

Foothills Christian Assembly Sermon February 13, 2022

Acts 1: 12 – 26 “Unified Prayer, the Living Word, and Kingdom Wholeness”

4 And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," He said, "you have heard from Me; 5 for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." 6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" 7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. 8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth." 9 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. 10 And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, 11 who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." 12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. 13 And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. 15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said, 16 "Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; 17 for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry." 18 (Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out. 19 And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.) 20 "For it is written in the book of Psalms: 'Let his dwelling place be desolate, And let no one live in it'; and, 'Let another take his office.' 21 "Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 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." 23 And they proposed two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. 24 And they prayed and said, "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen 25 to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." 26 And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

I. Introduction

- a. The book of Acts is a Kingdom Book. Jesus spent His last 40 days with His disciples teaching them about the Kingdom of God. Now they are on their way to Jerusalem to begin the process of God's Kingdom coming from heaven to earth via His Church's Holy Spirit empowered faithfulness.

- i. Kayser “In verses 1-3 we were presented with Christ's passion for the kingdom of God. And I say He was passionate about it because He spent His last 40 days teaching about the kingdom. In your last days with those that you love you usually focus on those things that are most important. And if you are not passionate about the kingdom of God, your priorities are not where Christ's were. The book of Acts is a kingdom document. Unfortunately, so many people treat it as if it were anything but kingdom. these books claim that Christ postponed the kingdom and what he was talking about in these verses is what would happen at the end of history. But think about it: why would Jesus spend His precious last 40 days with His disciples talking about something that – sure, might pique their curiosity, but which would be utterly irrelevant to what they would be doing, if indeed the book of Acts is not about the kingdom. Instead, we would point out that this book starts with Christ talking about the kingdom. The last verse of the book speaks of Paul preaching the kingdom. And every chapter in between is about the kingdom.
 - b. Acts 1: 12 – 26 “Unified Prayer, the Living Word, and Wholeness”
 - i. V12-14 Unified Prayer
 - ii. V15-20 The Living Word
 - iii. V21-26 The Twelve Made Whole
 - iv. Questions to know, love and obey God
- II. V12-14 Unified Prayer
 - a. “Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. 13 And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James. 14 These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.”
 - b. So, the eleven remaining apostles, no longer gazing up into heaven, return to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, from Bethany (Lk 24:50): “the house of misery”. Walking westward down the western slope of the Mount of Olives, passing nearby the Garden of Gethsemane, down through the Kidron Valley. Recall from our Dec 19, 2021, sermon, the view across the Kidron Valley from the Mount of Olives toward the temple Mount, about 1/2 – 3/4 of a mile walk (Sabbath day's journey). This was 40 days after the Sunday, April resurrection day, so likely sometime in May of AD30. They obey Jesus by returning to Jerusalem, the place where Jesus was unjustly convicted, mistreated by both Jews and Gentiles, and crucified. These eleven men are no longer running away from danger like they did that night in Gethsemane.
 - c. About the Sabbath day's journey
 - i. Bock “All of this reckoning suggests Jewish roots for this scene, but it does not mean the ascension took place on the Sabbath; by Luke's reckoning, it likely did not. This is because forty days of appearances from

resurrection to ascension, with the resurrection taking place one day after the [Jewish] Sabbath, means a Sabbath is not in view. Reckoning the distance as a Sabbath's walk is merely a way to give a measurement, not the timing of the event."¹

- d. "And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying"
 - i. Where is this upper room where they were staying? Some commentaries point to the likelihood of a rented space in the city, perhaps the same space as mentioned in Luke's account of the Last Supper. Others point to one of the rooms in the Temple.
 - 1. Kayser "many reasons to believe that the upper room that the disciples were waiting in was an upper room on the south side of the temple complex.the Sabbath Day's journey (which was 2000 cubits) that's mentioned in verse 12 would have landed them right in the temple. And any Jew reading this book would have known that this was the first building you would come to and that it was a Sabbath day's journey from the mount of Olives. Ezekiel had said that just as the Spirit had left the temple from the south side in Nebuchadnezzar's day and had been poured out on a remnant of Jewish believers who would form the new Israel and a new temple among the nations, in the same way, in the time of the New Covenant God would again pour out His Spirit on a tiny remnant of Jewish believers in the temple and through them would leave the physical temple and form a new temple – a temple not made with literal stones, but with spiritual stones - human beings."
 - a. <https://media-cloud.sermonaudio.com/text/124181159292.pdf>
 - ii. And, in Acts 2:46, after the great work of God on Pentecost Day, Luke writes, "So continuing daily with one accord in the temple..." showing us that the scene of Pentecost Day, with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, occurred in the temple area. So, it seems likely this upper room was either in the temple structure itself or very nearby.
- e. The Eleven remaining disciples are named for us
 - i. "Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James."
 - ii. Scattered on the night of Jesus' arrest, absent from His crucifixion and burial, then gradually brought back together at His resurrection and the 40 days after, all present at the ascension, they are now one, ready to follow Christ's Kingdom plan.

¹ Darrell L. Bock, [Acts](#), Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 76.

- iii. Bock “The Twelve are reduced to eleven because of Judas’s defection and suicide, which is described in verses 17–19. Jesus chose and assembled them as an identifiable group in Luke 6:14–16 (also Matt. 10:2–4; Mark 3:16–19). Their formation was a symbolic way of saying Jesus was leading a reorganization of Israel. This was an indication that the new era had come and that the old Israel was not responding to God in a proper manner and needed restructuring under the direction and ministry of Jesus, whom God had sent”²
 - f. Others are present with them
 - i. “with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.”
 - ii. “the women”
 - 1. Bock “present are the “women,” who likely include witnesses of the crucifixion and resurrection, since they are otherwise undescribed (Luke 23:49; 24:1, 9, 22).”³
 - iii. “Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers”
 - 1. So, here we have Jesus’ mother and brothers together after the ascension, with Jesus’ 11 apostles and the other women, all together. Think of the joy of Mary, the astonishment of His brothers. Jesus’ mother and brothers are now amongst those who hear the Word of God and do it:
 - a. Lk 8:19-21 “Then His mother and brothers came to Him, and could not approach Him because of the crowd. 20 And it was told Him by some, who said, “Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You.” 21 But He answered and said to them, “My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it.””
- g. “These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication”
 - i. “All continued”
 - 1. They stayed together. This is not just a statement about what they did once they arrived in the upper room where they were staying. They continued together waiting, praying, in the Word, until the Promise of the Father. They needed the changes God would bring forth during these 10 days between the ascension and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. God wastes no time.
 - 2. They persevered in prayer together for 10 days, along with the Word and fellowship. Their schedule was built upon time together in the Word and in prayer.

² Darrell L. Bock, [Acts](#), Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 77.

³ Darrell L. Bock, [Acts](#), Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 77–78.

3. Bock “As they patiently wait on God’s timing, the disciples are praying and readying themselves for their task as a group.”⁴
 4. Henry “*They continued in prayer, spent much time in it, more than ordinary, prayed frequently, and were long in prayer. They never missed an hour of prayer; they resolved to persevere herein till the Holy Ghost came, according to the promise, to pray, and not to faint.*”⁵
- ii. “with one accord”
1. The Kingdom instruction Jesus gave them has gripped them all down to their bones. Same thoughts. Same vision. Same purpose. Same love. Same faith. Same hope. Same Word.
 - a. Henry “This intimates that they were together in holy love, and that there was no quarrel nor discord among them; and those who so keep *the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace* are best prepared to receive the *comforts of the Holy Ghost*. It also intimates their worthy concurrence in the supplications that were made; though but one spoke, they all prayed, and if, when *two agree to ask, it shall be done for them*, much more when many agree in the same petition”⁶
 2. Paul calls the saints at Ephesus to this same life: “I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, 2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, 3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” (Eph 4:1-6)
 - a. Bock “The gathered community is of “one mind” (ὁμοθυμαδόν, *homothymadon*) as it prays. Ten of the eleven NT occurrences of this term appear in Acts. The word refers to a group acting as one (“with one accord” in KJV, ESV, RSV; “with one mind” in NASB, NET; “met together continually” in NLT; “continually united” in HCSB; “all together” in Robertson 1934: 602). Often it describes Jews or others acting in protest against something (Acts

⁴ Darrell L. Bock, [Acts](#), Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 79.

⁵ Matthew Henry, [Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2064.

⁶ Matthew Henry, [Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2064.

7:57; 12:20; 18:12; 19:29). In other cases it describes the disciples who are in accord about something (2:46; 4:24; 5:12; 15:25). As the examples concerning disciples show, it is a term that points to the fundamental unity within the church. Here the group is operating in obedience, waiting for the Spirit and praying in preparation as they wait. The nascent church is showing some of its most fundamental characteristics: gathered, seeking the Lord's will with one mind in prayer, and assembled to carry out God's mission"⁷

iii. "in prayer and supplication"

1. Prayer = communication addressed to God
2. Supplication = seeking, asking, entreating God
3. So, with one unified heart and mind, these men and women came together to communicate to God together, to seek God, to ask God, to make entreaty of God. We can be confident the central focus of their prayers was taught to them by Jesus: His Kingdom and the coming of the Holy Spirit, unto preaching remission of sins and repentance to the whole world, beginning at Jerusalem. And they knew they would have enemies, just like Jesus did, so they would also be praying to God for protection from their enemies, and destruction of the kingdom of darkness.
4. Henry "It was now a time of trouble and danger with the disciples of Christ; they were as sheep in the midst of wolves; and, *Is any afflicted? Let him pray*; this will silence cares and fears. They had new work before them, great work, and, before they entered upon it, *they were instant in prayer to God* for his presence with them in it. Before they were first sent forth Christ spent time in prayer for them, and now they spent time in prayer for themselves. They were waiting for the descent of the Spirit upon them, and therefore abounded thus in prayer. The Spirit descended upon our Saviour when he was praying, Lu. 3:21. Those are in the best frame to receive spiritual blessings that are in a praying frame. Christ had promised now shortly to send the Holy Ghost; now this promise was not to supersede prayer, but to quicken and encourage it. God will be enquired of for promised mercies, and the nearer the performance seems to be the more earnest we should be in prayer for it"⁸

⁷ Darrell L. Bock, [Acts](#), Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2007), 78.

⁸ Matthew Henry, [Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2064.

- h. So, they stayed together in Jerusalem, in the temple area, praying together with one heart and mind, for ten days, waiting upon Christ to keep His Promise, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, to empower them. They needed these 10 days together with God in order to be ready for the Spirit and the community/leadership challenges that would follow revival.

III. V15-20 The Living Word

- a. “And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples (altogether the number of names was about a hundred and twenty), and said, 16 "Men and brethren, this Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus; 17 for he was numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry." 18 (Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out. 19 And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.) 20 "For it is written in the book of Psalms: 'Let his dwelling place be desolate, And let no one live in it'; and, 'Let another take his office.'”
- b. So, Peter takes the lead. They’ve all learned from Jesus about Himself as the Messiah and about His Kingdom, from the Word of God, which for them at that time, was the OT. Peter shows so many critical principles of Bible doctrine as he preaches.
 - i. Scripture must be fulfilled (invincible)
 - ii. Scripture is spoken by the Holy Spirit (inerrant, infallible)
 - iii. Scripture is spoken by the Holy Spirit via the mouth of prophets like David (the mystery of the office of prophet and the Divine written revelation process)
- c. “In those days”
 - i. So, sometime during the 10 days of waiting, Peter concludes it’s time to choose someone to replace Judas.
- d. “the number of names are about 120”
 - i. Church rolls are implied here.
 - ii. Numbers of believers are important to Luke in his history. God works in Luke to show us the numerical expansion of the Kingdom of God under the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - iii. 120 is not a lot of people to take the Gospel of the Kingdom to the whole world. Think mustard seed. Think leaven.
 - iv. The significance of 120
 - 1. Kayser “He doesn't say 120 persons, but 120 names. Just like every other detail in this chapter, that detail is significant. 120 was the minimum number of males needed to constitute an official Jewish community complete with a ruling council. And they had to subscribe their names, and thus the mention of the names here. Ten men could form a synagogue, but we have enough men here to form twelve synagogues. And I believe Luke gives us hints that

while the twelve were all from Galilee, that the 120 were men representing every tribe in the nation of Israel. So this really was the beginning of the new Israel. I'm not going to beat this to death, but turn with me quickly to Luke 22. These are the words of Christ at the last supper."

- a. Luke 22:28-30 "But you are those who have continued with Me in My trials. 29 And I bestow upon you a kingdom, just as My Father bestowed one upon Me, 30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.""
 - e. Peter knew that the Bible had predicted a betrayer of the Messiah. Since Jesus had taught them all about Himself in the OT, it's likely Jesus had taken them through these texts while He was with them during the 40 days.
 - i. "Numbered with us and obtained a part in this ministry"
 1. Their number and their ministry was now diminished.
 - ii. Yet Judas had earned an eternal place of infamy. Peter describes him in such a ghastly fashion here
 1. "(Now this man purchased a field with the wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out. 19 And it became known to all those dwelling in Jerusalem; so that field is called in their own language, Akel Dama, that is, Field of Blood.)"
 - iii. Peter brings forth the Word of God in regards to Judas' broken lineage, and the need to fill his empty office.
 1. "'Let his dwelling place be desolate, And let no one live in it';
 - a. Ps 69:25 "Let their dwelling place be desolate; Let no one live in their tents."
 2. "and, 'Let another take his office.'"
 - a. Ps 109:8 "Let his days be few, And let another take his office."
 - f. The people of God persevering together in prayer, supplication and the Word of God as they wait for God's Promised Holy Spirit, obeying the Word of God by replacing Judas. God prepares them internally with unity, prayer, the Word, and obedience, to be ready.
- IV. V21-26 The Twelve Made Whole
- a. "Therefore, of these men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 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." 23 And they proposed two: Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. 24 And they prayed and said, "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen 25 to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place." 26 And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles."

- b. So, with understanding of the Bible's invincibility and infallibility and Divine inspiration, Peter brings forth the Word's teaching about Judas and the need to have another take his office. And, Peter knew that the outward work of the Kingdom of God would likely accelerate after Pentecost, so the time to reconstitute the Twelve was then. They needed to be ready.
 - i. Kayser "Now with that as a background, I think you can understand why Peter was not out of line when he said that a replacement for Judas had to be made before Pentecost. They could not wait. Prophecy indicates that the Spirit would be poured out upon a new Israel, under twelve new princes. And remember that we've already read in Luke 22 that Jesus calls the apostles princes (if they are sitting on thrones they are princes) judging the twelve tribes of Israel."
- c. Note the requirements for an apostle
 - i. Men
 - ii. Who have accompanied the apostles
 - iii. All the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out amongst us
 - 1. From the baptism of John until the ascension
 - 2. Must be a witness of Christ's resurrection
- d. Note their process: two men met the requirements, so they prayed to God and cast lots
- e. Note their prayer as they sought to live out God's Word and find the man God has chosen to be the replacement for Judas
 - i. "You, O Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which of these two You have chosen to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place."
 - 1. O Lord – Jesus chose the original twelve, and He will also choose Judas' replacement
 - 2. Only the Lord knows the hearts of all
 - a. One of these men had been given the heart to be amongst the twelve, and only God knew
 - b. We can only see the external requirements, so we must pray for God to guide us with His divine wisdom
 - c. Henry "When an apostle was to be chosen, he must be chosen by his heart, and the temper and disposition of that. Yet Jesus, who knew all men's hearts, for wise and holy ends chose Judas to be one of the twelve. It is comfortable to us, in our prayers for the welfare of the church and its ministers, that the God to whom we pray *knows the hearts of all men*, and has them not only under his eye, but in his hand, and turns them which way soever

he will, can make them fit for his purpose, if he do not find them so, by giving them another spirit.”⁹

3. They ask God to show them (via lots) which of these two men He had chosen

- f. Note their confidence in God. They cast lots and move on.
- i. “And they cast their lots, and the lot fell on Matthias. And he was numbered with the eleven apostles.”
 - ii. They had God’s Word. They had faith He was listening to them seek His will. They knew casting lots was acceptable in this situation. Decision made. Move ahead.
 - iii. Henry “The doubt was determined by lot (v. 26), which is an appeal to God, and lawful to be used for determining matters not otherwise determinable, provided it be done in a solemn religious manner, and with prayer, the prayer of faith; for *the lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposal thereof is of the Lord*, Prov. 16:33. Matthias was not ordained by the imposition of hands, as presbyters were, for he was chosen by lot, which was the act of God; and therefore, as he must be baptized, so he must be ordained, by the Holy Ghost, as they all were not many days after. Thus the number of the apostles was made up.”¹⁰

V. Questions to know, love and obey God

⁹ Matthew Henry, [*Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2065–2066.

¹⁰ Matthew Henry, [*Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume*](#) (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 2066.