



## THE DISCIPLES OF JESUS PREPARED TO RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT BY...

### Practicing Simple Obedience

Acts 1:12-13 - "12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, a distance of half a mile. 13 When they arrived, they went to the upstairs room of the house where they were staying. Here are the names of those who were present: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James (son of Alphaeus), Simon (the zealot), and Judas (son of James)." (NLT)

Jesus told them to wait and not leave Jerusalem until the Heavenly Father sends the gift He promised. There are few things in this life harder to do than to have to WAIT. We are people of action. So we expect action immediately. We think that the Holy Spirit should come at once, but instead we sometimes experience DELAY. We have periods like this in our lives, and these are often the hardest periods for us to live through. We want to do something. Or, what is even more significant, we want God to do something. When God does not do anything, we think that things have gone wrong. We think that things should be happening by now if we really are Christians and if we really are on track with God. Friends, that's not necessarily the case.

When God allows us to wait, it doesn't mean that He's not doing anything. When we are waiting, it is just a time of PREPARATION - either He's developing our character or He's preparing us for something bigger. There are times that OBEDIENCE may require us to WAIT without doing anything.

### Continuing in Fellowship

Acts 1:14-15 - "They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus. 15 During this time, when about 120 believers were together in one place, Peter stood up and addressed them." (NLT)

About 120 believers of Jesus composed of men and women, eleven disciples of Jesus, Mary the mother of Jesus, and other brothers of Jesus met together constantly. These people coming from different background and with issues in life can come together and meet regularly. The people mentioned here in this verse could easily allow division to come in their midst. The mother and brothers of Jesus could easily demand for special recognition and position. Peter could have been criticized for his denial. John and James could have been condemned for desiring to be at the right and left of Jesus. But they set aside their own personal agenda. They understood it's not the time to ask, "Who is the greatest of them all or who has done the most wrong in times of testing?" For them, it is just time to come together to spend time in prayer and worship.

If we want the Holy Spirit to come upon us, we have to come together in UNITY. We have to meet CONSTANTLY. We cannot live alone. We cannot grow on our own. We cannot spread the good news on our own. We have to help one another. We have to do our part. We have to support one another. The disciples knew that without the spiritual power promised from the Lord that it would be impossible to fulfill the Lord's command to share the good news to the world. So they stayed together and they waited, but they were not idle.

### Praying Constantly

Acts 1:14 - "They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus." (NLT)

We learn that God's promises do not render prayer unnecessary. On the contrary, it is only God's PROMISES which give us the WARRANTY to pray with confidence that He will hear us and answer. There will always be an excuse not to pray. There will always be an excuse to give up praying too soon. Don't give up. Let me tell you my secret for prayer: Don't stop praying when it is hard to pray. You need to persevere until it is easy to pray! The disciples didn't stop until the Holy Spirit come upon them.

### Studying the Word of God

Acts 1:16-20 - "16 "Brothers," he said, "the Scriptures had to be fulfilled concerning Judas, who guided those who arrested Jesus. This was predicted long ago by the Holy Spirit, speaking through King David. 17 Judas was one of us and shared in the ministry with us." 18 (Judas had bought a field with the money he received for his treachery. Falling headfirst there, his body split open, spilling out all his intestines.

19 The news of his death spread to all the people of Jerusalem, and they gave the place the Aramaic name Akeldama, which means "Field of Blood.") 20 Peter continued, "This was written in the book of Psalms, where it says, 'Let his home become desolate, with no one living in it.' It also says, 'Let someone else take his position.'" (NLT)

As they waited, the apostles undoubtedly had some questions about what God was doing in their lives. While being together and as they studied the Scripture, they had one sad reflection, the tragic defection and suicide of Judas. Perhaps they grappled with the question, "If Jesus knew everything from the beginning, why would he choose a man who would betray Him?" Knowing that everything Jesus did was a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, they would naturally turn to Scripture for answers to the problems that confronted them. Later Peter quoted two specific Old Testament passages Psalm 69:25 and Psalm 109:8. These would indicate that Peter and perhaps the other apostles as well were studying the Scriptures in those days of waiting looking for answers to the questions that confronted them.

### Selecting Godly Leaders

Acts 1:21-26 - "21 "So now we must choose a replacement for Judas from among the men who were with us the entire time we were traveling with the Lord Jesus— 22 from the time he was baptized by John until the day he was taken from us. Whoever is chosen will join us as a witness of Jesus' resurrection." 23 So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. 24 Then they all prayed, "O Lord, you know every heart. Show us which of these men you have chosen 25 as an apostle to replace Judas in this ministry, for he has deserted us and gone where he belongs." 26 Then they cast lots, and Matthias was selected to become an apostle with the other eleven." (NLT)

Peter then listed the qualification necessary for a replacement which we can find in verses 21-22. Leaders chosen in the church should be walking with Jesus with whole heart and have been baptized. Why is it important to choose leaders who are Godly? The church cannot function properly if leaders are not one with God. The Holy Spirit cannot move when leaders are not in one accord with God and with other leaders.



- 1.) **What energizes your Christian walk?**
  - 2.) **Do you sense the urgency to share the gospel to others, share?**
  - 3.) **How do you share Jesus to others around you?**
- PRAY FOR EACH OTHER IN YOUR GROUP**