

Preparing to Live Out Jesus' Mission

Acts 1:12-26

Opening Question – share your response to (a) or (b)

- a) Recall a time when you were facing a task for which you were unprepared. What did you do?
- b) Recall a significant decision you've made in your life? How did you decide what to do?

Discussion Questions

1) **Read Acts 1:12-14.** Who was present at the young church's prayer meeting in Jerusalem? From Mark 3²⁰⁻²¹ and John 7¹⁻⁵, how do you account for the presence of Jesus' family?

2) What do you think drove this group to "join together constantly in prayer" (v.14)?

3) What has driven (or still drives) you to a time of intense prayer?

How did (does) the urgent need for prayer affect your relationship with Christ?

4) **Read Acts 1:15-26.** What thoughts and feelings do the disciples have about Judas?

What details does Luke give about Judas' death?¹ Why do you think he included these?

5) What approach & resources do they use to decide what to do about the opening left by Judas?

6) How are the verses that Peter quotes (Psalm 69²⁵ & 109:8) applicable to their present situation?

How does Peter's application compare to these verses original context and meaning?

7) How does the pattern of decision-making here compare with the way you, your family or your church make important decisions?

Which of the ingredients listed here do you need to utilize more?

8) Luke's Gospel is his account of the life of Jesus. Acts is the continuing story of Jesus' ministry. How do you see the continuing ministry of Jesus in your own life?

¹ Luke's account of Judas' death differs from Matthew's (27:3-8). It may be that either writer (or both?) is "simply reporting what was commonly said in Jerusalem, and that we are not meant to harmonize the two accounts."^{Marshall,65} If we do try to harmonize them, it may be that: (a) Judas hanged himself^{Matt.}, but the rope broke and his body was ruptured by the fall (possibly after he was already dead and beginning to decompose); (b) What the priests bought with Judas's money^{Matt.}. Could be regarded as his purchase by their transaction^{Acts}; (c) The field bought by the priests^{Matt.}. Was the one where Judas died^{Acts}.