

Introduction:

We have not had a chance yet to be formally introduced my name is Steve and I am one of the pastors here at Sound City. I want to thank Pastor Aaron for the opportunity to speak to all of you this morning.

As I was reading and studying this passage, I could not keep from thinking about being on pause. Think about these apostles and the other followers of Jesus having just experienced the miracles of the resurrection and the ascension and then being told to wait for the Holy Spirit. That got me to thinking about us in this time we are all kind of on pause. Sure, we still move forward but not at the pace and intensity that we would if things were “normal”.

What can we learn from these followers of Jesus that could help us to navigate our pause...?

1. Some overarching thoughts from this passage

a. What does it mean to be an Apostle?

Note: in this passage Peter seems to be defining an Apostle as someone who had followed Jesus from the very beginning and could testify to the facts of His resurrection. Furthermore verse 2 of chapter 1 adds that Jesus had personally chosen the Apostles.

b. What are Lots? – Why do they cast them?

Note: A lot is essentially two stones that are the same weight and size sometimes they were black and white sometimes they would write names on them and essentially they would put them in a container and either reach in or dump them out whichever one came out was the chosen. How serious do they take these decisions decided by casting lots, ... well **Proverbs 16:33 says “The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord”**

c. How to discern the Will of God?

Note: This question is a sermon series unto itself. To keep it brief know this that God’s will for your life is share the gospel. How that looks for each one of us is different. We have the benefit of the Holy Spirit to guide us as we walk in the Spirit. However even today we use various means such as congregational votes to affirm what we believe to be the Will of God.

d. Understanding God’s Sovereignty

Note: this is another statement that could be an entire sermon series. Again, to be brief, Understanding God’s sovereignty is to understand that His will, will be accomplished.

2. 4 Characteristics they had

a. They Were People of Obedience vs12

Jesus gave them instruction and they followed the instructions. Do not leave Jerusalem and wait for the Holy Spirit.

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, which is near Jerusalem—a Sabbath day's journey away. Acts 1:12

i. We need to be People of Obedience

Jesus instructed us in the Great Commission according to Mathews Gospel that we should make disciples, baptize them, and teach them everything that Jesus taught us.

b. They Were People of Prayer vs14

They were continually united in prayer

They all were continually united in prayer, along with the women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. Acts 1:14

i. We need to be People of Prayer

Unfortunately, it is all too common for western Christianity to try and solve all our own issues. It is only after we fail to fix it, or we make it worse that we turn to God in prayer. This is completely backwards thinking, you cannot fix anything, so prayer needs to be our constant state.

c. They Were People of Scripture vs16

They continued to study the Scriptures; Peter quotes several passages from Psalms to make his point that they needed to replace Judas.

“Brothers and sisters, it was necessary that the Scripture be fulfilled that the Holy Spirit through the mouth of David foretold about Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. Acts 1:16

i. We need to be People of Scripture

Later in the book of Acts it is going to be written about the followers of Jesus at Berea that they were more noble than those of Thessalonica because they searched the scriptures daily.

The people here were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica since they received the word with eagerness and examined the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. Acts 17:11

d. They Were People of Action v26

Even though they were waiting for the Holy Spirit to come they were not static they kept progressing forward. Carrying out the business of the Church.

Then they cast lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias and he was added to the eleven apostles. Acts 1:26

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The Big Picture

The characteristics found in the 1st century followers of Jesus and aspired to by the 21st century followers of Jesus cannot be accomplished outside of Christ. Jesus said "...apart from me you can do nothing" John 15:5

A list of Old Testament verses that mention casting lots:

Leviticus 16:8

Numbers 26:55

Joshua 18:6

1 Samuel 14:42

Jonah 1:7

Proverbs 16:33