

Title: The Man who Lost Everything

Text: Acts 1:12-26

Turn with me to the book of Acts chapter 1. The book of Acts chapter 1 beginning at Vs 12. Acts chapter 1 Verse 12.....

(Read Acts 1:12-26)

Let us look to the Lord in Prayer

Our Father, we again ask that your Word will be clear to our hearts. And that your Holy Spirit would be in control of this message. And we pray, Father, that those who have come today, who stand perhaps in the situation that faced this man Judas so long ago, with great opportunity and yet, never fully coming to receive Christ as Lord and Saviour. A man who literally lost everything. Father, I pray that you would help each one considering the claims of Christ upon their life, and lacking that confidence that they personally related to God by faith, Lord, I pray that this might be the day of decision for them. I pray, also, Lord for those who are Christians that we might again refresh our memories on how the church was begun. And we might sense again the need of the power of the Holy Spirit for witnessing in this day of ours. For we ask it in Jesus name and for his sake...Amen...

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I remind you that this is Acts of the Apostles. It is dealing with men who are called Apostles. In Ephesians 4:11 the Bible says there are four gifted men that have been given by God to the church. They are: Apostles, prophets, evangelist, and Pastor-teachers. The Pastor-teacher is related to the local ministry. The evangelist is one who travels from place to place winning people to Christ and establishing new churches. The Evangelist stays in a place long enough to form a church with a Pastor-teacher as shepherd.

Then you have the Prophets. Prophets in the N.T. foretold the future. They foretold the future. They are not simply foretellers. They are prophets who fore-tell. They actually knew the future. And they were able to predict the future.

The Apostles were men who were supernaturally invested by Christ with gifts of the Holy Spirit. Miraculous gifts which are summarized in Hebrew chapter 2 verse 3 and 4. And also in Mark 16 verses 17 to 20. The Apostles, for example, were able to directly ~~heal~~ heal people. They did this through the laying on of hands. The Apostles were, also, able to speak in different languages. They were able to do things without being hurt. And Jesus said that these are signs that will confirm the spoken Word. They, of course at that time, did not have the written word. The N.T. had not yet been written. The miraculous signs of the Apostles which are recorded in Acts, were that the spoken word would be confirmed.

As you know, the Bible teaches in I Corinthians 1:22 that the Jews require a sign...The Greeks seek after wisdom. But we preach Christ crucified. The Jews did require signs. And ~~God~~ God gave it to them. He gave them signs to confirm the spoken Word.

Now, in the first 11 verses of Acts 1 we had a four-fold outline. And this is really the introduction to the book. We have already studied this but let's review it quickly.

One, the book of Acts is a continuation of the book of Luke. Two, the book of Acts is the great commission in action. It vs 2 when it says that he had given commandments to the Apostles whom He had chosen, it is simply the word "commanded" in the Greek text. One command. The great commission. And that is the story of this book.

Third, it is a commentary on the power of God in men's lives. And that brought us up to last week as we studied the power of the Holy Spirit. In vs 8 we read: "but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth."

Fourth, the book of Acts is a conviction that Jesus Christ is coming again. vs 9 to 11, the Apostles saw Him ascend into heaven. Then men in white dress appeared to the Apostles and said that just as Jesus was taken up from you into heaven, so will he come in just the same way.

Jesus Christ will return.

I have outlined the book of Acts into 7 major divisions. And I would like to give to you now. I will be remaining you of it in the future. This will help you, I hope, as you read study Acts. There are seven major points outlining the entire 28 chapters of Acts.

Number 1, in ~~the section~~ chapter 1 verses 12 to 26, we have the choosing of Matthias. That is very important to begin with.

Secondly, chapter 2 talks about the coming of the Holy Spirit.

The third major point begins at chapter 3 verse 1 and goes through chapter 8 verse 40. Chapter 3 verse 1 through chapter 8 verse 40. This is the church at its birth and early development. You will learn in these chapters ---3 through 8--of the church as it is born and its early stages of development.

Major point four...the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. This is a pivotal point in Acts. Chapter 9 verse 1 to 31....The conversion of Saul of Tarsus.

Point number 5 is the calling of the Gentles. It was a Jewish church until this time. The calling of the Gentles. Chapter 9 verse 32 to chapter 11 verse 18....

Point number six begins with chapter 11 verse 19 and goes through chapter 20 verse 38. These chapters deals with the church as it grows. The church as it grows. Acts chapter 11 verse 19 through chapter 20 verse 38, And here you find the missionary journeys of Paul and others.

Then finally, from chapter 21:1 to the end..chapter 28:31...is the commitment of the Apostle Paul in the closing days of his ministry. And ~~the~~ that is one of the greatest sections of Acts. No Christian ever experienced what this man experienced. And it is a testimony and example to christian's throughout all history. Paul even writes that God chose his life to be an example to all who would believe in Christ.

So, this is the book of Acts. It centers really in primarily two people. In Peter, who comes to the forefront in the first few chapters. And then in Paul in the last few chapters.

I say to you, again, that there is no book as important to our understanding of what the church is today, of who we are and what we are to

do, of what God's program is, then the book of Acts....

Now, let us come to the section in Chapter 1 verse 12 to 26 which concerns the choosing of Matthias. The choosing of Matthias.

Now, there are four things that I would like to point out in these verses. Four things.

First of all, in verses 12 to 14, we notice the intense of their prayer. The intensity of their prayer. These men were faced with a serious decision. Jesus Christ has said that 12 men would set on 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel. Jesus Christ predicted that these 12 men would be influential and key leaders in the future when Christ would set up his kingdom. In fact, if you will remember, these men argued amongst themselves as to who would be the greatest among them in the kingdom. Jesus taught that the 12 Apostles were very important in his program.

So, they are now down to 11. Judas hanged himself. And in that great problem facing them, I think it is very interesting that the Bible preceding verse 15 says in Vs 14: "These all continued with one mind devoting themselves to prayer."

This decision to choose Matthias was bathed in prayer. I would like you to notice a couple of things about this prayer meeting.

We are told in Vs 13 that the 11 apostles were there. In Vs 14 we are told that they were with the women. And also with Mary, the mother of Jesus. And with his brothers.

Now, here is an interesting note. In the life of Jesus, if you will remember he had four half-brothers (Mark 6:3). He also had sisters. ~~Child~~ Children who were born to Joseph and Mary after they were married. Jesus had four half-brothers. The Bible says that they did not believe in him during his ministry. That is one of the most fascinating verses in the Bible, His own half-brothers did not believe in Him.

But, notice at this prayer meeting, his brothers are there. What changed these brothers? I suggest to you that it was the resurrection. That Jesus in those 40 days mentioned in Vs 3 was appearing to his disciples and to his brothers.....

Can you imagine the sight of those brothers seeing their own brother whom they saw crucified. And now seeing him alive. And they believed. Because now they are in this prayer meeting.

How many were there? There were 120 people. Men, women and children. 120 people, according to Vs 15.

Now, you will notice in Vs 14 that it says that "these all continued." The word "continued" means to "continue steadfast." They stayed with it.

Look at chapter 2 verse 42. In speaking about the day of Pentecost, and the events after that day, the 3 thousand people who believed in Christ that day, and were added to the group of 120, it says verse 42 "they were continually devoting themselves."....The same idea as is in Acts 1:14.

Will you turn, please, to the book of Ephesians. Ephesians chapter 6 and verse 18: "With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints."

The word "perseverance" in the Greek text is the same word as Acts 1:14 and 2:42.

Now, why do I point that out? The word means to "stay with it." To not give up. The point is that these people who were gathered together in that upper room were not just throwing up casual prayers like: "LORD, BLESS EVERYONE."....They were fervent and intense in their desire to know the will of God for their lives. They continually devoted themselves to prayer. It is the same word "perseverance."

The Bible teaches Christians to pray with this fervency. With this steadfastness and not giving up. Folks, we are so easily tempted to stop praying because either we haven't seen the answer, or we are afraid that it indicates we didn't believe God the first time....But the Bible teaches us to wait on the Lord, to be of good courage; and he will ~~st~~ strengthen our hearts. They prayed with a steadfastness. They would not give up.

And I say to you that many of the things that happened to these people were a result of their fervency in prayer. This was a praying people. They knew how to go to prayer and get awfully close to God.

Some of you listening to me today, do not know what it is to pray. Maybe on occasion as you have been in a restaurant or in your home, maybe on occasion you have said a prayer to thank God for the food. And many of pray in a token way. Sometimes before we go to bed at night. And we say, "Lord, forgive me for everything that I have done today."

And I am amused when I hear that because I can just imagine the Lord saying: "Well, which things?".....

Lord, forgive me for all the things I have done." "Well, which things? I am afraid, folks, that many of us are praying as we should. We know it in our hearts. We know we need to pray. But we don't pray. And ~~the~~ one of the things that made Acts exciting is because the people were praying.

There is another interesting fact if you will come back to Acts 1, about their prayer. In Vs 14 it says "These all with one mind continued." Now, the word "mind" here I believe is a little weak. The word comes from two Greek words. One meaning "same". And the other meaning "passion." When the two words are put together it means "the same passion".

Friends, you have here one of the greatest text on prayer. These all.. everyone...all 1120...continued "steadfast" with the same passion.... The intense desire of their hearts. They were together. They had the same passion.

Now, what were they praying for? Well, there have been many suggestions. Where they praying for the Holy Spirit to come?

Well, Jesus predicted that he would come. And he came in answer to the promise of the Father, according to these early verses in chapter 1.

WHAT WERE THEY PRAYING FOR?.....

First of all, I believe they were praying for wisdom.... Wisdom to know what to do to know God's will...

Why? Because the key issue under discussion, beginning with Vs 15, is the selection of another apostle.....

Many people have treated this last section very lightly. And many say that they made a mistake. They were not right in their selection of Matthias. It should have been Paul....

I hope to show you, today, that these people were on target. That it was God's will. And the Apostle Paul is not one of the twelve. There were many apostles as I have mentioned before. Matthias was chosen because of fervency in prayer. They continually devoting themselves. And they were all with the same passion in prayer and sublication.

Now, the second thing that I want to deal with is the fulfillment of
of scripture. The fulfillment of scripture.

You will notice, beginning with Vs 16, that Peter says that what is happening now is so that scripture can be fulfilled. This isn't an accident. Scripture has been fulfilled.....

What do you think it was really like? For 12 men who had walked together for three years with Jesus to see one of their own betray him and then hang himself? And then to be seating in an upper room and wandering what happened to him. Do you not understand why Peter came forth with these tremendous words of assurance and said: "Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled."

Many of them, I am sure, had said at the last supper: "LORD, IS IT I... If it happened to Judas, maybe it can happen to me. WHAT HAPPENED TO JUDAS? WHY DID HE DO IT?....."

And yet, the Bible clearly teaches that all of these disciples forsook Jesus in the garden. When Judas placed that kiss on the cheek of Jesus, and the band of soldier came to take him, the Bible says that all the disciples forsook him and fled. Not one of them stood with him.

There they are in the upper room continually devoting themselves to prayer. And Peter under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit stands up and says: "Brethren, the scripture had to be fulfilled."

SO, WE ASK THE QUESTION, WHAT SCRIPTURE?.....According to Vs 16 it says "the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David." Notice, not David spoke, but the Spirit spoke through the mouth of David. All scripture is a result of God speaking. The Holy Spirit has produced it. Sometimes God speaks in the Bible. That is always true. Sometimes the Devil speaks and you cannot tell if ~~it~~ it is true or not.....

And sometimes ~~man~~ speaks and you are not quite sure whether his words are true or not. But, the fact that they said it means it is true. God's written revelation. The writing is by the Holy Spirit's control.

Now, what was the scripture about that is being fulfilled? It was according to Vs 16, concerning Judas.

Now, turn with ~~man~~ in your Bibles to the book of Psalms. Psalms chapter 41. There are three Psalms involved which Peter makes reference to which teaches us that scripture is being fulfilled. WHAT ARE THEY? Psalms 41:9... Psalms 41:9 says: (read).....

Here is a prediction of the future. One of those great fulfilled prophecy of the O.T. concerning Christ. My own friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread. He has lifted up his heel against me.

So, number one, in the fulfilment of scripture we have a prediction of the betrayal of Judas.....The betrayal of Judas.....His betrayal was not by ~~not~~ accidental. The scripture was being fulfilled when Judas betrayed Jeuss.....

Now, turn, please, over to chapter 69 of Psalms. Psalms 69:25... We read: "May their camp be desolate; May none dwell in their tents..."

In Acts chapter 1, we read in Vs 20(Read).....

Peter quotes from Psalms 69 to show these disciples who are gathered in the upper room that not only the betrayal was predicted, but also the actual banishment of Judas. His home would be completely desolate. And none would dwell in the tents.

But, let me tell you, it is fantastic to read what the Bible says about this man, Judas.

Then look at Psalms 109....Psalms 109 verse 8.....Peter quotes this also in Acts 1:20.....Psalms 109:8 says: "Let his days be few; Let another take his office.".....Then, we read in Acts 1:20: "His office let another man take.".....

In other words, on this occasion when Matthias is being chosen to replace Judas, it is all in the fulfillment of God's Word. God knew all about this. God was in complete control.

Now, the thing that will really touch your heart is in the predictions of Christ. Turn to John chapter 6, please. John chapter 6. I don't know of any story that will hurt your heart as much as the story of Judas and what happened to him. The man who lost everything.

But, Jesus was constantly telling his disciples and this man about what was coming. In JOHN chapter 6 beginning at vs 64 (Read 64-65)

What a tremendous statement. My friend I tell you today in love and in kindness, but I tell you on the bases of the word of God that you cannot come to Christ out of your own desire and choice....

You say, "Well, don't you plead with people to come to Christ."..YES... I do...Absolutely....The Bible invites us to come to him. Well, then, what do you mean by this? The Bible teaches us that God is drawing people to himself. You say, "Why, do I feel sensitive towards Christ?" Well, I want to tell you it is because God has put that in your heart. And he is drawing you unto himself. Jesus said, clearly, "No man can come unto me except it be given to him by my Father....."

Now, notice Vs 66: "As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew, and were not walking with him any more."

Some of you will be alike this morning. You will conclude, "Well, that is a hard saying." It was a hard saying then. Some of his disciples went away. They didn't follow him anymore. Because you know what he said? He said, I am trying to tell you that only God can bring you. That God must change the life. For so many people, they want to do it. We want to run the show. We want to earn our own way. We want to show God how to do things. And we have self---self---self.....The Bible teaches that it is God who brings men to himself. It was a hard saying and many disciples fell away. Vs 67(read 67-71).....

Turn over to chapter 13.....chapter 13 verse 11.....(Read Vs 11, 18)

Now, will you turn to John chapter 17.....chapter 17:12(Read)

The scripture was being fulfilled in the life of Judas....

Now, let's come back to Acts chapter 1 and let's ask ourselves about the failure of Judas.

The failure of Judas. Now, here is a man who certainly had many advantages. Acts chapter 1 verse 17 Peter says that Judas was counted among amongst them and had received his portion of the ministry.

I ask you and I ask myself, How could a man who was with Jesus for 3 years betray him as Judas did? How could a man do that?..... And yet are we not amazed to as people who have been under the influence of the teaching of the word of God, who supposing are professing Christians, and yet time after time will betray Christ. And we do this for far less than 30 pieces of silver. Maybe a moment of popularity.....maybe a moment of acceptability with the world, we betray Jesus.....Who are we to judge Judas and say we would never do that.....Who are we to say that.....

Judas had plenty of advantages. I remind you that he was chosen by Christ. He was part of the 12 apostles. Jesus loved Judas. And he did many things to indicate his love. †

I want you to turn to John, again. John chapter 13 and verse 21.....
(Read Vs 21-30)

Do you know what really amazes me about this story? It amazes me that 12 men could be together for 3 years and not know one another. Do you realize that these disciples even on that night still believed that Judas cared for the poor. You talk about a fellow who could really fool people. Judas had fooled them.

Let me show you the importance of this. Turn back to John 12. This is just a few days before Jesus died. He had a dinner or supper in honor of Lazarus whom he had just raised from the dead. John 13 beginning at Vs 2....
(Read Vs 2-6)

And even at the last supper when Jesus handed him the morsel and he went out with the bag, all the disciples thought he was going out to either pay for the food or to give something to the poor. They still thought Judas was concerned about the poor. He was interested in the poor. He was interested in Judas. His problem was that he had a desire for material possessions for money. He sold Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.....Judas didn't love the poor. He didn't care about the poor. He cared only for *Judas* himself.

But think of the act he put on in front of these disciples. My friends, I have experienced as a Pastor and you have who have seen christians for years, you have seen christians go on for years professing and acting as though they were christians, only to discover one day in that heart was a black against Christ, there was something there, whether materialism or something else, they never really trusted Christ. It was something they tacked onto their life for their own enjoyment. And they accept Christ as a catch. But down deep inside there is not knowledge of the consequences of the Gospel. And if there are there is a denial.....

Judas recognized, I believe, the consequences of the Gospel after he had sold Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.

Turn, please to Matthew chapter 27....Matthew 27 beginning at Vs 3. Here we have a tremendous insight as to what happened in Judas' heart.

Vs 3 says: (Read 3-8)

Look again at Vs 3. "When Judas saw that He had been condemned.".... Why is that important? Judas never really believed that they were going to kill Jesus. He never did.

Do you know why Judas betrayed Jesus? I believe there is plenty of evidence in the Gospels to prove that Judas had the heart of a zealot. The zealot wanted a king to overthrow the Roman empire. And when Judas finally realized that Jesus was condemned, he felt remorse.

Now, your KJ says that he repented. Did Judas really repent of his sin? There are basically two words in Greek that can be translated repent. One word means to be sorrow for your sins. The other word means to change your mind, and to turn around and go the other direction.

And the word used here only means to be sorry or remorseful...Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 7:9-10, now I rejoice not that you were made sorry, but that you sorrowed to repentance. For the sorrow of the world works death.

You say, "Oh, I wish I could relieve the sins of my life. I am sorry for them.".....But, until it comes to a total change of mind and a turning to Christ who is the ~~savior~~ saviour, the only one who died for sin, there is no repentance. And it is not real.

Many people are sorry. Especially when you get caught. People are sorry. Judas, when he saw that Jesus was condemned, he was remorseful. But, he didn't really repent. He didn't change his mind about Jesus.

Folks, you maybe here today and you have never trusted Christ. And maybe you are sorry for the sins you have committed. Sorry for things and the way you have treated Jesus. And you want things to be different. But, I am telling you today that until you change your mind, until we recognize that we must turn from sin to Christ, there will be no salvation for any of you.

Now, let's come back to Acts. Acts chapter 1. Just this final word. In Acts 1 we have this sad commentary on Judas' life. And you find it right here in Vs 25. It says that Matthias "may occupy the ministry ;and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place."

Now, what does that mean? The little phrase "go to his own place." Now, listen: Judas choose not to have true repentence.....Was he sorry for what he had done?....YES, HE WAS SORRY...But, he never changed his mind about Christ.....And thus the Bible says that he was lost...Lost forever....And the scripture was fulfilled. He betrayed Jesus.

What am I saying to all of you? I am saying that many of you can be here today with many facts about Christ, you many have many opportunities like Judas had for 3 years. And yet, if there has been no coming to Christ where we recognize that our sin was laid on him, that there is no hope unless we accept Christ as our Lord and Saviour, that we believe the gospel and repent.....there is no forgiveness...

Oh, we may be sorry for our sins. But the sinbearer is the one we must come to. And believe ~~if~~ we are to be saved.....

Let us close in prayer