

Acts 1:12-26 - God Is Faithful to Finish What He Begins

- God is sovereignly working through real people, real events, and even human failure to accomplish His purposes.

1. The People in the Room

Read:

- Acts 1:12-14 – *“Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away. And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot and Judas the son of James. All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.”*
 - Reference: Acts 1:15

Who Was There?

These were not random individuals.

This was:

- The eleven apostles
- Mary, the mother of Jesus
- Jesus’ brothers
- The women who followed Him (including Mary Magdalene and others)

Why This Matters

These are the people we think of when we think about the life and ministry of Jesus.

They:

- Walked with Him
- Heard Him teach
- Saw His miracles
- Witnessed His crucifixion
- Encountered Him after the resurrection

These were His closest friends and followers.

Key Insight

The Church begins with people who truly knew Jesus.

A Note on the 120

- Acts 1:15 tells us about 120 believers were gathered
- This likely developed over the days between Jesus' ascension and Pentecost

2. Judas and the Sovereignty of God

Read:

- Acts 1:15-20 – *“In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of person was in all about 120) and said, ‘Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry.’ (Now this man acquired a field with the reward of his wickedness, and falling headlong he burst open in the middle and all his bowels gushed out. And it became known to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the field was called in their own language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) ‘For it is written in the Book of Psalms, ‘May his camp become desolate, and let there be no one to dwell in it’; and ‘Let another take his office.’”*

Peter's Explanation

Peter says:

“The Scripture had to be fulfilled...”

He then points back to the writings of David.

Read the Psalms Peter Refers To

- *Psalm 69:25*
- *Psalm 109:8*

What Is Peter Saying?

Peter is showing that:

- Judas' betrayal was not outside of God's knowledge
- It was foreseen and spoken of in Scripture

Important Truths to Hold Together

1. God Was Not Surprised

God knew exactly what would happen.

Nothing caught Him off guard.

2. Judas Is Still Responsible

- Judas acted out of his own sinful desire
- He chose personal gain over faithfulness to Christ

3. God Uses Even Sin to Accomplish His Purposes

The betrayal that led to the cross became the means of our salvation.

Reflection

- Do I trust that God is in control, even when people act wrongly?
- Do I believe God can work through broken situations?
- Do I trust Him even when I don't understand what is happening?

Key Truth

Evil never outmaneuvers God.
It is always under His authority.

3. The Appointment of Matthias

Read:

- **Acts 1:21–26 – “So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us – one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection.” And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed and said, ‘You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.’ And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.”**

What Were the Qualifications of an Apostle?

The apostles were not just leaders—they were witnesses.

They had to be:

1. Present with Jesus from the beginning

(from John's baptism to the ascension)

2. Eyewitnesses of the resurrection

3. Chosen and affirmed for this role

Why This Matters

The apostles were uniquely appointed to testify about Jesus.

Their role was foundational to the Church.

What This Means for Us Today

- The foundation of the Church has already been laid
- The apostolic role in this sense is complete

This means the message we have in Scripture is sufficient and complete.

Key Truth

We are not waiting for new revelation.

God has already spoken through His apostles.

4. Bringing It All Together

Before the Church moves forward in Acts 2:

- The right people are gathered
- Scripture is understood
- Sin is accounted for
- Leadership is established

Final Truth

God is faithful to complete what He begins.

Personal Reflection

- Do I trust God with the details of my life?
- Do I believe He is working even when I cannot see it?
- Am I resting in what He has already revealed in His Word?

Closing Thought

The same God who was at work in these moments
is still at work in your life today.

He is not only able to begin a work in you

He is faithful to bring it to completion.