

**Living Out Our Faith - Pt2**  
**Acts 1:15-26**

**V15-26**

- By this time the apostles had become students of prophecy, and knowing all prophecy is rooted in scripture they no doubt had searched them thoroughly. Verse 15 - Peter stands up in the midst of the 120 and he quotes out of **Psalm 69:25** and **Psalm 109:8**, where a betrayer of the Messiah would be revealed and then removed so another could take his place. He goes on to identify Judas as the betrayer in fulfillment of the prophecy mentioned by David (v16). He gives detail of Judas being a part of their ministry and ultimately throwing it away to his own demise.
- Verse 17 says Judas was numbered with them. This tells means you can join a church, get involved in ministry, even tell people they need Jesus, and still fall completely away from Jesus. But how? Because none of these things determine a person's salvation.
- In **Matthew 10:1-4** the disciples were given power to heal diseases and to cast out demons. Judas was included in that group. Some may be thinking how can Satan cast out Satan? Remember Satan had not entered Judas until right before the Passover meal, so up until that point Judas wasn't demon possessed, just unconverted. This is made clear in **1 John 2:15-19** - don't love the world because the whole world is under the influence of Satan (**1 John 5:19**). If you fall in love with the world then you won't be in love with Jesus, and ultimately you'll become the example in **1 John 2:19**.
- Time is the greatest barometer or test of a person's salvation. Did you continue with Jesus? Then according to **Philippians 1:6**, if God began a work in you He will complete it. Also **2 Timothy 4:7** doesn't say, "I fought a good fight, I started the race," it says, "I finished the race, I kept the faith." Many start out claiming faith in Jesus, but as times get hard and things don't turn out like you thought, the question then becomes, will you continue with Jesus?
- Verse 18-19 - people often claim these verses contradict **Matthew 27**, where it says Judas hung himself. But what they don't understand is that he did, over a cliff. And when the branch broke under his weight he fell head first into a field, which happened to be the same field the chief priests purchased with the money he gave back because of a guilty conscience. That's why the field was called the field of blood.
- Verse 21 begins an interesting set of events - they realize someone else must take Judas' place as one of the 12, so they decide first on the criteria that had two requirements. First, he had to have accompanied the disciples during all three years of Christ's public ministry, from baptism to the ascension. Second, he had to have been an eye witness of Jesus' resurrection. According to verse 23, two men fit that profile - Justus and Matthias. So they pray about which one should be chosen, and then they cast lots. At this point all they have to go on is the Old Testament, and casting lots was a method used for discerning God's will (**Proverbs 16:33**).
- The lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the 12. Apparently God did allow this because from hereafter the apostles are referred to as the 12 (**Acts 6:2**).

But many have a problem with this because most believe Paul was to be that twelfth apostle. And the fact that we don't here of Matthias again gives some credence to this thinking. But the problem's not with that reasoning, the issue that's so clearly pointed out is the fact that Peter has a patience problem; he's a man of action, not one to wait. Jesus instructed not to do anything until they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, meaning don't pass out a tract, don't give a witness, don't hold a church service, and I have to believe, and don't choose another apostle either.

- Although Acts includes the 12 and the New Testament does tell us Paul's ministry was unique, I believe when we get to heaven and we see the fulfillment of **Revelation 21:14** - names of the 12 apostles on the foundations - I don't think we'll see Matthias' name but we'll see Paul. Paul says in **1 Corinthians 15:8** that he was one "born out of due time." And when it was time for Paul to take his rightful place as an apostle that God would raise him up.
- According to **Galatians 1:1** it wasn't man who chose him but God. The criterion used was not of men but God's. Eight of Paul's 13 letters begin with an acknowledgement of him being an apostle, including all three of the Pastoral Epistles:
  1. **1 Timothy 1:1** - apostle by the commandment of God our Savior and Jesus our hope
  2. **2 Timothy 1:1** - apostle by the will of God to the promise of life in Jesus
  3. **Titus 1:1** - bondservant and apostle according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of truth which accords to godliness.
- It's laid on thick here, meaning if you doubt Paul's apostleship, then you must not belong to God, because to refuse Paul is to refuse truth, and that proves you're not following godliness. That's why Jesus said in **Luke 10:16**, "He who hears you hears Me, and he who rejects you rejects Me....," and he who rejects Jesus rejects God the Father.
- I believe Peter and the boys jumped the gun a bit. Now it didn't stop the program of God, as He still raised Paul up in His time, but there is a danger when we, in our excitement for God, disobey God in an effort to please Him. Peter was right in what God wanted to do; he's spot on and clear with that. What he wasn't clear on was the timing, and that's why he should have waited for the power of His Spirit to bring it about.
- It's also important to take note that he offered God two choices. You can't say Peter wasn't fair. The problem was both choices were wrong. We're always wrong when we give God a choice - door #1 or door #2? But we'll say, "I prayed about it," like that makes it alright. It doesn't.
- Never attempt to box God in. Let Him reserve the right to make His choices, and you just follow. We do this often, how we'll see a principle in the word and then think of a way to make it happen. We don't need to make it happen; we just need to wait patiently for God and be prepared so when He speaks we're not only ready to move but also well equipped to accomplish whatever He leads us to do. Amen!