



February 1, 2026
Pastor Wil Staley

“God’s Working in the Waiting”

Acts 1:12-26

Acts: The Unstoppable Gospel

Introduction: “Hurry up and wait.”

The Apostles Obeyed (vv. 12-14)

- They returned
Acts 1:12 – “Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day’s journey away.”
- They were united
Acts 1:13-14a – “When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, 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. These all with one mind...”

John 17:20-23 – “I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.”

There was unity amid diversity. “I do not want the walls of separation between different orders of Christians to be destroyed, but only lowered, that we may shake hands a little easier over them!” – Rowland Hill

- They devoted themselves to prayer
Acts 1:14b – “These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.”

“Prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge to Satan.” – John Bunyan, Pilgrim’s Progress

The Scripture is Fulfilled (vv. 15-22)

- Peter addresses the 120 regarding Judas
Acts 1:15-17 – “At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together), and said, ‘Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. For he was counted among us and received his share in this ministry.’”

Luke 22:21-22 – “But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!”

- The fate of Judas
Acts 1:18-19 – “(Now this man acquired a field with the price of his wickedness, and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his intestines gushed out. And it became known to all who were living in Jerusalem; so that in their own language that field was called Hakeldama, that is, Field of Blood.)”

Matthew 27:3-8 vs. Acts 1:18-19:

- In Matthew the chief priests buy the field; in Acts Judas bought the field. In a “causative” Judas bought the field.
- In Matthew Judas hangs himself; in Acts Judas falls and his entrail burst open. Both outcomes can be true.
- This emphasizes God’s judgment on those who oppose Him.
 - Other examples in the book of Acts: Ananias & Sapphira (5:1-11), Simon the sorcerer (8:9-24), Herod (12:20-24), and Elymas the sorcerer (13:6-11)
- Warrant for replacement of Judas (vv. 20-22)
Acts 1:20 – “For it is written in the book of Psalms, ‘Let his homestead be made desolate, And let no one dwell in it’; and, ‘Let another man take his office.’”
 - The Lord opened up their minds so that they might understand the Scriptures (Luke 24:45)
 - The disciples read David’s prophetic writing about the enemies of God (Psalm 69:25) and the replacement of Judas’ office (Psalm 109:8).

Acts 1:21-22 – “Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us— beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us—one of these must become a witness with us of His resurrection.”

The conditions for Judas’ successor:

- They had to have been around for all Jesus’s coming and going.
- They had to have been there the whole time.
- They had to have witnessed the resurrection.

The Twelve gets Re-established (vv. 23-26)

Acts 1:23-26 – “So they put forward two men, Joseph called Barsabbas (who was also called Justus), and Matthias. And they prayed and said, ‘You, Lord, who know the hearts of all men, show which one of these two You have chosen to occupy this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.’ And they drew lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.”

There are two candidates to replace Judas

- Joseph aka Barsabbas whose name means “son of the Sabbath”.
- Matthias whose name means “gift of God”.

Luke 22:26, 28-30 – “But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves...You are those who have stayed with me in my trials, and I assign to you, as my Father assigned to me, a kingdom, that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

The new community represented the realization of God’s divine promises.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION:

1. On a scale from 1-10 (1=terrible, 10=excellent) how well do you deal with waiting?
2. Do you get encouragement when you consider the variety of people that made up the first assembly of believers?
3. Regarding the John Bunyan quote above, have you ever seen prayer accomplish those things in your life?
4. When it comes to “connection over production” where do you tend to focus a majority of the time? Give examples.
5. What is one area of your life where you’d like to see God work in the waiting? Based on today’s passage, what might that look like?