

Get Ready to Sail
Acts 1:12-14

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I remember the first time I went sailing. My brother and I borrowed a boat from Sambica Bible Camp on lake Samamish. The beautiful day and steady breeze got us excited about speeding across the lake, driven by the power of the wind. We got the boat in the water, wisely took a set of oars with us, put the mast up and fixed the sail. We were ready to go and with the wind at our backs going across the lake was pretty fun....the sail caught the wind and gave us the ride. The difficult part of sailing we discovered when we got to the other side of the lake, was on the coming back part, trying to sail the boat in a direction against the wind. All the talk of tacking the boat back and forth didn't register with any sort of unity in the boat. We just got frustrated trying to get the boat, the sail and ourselves all heading in the same direction. We lacked the skill and togetherness coordination to get where we wanted to go...so we ended up just dropping the sail down in a useless heap in the bottom of the boat and for the next two hours we slaved away taking turns at pulling on the oars to get back to the dock.

Do you ever feel like that at times in your spiritual life? Sometimes you have the wind at your back and the sails are full and pulling, the Spirit of God is empowering your life and you are heading the same way God wants to head and it's exciting and productive...and then it all changes. You get stuck somewhere...against the other side of the lake, in a cove. You feel like you and God are not on the same team. Everything seems to be working against you. Life just seems to be difficult and those areas that you want to see God work in power just don't seem to be changing or progressing. Those sins keep nagging at you. The fog of bitterness confuses and clogs up your thoughts and emotions. Anger

rages out of control at inconvenient and ungodly times. Doubts and discouragement cling to your soul like mud to your shoes. Relationships that you deeply desire to be filled with peace and unity are not. You're tired, lonely, discouraged and it seems like it's been far too long since you could honestly say you felt the power of the spirit move in your life.

Do you want your spiritual sails full of the breeze of the spirit blowing through your life? Wind blowing sails is a great analogy for the spirit since the Greek word for Spirit Pneuma, means air, wind, breath. We get our word Pneumatic, driven by air, for air-powered tools. God wants us to be Pneuma tools, Spirit powered tools for God's use. He wants us to get ready to sail because the Spirit wants to blow the sails of our life.

This morning we will be studying a new community of believers that are waiting. Waiting for God's promise. Waiting for the promised Holy Spirit to come down from heaven and indwell the believers. We will be studying some of the things they did to get ready to receive the wind of the Spirit that was promised to come blowing in. Spirit winds that would empower their witness and blow it all across the known world. Do you want your spiritual sails prepared to catch the breeze of the Holy Spirit? We can learn from this new community on what they did to prepare for the coming of the Holy Spirit. Those same things apply to us today, to us who desire the Spirit to move in power in their life.

Turn with me in your Bibles to the first chapter of Acts. Doctor Luke wrote this book under the guidance and inspiration of the Spirit. Acts is the second of a two-volume work, the first being the gospel of Luke. Acts begins by describing that which was mission critical for the early believers. The fact of the resurrection, that Jesus had risen again and was alive. Jesus sent them out with a commission to be His witnesses. Communicate to everyone in their neighborhood, towns, countries, states, country and world how they had been changed because of their life with Jesus. He then leaves, ascends back into heaven but

just before he goes he tells them to go to Jerusalem and wait. Wait for the promised Holy Spirit to come. Pick up the story Acts 1:12-14(READ)

Jesus ascended back into heaven on Mt. Olivet. More like a hill than a mountain compared to what we are used to. Only about 200 ft. higher in elevation than Jerusalem city itself. V. 12 tells us it was just a Sabbath days journey from the city, which was decided at 2000 cubits or about 3000 feet about 3/4 of a mile. A Sabbath's days journey was a popular way to measure length traveled. It was the longest distance allowed the Jews to travel on the Sabbath...any more than that and it was considered work and breaking the Sabbath, a day of rest. It may have taken them 15 minutes to walk from Olivet to the gates of Jerusalem, through the Eastern gate down the winding cobblestone streets to the upper room. V.13 makes it clear that when they entered the city they went right up to the upper room where they were staying.

The definite article added "The upper room" leads me to believe that this was the same upper room where Jesus had Passover, the last supper with his disciples. We know from the first volume Luke 22:12 that this upper room was large and well furnished. It would make sense that they would go back to this room, to the point just before everything broke loose and got pretty wild. Back to the place where John's gospel chapter 14:16-18 writes that Jesus Promised, "I will ask the Father and he will give you another counselor to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth... I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you." Yes, back to the upper room where in Luke 22 we read they argued about which one of them was the greatest. Yes, back to the upper room where Jesus predicted that Peter would blatantly deny any relationship with him, not just once, but three times in an evening. Yes, back to the upper room where Judas was exposed as a traitor and left the inner circle for the last time. Yes back to the upper room where Jesus explained the sacrifice he would give for them. Where Jesus predicted suffering and difficult times for them. Yes, back to the upper room where Jesus knelt down in humble service and

washed the dirty feet of the disciples, yes, even washed the feet of Judas in loving service. It may have been the natural place for them to return, but it may not have been easy to recall the painful reminders of that night.

Jesus may not have been specific on where to back to Jerusalem and wait, but what I am stuck by is that's exactly what they did. They immediately obeyed within 15 minutes of the jaw dropping ascension into heaven, they are doing exactly what Jesus told them to do in v. 4 "Go to Jerusalem and stick there until the Spirit show up"

Obedience. There were probably plenty of other things they could have done. After the crucifixion they all scattered and hid in fear. The disciples from Emmaus were on the road heading back home when Jesus caught up to them and appeared to them. Some of these guys were fishermen, one had been a tax collector. Certainly there were plenty of business or family things they could have done. They could have decided this run was all over and they ought to get back to Galilee get a real job and get on with life. They could have...but they didn't. Jesus told them to go and wait and they obeyed.

Obedience isn't always easy is it? I think its especially difficult in those situations where we can't entirely see why we are called to do something. For example 8:1/2 years ago I couldn't exactly see why God was calling me to pastor a small little church with ripped up green carpet out in the middle of nowhere. I was convinced that's what He wanted me to do...but it didn't make a whole lot of logical sense to me and I wasn't even sure I wanted to. But...I was sure God wanted me to and now I know a whole lot better why He did. But if we can give a logical reason for what we are doing then we are not necessarily learning faith obedience...we may be simply trusting in our own logical reasoning to figure it out. We may not be doing it out of faith obedience but simply because we think it's the best thing to do. There is nothing wrong with that of course...God gave us a brain and wants us to use it. But

obedience when we are convinced that God wants us to do something of service for Him...even though it may not seem like the most logical thing to do at the time...that's the kind of obedience that builds faith and trust. An obedience not based on our logic but obedience based in our love and trust for God that He knows what He's doing even when things are still foggy to us.

Just like a child who wonders why his parent won't allow them to see that movie or go to that party, or wants them to come immediately to them now in a crowded amusement park. Or wait right there, don't move until I come for you. The parent knows well the purpose, see the problems or dangers or opportunity to learn. God too wants us to obey whether we can see the reason why or when or what for or not. He simply wants us to trust and obey. That's exactly what the disciples did, immediately obey.

Maybe some of us find ourselves in a waiting period where it seems like God is almighty silent and inactive. In this case we need to obey Him by doing the things that He has clearly revealed for us to do. We have His written word that tells us to Be His witnesses. Be kind to one another, Forgive each other. Be anxious for nothing. But give thanks in everything. Pray without ceasing. Be patient when wronged. Keep yourself unstained by the world. Love what is good and hate what is evil. Do not look out just for your own interests but also for the interests of others. Waiting in obedience is not inactive. Obey God in the areas where He has clearly revealed to you His desire. God will let you know when He wants you to take the next move.

That obedience is what gets us down to the lake and gets our boat in the water. If we are going to get ready to sail and feel the power of the spirit behind us we need to start with faith obedience that does the things that God has made clear for us to do. What has he been quietly whispering in your ear to do that you have been ignoring? Do it and you will take the first step toward getting your spiritual sails ready to fly.

In this early group of believers, I see not only an immediate obedience, I also see an expectant attitude of unity. If obedience is getting your sailboat in the water, then an attitude of expectant unity is working together with others to get the sails up the mast.

V.13 they were all there in the upper room. All eleven Apostles were there and mentioned by name. V.14 “these all with one mind”. This phase is mentioned eleven times in Acts and is a mark of the early church. It refers to those who are like minded in thinking, heading the same direction, purpose and focus, not necessarily people who all think and feel the same, and all agree on everything. Unity is not uniformity. It is not having Peter convince the rest of the group that his way is the right way and we aren’t going to be unified until you all change your mind. Unity is not twisting someone arm until they reluctantly agree to go along with your plan.

These people those who “with one mind” have decided to set aside personal feelings and opinions to commit themselves to a common desire. They all want what God wants. All 120 of them want what God wants. In fact they want so much what God wants that they are willing to set aside their own opinions because its not about us, its about God. Each of them may have different ideas about how to get there, but they all want the same thing. They were all with one mind. It not all about any one of them because their leader has pointed them toward a goal and they have decided to set aside personal preferences and ambitions for glory for a far greater reason. They have set aside past relational tensions for a greater purpose.

The ill wind of disunity would have so easily blown through this group crowded into the upper room. The strong-willed apostles certainly had a track record of dissension when Jesus stepped out of the scene for a little while. Someone in the group could have been very critical of Peter for His triple denial on the night Jesus was arrested. John might have taken the opportunity to rip into all the rest because they all ran and He

was the only one with some of the women who faithfully stood by Jesus at the foot of the cross. It would have been natural to start up an argument about who would be their leader, who was the greatest...they certainly had discussed that one before. But they didn't they came together all with an expectant attitude of unity. Each of the them wanted what God wanted.

I think its significant that v.14 mentions that mother of Jesus was their along with Jesus brothers. We know that Mary and Joseph had biological sons named James, Judas, Joses, Simon. John 7:5 tells us that in Jesus early ministry years, Jesus brothers tired to give Him marketing advice about where and when Jesus could put his miracles to the best use...but it says, "even his brothers were not believing in Him" But now there they were..."His brothers" counted among the believers. I think that is significant. I think that is huge evidence for the truth and reality of Jesus as God. These guys, of any on the earth would know the truth. I grew up with two brothers. We brothers know well that none of us is the perfect Son of God. I could tell many stories about each of us that would conclusively prove that neither one of us is the perfect son of God. So...I think it's an incredible proof that here are Jesus brothers, the guys he roomed with half of his life..he being the older brother to them all. They now get it. They see it and believe. Having grown up with him they have seen it all and now admit..He is the Son of God and they were ready to die for that belief. James went on to become the head of the church in Jerusalem. Jesus brother, Judas wrote the second to the last book in the Bible Jude. They came knowing and believing and that believing expectancy brought them together in an incredible unity.

It may well be that the Spirit came not just because of a certain date on God's calendar, but in response to the reconciliation that must have occurred for these people to come together of one mind.

We read the names of the disciples, Jesus mother and brothers, but did you notice the mention of the women, Yeah, the women, they

were there too. All through the last two chapter of Luke's volume 1 these women are mentioned in a very favorable light. It was "the women" who stuck with Jesus at standing there witnessing the crucifixion. It was "the women" who brought spices to care for Jesus body after death. It was "the women" who were the first to witness the empty tomb. This new community that God is creating is not just a male only men's club. The women looked down on society God decided these women should be an important witness to His resurrection.

120 people it says, from various social classes, levels of ability and wealth, men and women, all meeting together with one mind in believing and expectant unity. Each wanting what God wants. That's unity. That kind of unity working together will help get our sails up the mast and into the air where the wind of the spirit has the chance to blow its fresh air into it.

Do you want to experience your spiritual sails filled with the fresh breeze of the spirit? Obedience, doing what God wants you to do will get your boat in the water. Unity, wanting what God wants will get the sails up in the air. Do you need unity in your life? Relational unity? Is there someone you need to forgive right now? Is there a resentment that you have been holding onto because of a comment that hurt you? Are you angry with someone because you felt left out, minimized or rejected? Folks if you want to experience the fresh wind of the spirit in your life you must forgive and move on. Unity comes because the goal, the purpose is far bigger then are petty toes that have been stepped on. When the doctor calls to say that the lump he found is cancerous, that argument about what color to paint the bedroom is pretty much immaterial. Unity comes when we realize that Gods' plan is so much bigger then our agenda and we truly want what He wants.

There is a third pursuit that we find these early believers pursuing as they are readying themselves to receive the Holy Spirits power. Its found in v. 14. What were they doing while they waited? Yes, "They were

continually devoted to prayer” If obedience gets the boat in the water and expectant unity works together to get the sails up the mast then it is persistent prayer that lashes the sail ropes down to the sides of the boat. For without the ropes lashed down, the sails will simply flap in the wind. The ropes tied down holds the sails in place and tap into the power of the spirit.

These early believers were ‘continually devoted to prayer...are we? Do I pray as though my life depends on it? Convicting isn’t it?...but then we wonder why we don’t see the fresh wind of the Spirit blowing through our lives... I wonder what they were praying for? I don’t think they were praying for the Holy Spirit to come. That didn’t require their prayers. God had already promised it would come. They prayed because they were physically separated from the risen Jesus and prayer was the only means of communicating with Him. We like to use the acronym ACTS when thinking about prayer and it fits when studying the book of Acts. A for Adoration. C for confession, T for Thanksgiving and S for supplication. I can only imagine that they gave adoration as God had just worked among them in a powerful way. The father sent his son Jesus to die for their sins and then rose again from the dead before the witness of their eyes. Praised God for His wisdom, love power and grace and that Messiah had come in their time. Certainly they had a time of confession realizing how desperately they needed God. Peter blew it having denied Christ, others had scattered. Some may have need to confess their sin toward each other. They had plenty to thank God for. Forgiveness, the teaching from Jesus for the last 40 days. Bringing them together in unity. They probably also had plenty to supplicate too. Asking God for boldness and strength, obedience and wisdom in what He had called them to do.

They were desperate people...they knew they needed Gods help, because desperate people pray. People motivated merely by duty will not pray...at least not in private. Its desperate people that pray. When I’m not praying I know that something is wrong. When one of my boys is not

interested in eating dinner, then I immediately suspect they are getting sick, because its not normal for healthy growing boys to not want to eat, they have lost their appetite. When our spiritual appetite is gone then we know something is wrong inside. Do you pray because your spiritual hungry and your appetite is for God. Do you want what God wants? Do you long to know what He wants you to do and eager to obey? Are you constantly seeking Him in prayer that is not motivated by duty but driven by a hunger for God??? If you are then you will get your sail full of the spirits breeze.

Our situation is a lot like that of the little boy who asked his grandfather, "Grandpa, what is the wind? I cannot explain it to you, the old fisherman replied, but I can teach you to raise the sails. Acts shows us how to have the wind of the Holy Spirit in our sails. The pursuits that makes way for the fullness of the Holy Spirit is the same things we need to pursue; simple **faith-obedience**, Doing the things God has made it clear for us to do; **Expectant unity**, Wanting together with others what God wants. And **Persistent prayer**. Praying as though your life depends on it...and really it does for desperate people pray.

Notes on Acts 1:12-26

Acts 1:12 to end. This was a 10 day period. We know it was 10 days because the Holy Spirit came at Pentecost referring to the Feast of Weeks that lasts 50 days after Passover. Since Lord was taken back to heaven 40 days after resurrection which occurred at Passover, there must have been a 10 day waiting period. Why Pentecost would Spirit come? The Jews growing up in OT traditions would understand the symbolic timing, after it happened. The blessing that came when 1000's believed and came into the church was just the first fruit of a greater response with far reaching impact on the world.

Olivet is more a hill then a mountain rising only 200 feet in elevation higher then Jerusalem. Chosen for it's proximity and privacy.

Obedience; Direct response from Jesus told them to so in v.4. there were plenty of other things they could have been doing. Right after the crucifixion, they all scattered. The Emaus disciples were heading back home to Emaus when Jesus appeared to them. There were business things they could have been

about doing. Fishermen, tax collectors etc. They could have just got on with the business of living.

Obedience in situations where we can't entirely see why we are called to what we are doing builds trust. For if we can give a reason for what we are doing, then we are not necessarily learning obedience, we may simply be trusting in our own ability to reason things out. We do it not out of simply obedience, but because it seems the best thing to do. Nothing wrong with that of course God gave us a brain to use, but obedience when it does not necessarily seem like the most logical thing to do builds trust and faith, (illustr. Parents to kids...trust me on this one...I can't explain the purpose of why, but I want you to do this.)

Maybe you are going through a period in your life where you know what you are supposed to be doing, but you don't know why yet, or you are experiencing a delay from God, (that the waiting part). You seem stuck in one spot and can't quite get off of it. Trust that God is preparing you.

They went back to Jerusalem as Jesus instructed...and waited. The greek definite article "the" points to this being the same "upper room", though it is speculation. This is the same room where John 14:16-18 tells us Jesus promised, "I will ask the Father and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever, the Spirit of truth...I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you." The "upper room" Where Jesus and disciples had their last supper. Why there? Luke 22:12 Vol.1 Jesus and the disciples celebrated the Passover there in a large furnished room. Back to the place where the traitor, Judas was exposed. Back to the place where they argued about who was to be the greatest 22:24. Back to the prophesy of Peter's 3 time denial. Back where Christ predicts conflict, sell what you have to buy a sword?? 22:36." Lord look here are two swords, It is enough. Said Jesus." and Certainly reminds of Jesus exposure of Judas. Did Jesus say other things there that were a clue. Scene of Jesus last pre-crucifixion meal. Just before the storm hit?

They returned to the city and when they entered it, they went (implied directly) to the upper room. All the guys went there.

v.13 They were all there. **Expectant Unity**. All there and all with "one mind". This phrase is mentioned 11 times in Acts. It refers to those who are like minded in thinking, not to people who all think and feel the same way about everything, but who set aside personal feelings and commit themselves to one task in this case witnessing to other about Jesus. All 11. Save the embarrassment of Judas the group was complete. Here their leader was just killed and the chief financial officer turned traitor. Major hits to their movement. Yet...here all 11 of the other leaders are there and named. Not only that but Jesus mother and very significant...I think, Jesus brothers. These are the same brothers that gave Jesus grief during His ministry years. John 7:5 "even His brothers were not believing in Him." Biological sons of Mary and Joseph were James, Joses, Judas and Simon. James was the first head of the Jerusalem church and Judas wrote the book

entitled Jude.

"The brothers are there for me is huge evidence as to the truth and reality of Jesus Deity. Relative believe in following Jesus as God's son. v.14 They all stayed together because they had come to "know and believe" and expected the promised infilling of the HS. Expectant belief hoists the sails ready to catch the winds of the HS.

Not only was there a unity from physical proximity of being close to each other, there was a spiritual unity from praying together. It may well be that the Spirit came not because of a certain date on God's calendar, but in response to the reconciliation among the disciples. There were deep tensions and sharp conflicts among them during Jesus ministry years. Not until they were meeting in prayer together, open to God, seeking His will and loving each other, did the holy spirit pour out on them.

Do we need to do a relational inventory? Is there anyone that needs to be forgiven. Put yourself on your knees in the upper room, not with the disciples but with the people of this church. Complete unity? Anyone you need to communicate your healing love to?

It would have been so very easy to bring disunity to the group crowded in the upper room. Could have criticized Peter for His blatant denials. John might have ripped on the others for being the only Apostle who faithfully stood at the cross with the rest of the women. But not even any arguing about who was to be the greatest. "with one accord" common theme in Acts. Six times its mentioned.

We lack believing expectancy. We think its possible for others, but not for us. Billy Graham, Corrie Ten Boom and Joni Earackson..sure but not us, that is out of our reach. What needs to happen? Its not about broadening our understanding or belief. We simply need to believe, to act on what we say we believe. Do you have believing expectancy?

The women were there. Check out references to "the women" in the gospels. Luke 23:49,55 and 24:1,5,11,24) All the multitudes and "the women who had come with him from Galilee" were at the crucifixion. 23:49 nothing mentioned about the disciples. A strong witness to the reality of what happened. .v55 The women out of Galilee. Chapter 24, they women brought spices to adorn Jesus body. Saw an angel and were terrified, saw the tomb and how His body was laid. V.11 first witness to the resurrection, Mary, Joanna, Many the mother of James also the other women....apostles did not believe the witness. But Peter ran and checked it out. The women were the first and major witness to the resurrection of Jesus. Not just a male only deal. There were about 120 there. Probably not all in the movement but a significant number of people who believed Jesus had rose again.

What if our church had just 120 people in it, but were fully committed and sold

out to God no matter what the cost?

People need people. When you are a Christian you do not become a Christian in isolation. You enter a fellowship. One of the worst things you can do is isolate yourself from other believers. Its like the scuba diver stepping on his own air hose. Student who go away to College. Identify some other believers on campus. This is key. Get involved in some group where you can be fed and minister and supported. Find a good church to worship in but peer encouragement and contact goes a long way. That should be first priority when you hit campus.

According to Jewish law 120 people were required to set up a community. The 12 apostles then would be the counsel.

Prayer: v.14 "Continually devoted to prayer. Do we?? What does that look like. sounds like the waiting was not passive inaction. *What were they praying about?* Guidance? Wisdom? what else???. Pray about how they could be an effective witness to those who saw Jesus die? They were accused by authorities of stealing body that rumor was running around. What about that truth would be seen by all. Pray that they would be ready to receive the Fathers promise.

What do you do when your waiting? Why the only thing left to do...pray.

They were not praying for the coming of the Holy S, they had been promised it would come. It didn't require their prayers. They were pryaing because they were physically separated from the risen jesus and prayer were the only means of communication with Him.

Stott. Essentials for prayer persistence and of one mind. United in decision, togetherness.

ACTS: Adoration, confession, Thanksgiving Supplication. (Boice p.34)

Persistent prayer: "They stuck to praying" If you want your sail full of the breeze of the Spirit, then perseverant prayer is where its at. Luke 11:13 Jesus says, "How much more will you Father in heaven give the Holy Sprit to those who ask him?" We must ask yet God wants persistence more then just a hurried request soon forgotten. That statement Jesus made in Lukes first volume 11:13 was prefaced with a story about a man who went to his neighbor to borrow food for his unexpected guest. He repeatedly banged on the door. If a son asks for a fish, a fathers is not going to hand him a rock is he?

Examples of prayer in Acts; Wiersbe p18.

John Bunyon who wrote Pilgrims Progress said, "Prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God and a scourge to Satan.

Leadership;v.15. Peter rises to the top of the 11. He has been reading the

Bible he knew and was searching for direction answers. He sees how the Spirit has put some information in there they needed to know "foretold" by the mouth of David. Believes that God wants to instruct them and does so through the word of God. Frankly reading those passages I would have a hard time determining that was what I was supposed to do. Maybe the spirit was working at that time more than we realize. They were far more familiar with the scriptures than we were. They respond to instruction from the scripture... "let another man take his place." even in waiting they are not inactive but do what God has revealed for them to do. We have to wait on that but this is what I know we are supposed to be doing. Peter must have been studying the scriptures during this time. Peter's first sermon in Acts 2 was based on Joel 2 that spoke of the HS in the OT. He was probably studying everything in the OT that dealt with the HS. Peter probably thought, If God is going to pour out the Holy Spirit on us then I had best study every thing I can in Bible about it.

Describes the inspiration of scripture, the HS through the mouth of David.

Prayer and Bible study certainly are two things that go together. Bible study where God talks to us and prayer where we talked to God and also listen to Him.

When Peter was referring to Psalm 69:25 and 109:8 he wasn't doing this on his own, but was being led by the spirit of God. They believed that the Scriptures had a practical application to their lives. The OT was the Bible that the early church had to discover God's will and they often quoted from the OT to make a point. All scripture is inspired by God and is profitable. Certainly we want to interpret the OT in light of the New, but Wisdom seeks out the whole Bible in balance.

(Stott p. 57) Peter quotes two Psalms the first explains what happened Ps. 69 and the second what they should do about it Ps. 109. Psalm 69 is applied to Jesus five times in the NT. It describes Jesus as an innocent sufferer and how his enemies hate him and insult without cause. How he is consumed with zeal for His father's house. John quotes these verses and Paul twice refers to this Psalm. Later in the Psalm a prayer is mentioned that God's judgement would fall on those who are wicked and don't repent. Peter takes this text and applies it to Judas on whom judgment had certainly fallen. Psalm 109 is similar as it talks of wicked men who hate and attack without justification. Then the ringleader is singled out and God's judgement is requested. "May another take his place of leadership. Peter applies this to Judas.

Pre Holy spirit decision making: Replacing the missing one from the 12 as a witness to the 12 tribes. "...Judas demise became known to all." Why all the graphic description? guts? Warning to the traitor? Reality of what happened? Is this mentioned to highlight that in the rest of the book they don't have to rely on casting lots like they did at times in the OT. After this time they listen to the HS directly for direction. Give examples.

Judas represents the greatest wasted opportunity in history. He had the rare privilege given to only 23 other men to live and receive the ministry of Jesus direct..yet his motives were selfish. When it became obvious that kicking out the Romans and becoming a rising political star was not on Jesus' plans, he decided to cash in on what he could have saved by not wasting three years chasing around his dreams for power. Cut his losses and get out of it what he could salvage. "...from which Judas turned aside to go his own place. V25

They call God literally the "heart-knower" the Kardiagnosta

Didn't they get the wrong one? Wasn't God's choice Paul? (Wiersbe p.20)

Jesus was no longer physically there to give them personal direction and guidance but they had the word of God and prayer and those two things formed the ministry of the church. Not a bad place to found a ministry on.

Apostleship: Been from the beginning of John's baptism (reference to v.5) WHY? to become a special witness to His RESURRECTION. Eyewitness. Wants them to be able to say. I saw it with my own eyeballs. It looks like at least two guys qualified. How did they decide. PRAYED about it. Lord you know the hearts a whole lot better than we do. They knew this very well as the failure of Judas revealed. God we can only see the outside...you see the hearts. Help us out. If we rely only on what we see we or even that which make sense or even the most gifted then we are going to miss something. We need you Lord here.

Why the requirements? They underscore what the NT is telling us, that our faith is not based on legend or myth but based on facts, events which men have seen and heard and touched and been involved with. This not just some holy history that developed from the minds and ideas of men throughout the ages. This is real eyeball to eyeball stuff that actually happened and it was important for this 12th man to give a witness that these things were actually true.

Should lots be used now to decide? Drawing lots was used to determine God's will in OT Israel. Prov. 16:33 "The lot is cast into the lap but its every decision is from the Lord" The apostles were casting themselves completely on God for the outcome. They were dependent on Him.

The lots were cast probably by the method used by OT Jews. The names Matthias and Justus were probably written on stone, put into a jar and then the jar was shaken until one of the stones fell out. The name that fell out would be the one God had chosen. The lots were determined not by chance but by God's sovereignty.

Life Change on Application of specifics. Acts is a narrative, a true story that teaches us mainly by example. The first 30 years of the church were unique in the way God dealt with men. So not everything in Acts sets an example that we

should imitate. Acts records what did happen, not necessarily what should happen. I.e. Praying to God for guidance and casting lots is not meant to be a model for choosing a leader in general. So how do we know this? We need to determine when Luke is describing an example we should follow; when he is describing an example we may follow and when he is giving details to portray the overall message..but not to be an exact model for us. One clue for us is that the primary patterns that we are to follow will reoccur whereas specific details may vary. For example we know that people repeatedly pray for God's guidance in Acts, but casting lots occurs only once, and that is before the HS is poured out at Pentecost. So also when people become believers in Acts, water baptism and the Holy Spirit normally occur, but it may be with the laying on of hands, it may be without, with speaking in tongues or without. Keep this question in mind as we study: When is a practice in Acts a norm? When is it an option we should consider? When is the practice a unique to that particular time?

We pray for revival in our churches yet...what if it came? Would we be ready. Revivals are exciting but read the history they can be physically and emotionally draining. People are knocking on the doors of the churches wanting to be saved. They want to know how to turn their life around. They are hungry for teaching and help. Who will pastor and teach all these people? If you and I are serious about revival then we must prepare for it right now. What if God chose to save and send 1000 more people to our church next month would we be ready?

Hughes: p24 Our situation is a lot like that of the little boy who asked his grandfather, "Grandpa, what is the wind? I cannot explain it to you, the old fisherman replied, but I can teach you to raise the sails. Acts shows us how to have the wind of the Holy S in our sails. The attitude that makes way for the fullness of the Holy Spirit is the same attitude seen in the followers just before the HS was given on the Day of Pentacost

Illust. At a restaurant the waitress will often ask to fill up your coffee cup by saying, "Can I warm your coffee.?" Most people will say, "Yes because no matter how hot the coffee started when initially poured, given time and neglect it grows cold. Some of us need a spiritual warm up. Some of us are almost empty. We need a refreshing, refilling of the HS in our lives. Do you need it? Engage in expectancy. Believe this can happen for you. Ask Him to fill up your cup to overflowing. Forgive us for being content with our own meager resources. Help us to persistently call on you for resource. Fill our sails.