referring To Jesus’ – Resurrection!”
 - This Is The Reason Why This First “Members’ Meeting” Was Called!
 - Now - We’re Not Sure If This Was Something That Jesus Told Peter To Do After His Resurrection, Or If It Was Something That He Was Guided To Do By The Holy Spirit - But There Needed To Remain 12 Apostles:
 - To Serve As Witnesses Of The Resurrected Christ!
- But By Using This One Event:
 - In The Life Of Jesus:
 - Peter Points Back To All Of The Other Events:
 - In His Life As Well!
- To Be A Witness Of Jesus’ Resurrection:
 - Means That Jesus Had Died!
 - And If Jesus Died:
 - Then It Means That Jesus Had Lived!
 - And If Jesus Lived:
 - Then It Means That Jesus Had Been Born!
- So - To Be A Witness Of Jesus’ Resurrection:
 - Was To Be A Witness:
 - Of All That Jesus Was:
 - And All That Jesus Did!
 - And This Is What Matthias Was Chosen To Do!

* But The Second Thing Is This:

2. The Process Of His Selection!

- In 1:21-22 - Peter Lays Out The Qualifications:
 - For The New Apostle:
 - “Wherefore of these men which have accompanied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us / Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection!”
 - This Meant - That For This New Apostle:
 - To Be An Effective Witness:
 - For Jesus - He Needed To Be:
 - A Familiar Witness Of Jesus!
 - He Needed To Have Been In Fellowship With Jesus & “Have Accompanied With Us!” (1:21)
 - That Is - He Needed To Know Jesus - And Even More Important - Jesus Needed To Know Him!
 - This New Apostle Also Needed To Be:
 - A Faithful Witness To The Lord!
 - He Needed To Have “Accompanied” Jesus & The Other Apostles:
 - “All The Time That The Lord Jesus Went In And Out Among Us!”
 - Not As Some - Who Asked If They Could Follow Jesus:
 - And Then Turned Back!
 - Luke 9:57-62 - “And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain man said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. / And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. / And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. / Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. / And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. / And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God!”
 - These Two Men - Joseph Justus & Matthias - Were Both Faithful Followers Of The Lord Jesus!
 - This New Apostle Also Needed To Be:
 - A Full Witness For The Lord!
 - 1:22 - Even - “Beginning From The Baptism Of John, Unto That Same Day That He Was Taken Up From Us!”
 - To Be Able To Give A Complete Account:

- Of Who Jesus Was:
 - And What Jesus Did!
- Again - Both Of These Men:
 - Were Abundantly Qualified!
 - But There Was One More Qualification That Was Necessary!
 - The New Apostle Also Needed To Be:
- A Favored Witness By The Lord:
 - And Graciously, Personally Chosen By Christ!
 - And This Was What The Disciples In That Upper Room Were Careful To Maintain!
 - They Were Not Choosing This Apostle, Jesus Was, But Through Them!
 - And So - 1:24 - "They prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen!"
 - And That's Exactly What Took Place!
 - 1:26 - "And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles!"
 - But Even Though Matthias Was From This Point On:
 - "Numbered With The Eleven Apostles" - It Is Very Interesting That:
 - We Never Read His Name Again!
 - So - There Have Been Many Questions About His Apostleship!
 - Was Matthias Truly Jesus' Choice:
 - Or Peter's Choice?
 - Well - Even Though We Don't Read His Name Ever Again In Scripture - There Are Other Apostles That We Don't Hear From Either!
 - But They Are *ALL* Mentioned:
 - At Least One More Time Together:
 - In Acts 4 - Which Shows Us That He - Along With The Others - Became:
- A Fervent Witness For The Lord!
 - Acts 4:33 - "And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all!"
 - And Then - In Acts 6:2-4 - "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, - But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word!"
 - And God Used These 12 Men:
 - Personally Chosen By Jesus:
 - To - "Turn The World Upside Down" By Witnessing For The Lord!

Conclusion:

1. Now - Even Though The Office Of Apostle:
 - No Longer Exists In The Church Today:
 - The Lord Still Has The Same Purpose:
 - For All Of His Disciples Today!
 - 1:8 - "Ye Shall Be Witnesses Unto Me!"
2. Now - What Kind Of Witness:
 - Can We Be For The Lord?
 - We Too Can Be:
 - Familiar Witnesses Of The Lord!
 - Because This Is What The Gospel Does!
 - In Acts 4:13 - We Are Told That "When they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus!"
 - People Will Still Take Notice:
 - If You Have A Testimony Of:
 - Not Just Familiarity, But True Fellowship With Jesus!
 - That You Too "Have Been With Jesus!"
 - We Too Can Be:
 - Faithful Witnesses Of The Lord!
 - By Learning More About Him:
 - And Sharing The Truth From Him!
 - We Too Can Be:

- Full Witnesses Of The Lord!
 - By “Looking Unto Jesus As The Author & Finisher Of Our Faith!” (Hebrews 12:2)
 - And Telling Others Everything We Know:
 - About Him!
 - And We Too Are:
- Favored Witnesses Of The Lord!
 - Personally Chosen:
 - And Commissioned By Him:
 - To This World!
 - So - As Matthias & The Other Apostles:
 - Let Us Become More & More:
- Fervent Witnesses For The Lord!
 - Through The Power Of The Lord Himself!

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