

NEXT STEP: STUDY & SHARE

READINGS

Acts 1:12-:26

Psalm 47

God has gone up with a shout. (v5)

Ephesians 1:15-23

Luke 24:44-53

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Almighty God, your blessed Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, ascended far above all heavens that he might fill all things. Mercifully give us faith to trust that, as he promised, he abides with us on earth to the end of time, who lives & reigns with you & the Holy Spirit, one God, now & forever. Amen.

SERMON TEXT- Acts 1:12-:26

¹²Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. ¹³When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, & John, & James, & Andrew, Philip & Thomas, Bartholomew & Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, & Simon the Zealot, & Judas son of James. ¹⁴All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers. ¹⁵In those days Peter stood up among the believers (together the crowd numbered about one hundred twenty persons) & said, ¹⁶"Friends, the scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit through David foretold concerning Judas, who became a guide for those who arrested Jesus — ¹⁷for he was numbered among us & was allotted his share in this ministry... ²⁰For it is written in the book of Psalms, 'Let his homestead become desolate, & let there be no one to live in it'; & 'Let another take his position of overseer.' ²¹So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in & out among us, ²²beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us — one of these must become a witness with us to his resurrection." ²³So they proposed two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, & Matthias. ²⁴Then they prayed & said, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which one of these two you have chosen ²⁵to take the place in this ministry & apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." ²⁶And they cast lots for them, & the lot fell on Matthias; & he was added to the eleven apostles.

LISTENING TO . . .

GOD- *Christian life is rooted in the Father, Son, & Holy Spirit*

1. What are the four criteria for choosing the new apostle? How many of the 120 (v15) qualify? If the Apostles are the first pastors/bishops, does *Luke 24:1-10* override what happens in this story? That is, are the women at the tomb pastor/apostles, too? See *Luke 24:33, 44-48; John 20:19-23; 1 Timothy 2:12*
2. Theologians speak of different modes of Jesus' real presence: historical (his annunciation to his ascension); sacramental (i.e. Holy Communion); & mystical (baptized Body of Christ). How does his Ascension help explain each one? Hints: Where did his resurrected historical body go? Is "the right hand of the Father" an actual physical place limited to the laws our universe of time & space? See **Formula of Concord: Epitome VIII; FC, AC, LC, SC (#4, 5 below)** available bookofconcord.org

EACH OTHER- *Sharing & growing with our brothers & sisters in Christ*

3. What do we learn about true source of choosing pastors for ministry in specific congregations in *vv24-25? See also 20:17, 28*. Review the references in #1 to learn about ministry's big picture.
4. How does this change your perspective on a pastor's chief duties & authority? See *Acts 6:1-4; Augsburg Confession IV, V; Large Catechism 4th Commandment: 158-166*

NEIGHBORS- *Bearing fruit for those not yet our brothers & sisters*

5. Witnesses see & tell; what do you see in the Word & Sacraments that you can tell family & neighbors about God? See **Small Catechism** for hints
6. The Hebrew phrase "in & out" (v21) connects with *Deuteronomy 28:6 & 6:7*. It sort of means "& everything in between." We can learn here that following Jesus encompasses everything about everyday life, not only prayers & Sunday worship. Read *John 15:1-8, esp. v5*. Among the ins & outs of your everyday life, where are people receiving your witness? Where is your witness hidden, missing, or left out?

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Festival of Our Lord's Ascension

05.21.23

Series: Forged by the Spirit

Rev. Jared Stillions, STS

Raising Up Leaders Followers

I guess you just had to be there.

-Notes-

KEY VERSE: So one... who [has] accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in & out among us, beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us...must become a witness with us to his resurrection." (v21-22)

-NEXT STEPS MEMORY VERSE-

Go & make disciples of all nations, says the Lord;
I am with you always, to the end of the age. (*Matthew 28:19, 20*)

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