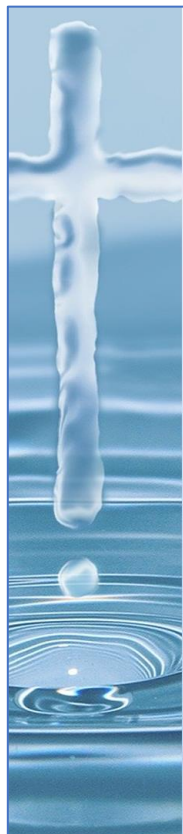


Dig Deeper Acts 1:12-26 for personal study and Life Groups...



acts 1:12-26 authority for certainty

why do we need to know about Matthias?



- 1) it happened?
- 2) a "time filler"?
- 3) a "warts and all account?"
- 4) a key player in the story?
- 5) top tips for church recruiting?

setting (v12-14) 6) to make up the numbers?


scriptures (v15-20) 7) to fulfil the Scriptures?

significance (v21-22) answer: an experienced

selection (v23-26) official spokesperson!



helps us to have greater certainty



Start with a prayer and read the passage through...

1. Last week we saw Jesus ascend to heaven. How does this passage tell us that his work is far from over? (How does that chime in with 1:1-2)?
2. Which part of the story makes most impact on you?
3. In what sense is Matthias an a) "experienced" and b) "official" spokesperson? Why do these matter, and what if we only had one of them?
4. How does the story of the addition of Matthias to the 12 work to strengthen your faith? How might it help when doubts and fears arise in the coming days? When do you experience them? What will you tell yourself next time?
5. [IF TIME... You might like to think about some of the knotty issues over the page (or other difficulties), but only if they are relevant, and can be applied to our lives!]

Spend some time praying about all this!

Resources...

- The Bible Project has put together two 8 minute videos on Acts [here](#) and [here](#).
- John Piper on the [apostles](#) and why we would do well to avoid the term in pioneer evangelism and church planting today.
- An interesting article on [4 lessons from Judas](#).

Some difficult questions that arise from this passage...



The names of the apostles seem slightly different from the gospels. Are they the same 12? Answer yes! In a culture which may have spoken of “son of x” more than “surnames” people often had multiple names (see v23). Different lists can be found: in [Matthew 10:1-4](#) and [Mark 3:13-19](#) and [Luke 6:12-16](#) (as well as here). There are also various names mentioned in John, though not all of the 12). The key differences (and resolutions) are:

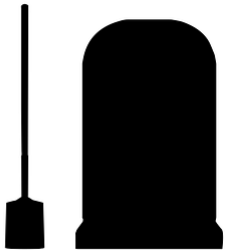
- **Bartholemew** has been identified with **Nathanael** in John’s gospel.
- **Thaddaeus** (in Mt and Mk) is likely to be **Judas** son of James also described as “Judas not Iscariot” in John 14:22.

Are there other Apostles outside the twelve?

Yes and no! Paul was an apostle and he witnessed the risen Christ, and was the “apostle to the Gentiles” (Romans 11:13), being sent out to preach the gospel. However as one “abnormally born” (1 Cor 15:8) he wouldn’t have put himself alongside the twelve, and in Galatians recounted that his message had to be brought into comparison with the Jerusalem apostles. Of others the title “apostle” may have been used (eg *Barnabas* – Acts 14:14, *Andronicus & Junia(s)* in Acts 16:7) possibly others too, though these are not considered part of “the 12” and given the same authority.



There seems to be a difference between the way Judas dies in Matthew 27:3-7 and Acts 1:18-19. Yes there are differences in those passages (although far more similarities!) The two (potentially different sources) actually reassure us that the issues surrounding Judas’ death were well known in Jerusalem. The main differences are easily resolvable though. 1) The field was acquired by Judas (Acts) by the agency of the Chief priests (Matthew). 2) Judas hanged himself (Matthew) and his body swelled up and burst open in its decomposed condition (Acts). 3) The field of Judas’ blood (Acts) also got its name from “blood money” (Matthew). Feel free to borrow John Stott’s BST commentary on Acts for more information. See also [this](#).



Should we use lots in decision making today? Proverbs 16:33 says that “*The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord*”. While it is true that Christians have used lots (eg picking a straw, rolling dice, flipping a coin) for making decisions (eg especially the Moravians in the time of John Wesley), this is the only recorded use of lots in the New Testament. Most Bible scholars think that the following make it a one off description, rather than a long term prescription for the church.

1) this was a decision of Jesus from heaven on a par with his choosing of the apostles on earth and so there is a special need for his direction (over and above his guidance). 2) The practice is not mentioned elsewhere and not in the epistles which are more prescriptive for the church after the apostles. 3) Shortly after this event the Holy Spirit came and would give guidance to the church from this point. Therefore, I feel it’s better that when making decisions, one should use prayerful bible-influenced common sense, looking to the advice of other Christians and the guidance of God in our circumstances and individual make up.



Was Judas really guilty if it was predicted in the Scriptures that he was going to betray Jesus? Did he have a choice? It’s not a contradiction to say that God foreknew that Judas was going to betray Jesus, in fulfilment of scriptures about the death of the Messiah AND that he was guilty. Acts 2:23 and Acts 4:23-28 speak of this same combination of rebellion and God’s advance knowledge and planning. Throughout Scripture man’s responsibility and God’s sovereignty go hand in hand. Judas should be a warning but not a worry!