

“HOW DO WE DECIDE?”
ACTS 1:12-26

INTRODUCTION

The apostles are going through a big decision making process. Some decisions have big consequences so we want to make sure we have the right process. This passage serves to edify us in our decision making. Jesus was taken up in the cloud. They left Bethany, walked back down the Mount of Olives across from the Kidron Valley and back to the upper room to wait.

REPLACING JUDAS

Peter took the lead to tell them that the betrayal by Judas was predicted. (Judas had remorse, but no repentance. They are not the same!) He went to the priests, but could have gone to God. He took the 30 pieces of silver, threw the silver down and hung himself. The branch (or rope) broke and he fell, dying from the fall.

Peter quotes **Psalm 109**, "let another take his office". His conviction was that since Jesus picked 12, there needed to be 12. Two candidates were proposed, Joseph and Matthias. They prayed and then cast lots.

The question is, was this the right way to do it? There are some good arguments as to why there were problems with this method. Was God's choice Matthias or was it Paul? It seems that Peter was ahead of the Lord. He was told to wait. **(v.4)** The Lord had wanted them to not do anything until He sent the Holy Spirit. Many times we seek the Lord about something that is already a clear command. Waiting on the Lord can be difficult. We need to have a healthy fear of getting ahead of Him, and then we will make better decisions. **Psalm 62:5**. We need to learn to wait. So Peter started off on the wrong foot.

It is also thought that the criteria for selection was wrong. Peter's requirements for an apostle were 1) a man, 2) has been with the apostles since the baptism of Jesus, and 3) witnessed the resurrection. These are good criteria, but the Lord never gave any instruction about this, only to wait!

On the other hand, some argue that Matthias couldn't be an apostle because he is not mentioned in Acts. That is a weak argument because it's an argument from silence. Many of the apostles aren't mentioned again in Acts either.

Paul seems to be the Lord's real choice as an apostle. He was an eye witness of the resurrected Christ. He repeated this over and over. The Holy Spirit records his commission in **Acts 9:15** and **1 Corinthians 1:1**. Certainly the signs and wonders followed.

While they did pray about Matthias, we don't know of the Lord actually *directing* that decision. We only know about the instruction to wait. It seems that Peter already picked 2 people and asked God to tell him which one he liked. God is the one who needs to choose as He did with Jesse's sons in the case of Samuel. Often God will choose those that we wouldn't even consider! The casting of lots is an Old Testament form of decision making, **Proverbs 16:33**. They used this to select a scape goat and to allocate land. Even Gideon used a fleece, but that is not how He wants to relate to us. We can't tell God what to do to prove Himself. He wants us to rely on being led by the Holy Spirit!

CONSIDER

The particular decision to choose Matthias was a big one, but had no real consequences. It seemed that Jesus ignored this choice. While Peter jumped the gun, there are others that are afraid to make the wrong choice and don't move in any direction. We have to remember that in any case, God is our supportive Father! The better way is to do what **Romans 12:1, 2** states. In that way *we are transformed* and prove what is the good and perfect will of God. Our biggest choice is to choose life! Submitting your life to Jesus is the most important choice you could ever make. It has eternal consequences! *Have you done that?*

PRAY.....

- * That the Lord would protect the body of Christ during this uncertain time.
- * That God's wisdom would be granted to our government leaders.
- * That we would have a better understanding of the Holy Spirit through the teaching of Acts.