

**COMPLETING THE APOSTOLIC TEAM!**  
**ACTS CH1:12-26**

**ILLUSTRATION**

The Twelve Disciples song!

**RE-CAP!**

We cannot understand the power of the Holy Spirit apart from the life of Jesus. There's no example of what it means to live a ***Spirit-empowered life*** unless we look at the life of Jesus. And so, that's what Luke tells us in his Gospel. He says, "OK, Jesus lived by the power of the Holy Spirit." He lives without sin, he dies for our sin, he rises for our sin, he evidences it for forty days, and he tells His people, "Don't go do ministry yet. Wait. You need power. The Holy Spirit's coming to cause you to be like me." That's why the former book and the latter book go together, Luke-Acts.

So, in the Gospel of Luke, what is the relationship between Jesus and the Holy Spirit?

1. At Jesus' baptism, God the Father speaks from heaven. The whole Trinity is there. "This is my Son, in whom I am well pleased." Here's Jesus, the Son of God, the second member of the Trinity coming up out of the water. Who descends on Jesus? ***The Holy Spirit in the form of a dove***. This is to show publicly that Jesus is anointed by the Holy Spirit, that he's indwelt by the Holy Spirit, that he's filled by the Holy Spirit, that he's empowered by the Holy Spirit, that his whole life is by the power of the Holy Spirit. That's why this was public, so everybody could see it. See, Jesus already knew it. This wasn't for Jesus' understanding; this was for our understanding. (Luke Ch3:21-22)
2. The Gospel of Luke, then, goes on to say that Jesus was "***full of the Holy Spirit***." How many of you have heard, "You should live a Spirit-filled life." That's true. You know what that looks like? ***Jesus***. Any time we lift someone else up and say, "Well, there's the Spirit-filled person, be like them," wrong person! None of us sinners are perfectly, continually full of the Holy Spirit. ***We can resist (Acts Ch7:51), grieve (Eph Ch4:30), we can quench (1<sup>st</sup> Thess Ch5:19), and we can insult the Holy Spirit at times (Hebrews Ch10:29). But Jesus was, "full of the Holy Spirit"—continually, perfectly.*** (Luke Ch4:1)
3. The Gospel of Luke says that he was "***led by the Spirit***." So, Jesus goes here because that's where the Spirit is directing him. He teaches these people, he leads these people, he casts out these demons, he prays over this crowd. Why? Because he's led by the Holy Spirit. (Luke Ch4:1)
4. We read in the Gospel of Luke that he came "***in the power of the Spirit***." How did he teach? In the power of the Holy Spirit. How did he cast out demons? In the power of the Holy Spirit. How were those who were blind given sight? Because he was empowered by the Holy Spirit. He came with, by, for, through the power of the Holy Spirit. (Luke Ch4:14)
5. Early on in his ministry, he walks into a synagogue, he opens the book of Isaiah, Isaiah 61:1-2, and he reads it. Do you remember what he reads? He reads this: "***The Spirit of the Lord is upon me to preach good news and to set captives free.***" ***And then he closed it up, and he said this: "Today, this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."*** Isaiah wrote seven hundred years prior and said, "There's one who is coming, and the Spirit of the Lord will reside on him so that he could preach good news and set captives free from sin and death." ***And Jesus says, "I'm here. That's me. I'm the one you've all been waiting for, and the Spirit of the Lord is upon me."*** (Luke Ch4:16-21)
6. The Gospel of Luke says that he "***rejoiced in the Holy Spirit***." When he had joy, when he celebrated, it was because the joy of the Lord was his strength. It was the Holy Spirit in him, causing him to glorify, to worship, to enjoy, to adore, to thank, to bless God the Father. (Luke Ch10:21))

***What is the essence of being baptised with the Holy Spirit? Is it the sound of wind, the tongues of fire, the other languages, the words of praise, the prophecies and dreams and visions? Can we get at the essence of what it means to be baptized with the Holy Spirit, or does it have to include all these things?***

I think the essence of being baptized with the Holy Spirit is **when a person, who is already a believer, receives extraordinary spiritual power for Christ-exalting ministry!** There are good reasons for believing that these disciples were already born again and converted and had the Holy Spirit dwelling in them (John Ch13:10; Ch15:3; Romans Ch8:9). But even more important than that is the fact that the issue of the new birth and conversion of the disciples is simply not in view at all in Acts Ch1 + Ch2. Jesus doesn't say, "Wait in Jerusalem until you are born again or converted or put into the body of Christ." He says, "But you will receive power....." He doesn't say, "You shall receive membership in the body of Christ when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." He says, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you."

**So filling with the "Spirit" is a special empowering for ministry that is described as ".....baptised with the Holy Spirit."** and this idea of "baptism" is almost always associated with this extraordinary power for ministry in the book of Acts. Notice that when the baptism with the Spirit happens in Acts Ch2:4, Luke says, "All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit ....." The effect of that filling was a powerful and even miraculous testimony to the truth of Christ that resulted in 3,000 people being converted (Acts Ch2:41).

Remember the "re-charging of the mobile phone" illustration? So here is my conclusion, that being baptized with the Holy Spirit is when a believer in Jesus Christ receives extraordinary power for Christ-exalting ministry!

The giving of the Holy Spirit is the chief sign of God's Kingdom beginning! **Jesus spent the 40 days talking to the apostles about the Kingdom of God (Ch1:3) which had been a central theme in His teaching in the Gospel of Luke – Ch4:43; Ch6:20; Ch8:1+10; Ch9:2+11; Ch11:20; Ch17:20-21; Ch18:16-17+24-25; Ch21:31; Ch22:16 (15 times in 24 chapters)!**

Power in the Kingdom of God is different to power in earthly kingdoms! As we see worldly leaders trying to keep or enlarge their "earthly kingdoms" through a misuse of sinful earthly power, God's Kingdom is spread in a very different way:

1. through witness, not soldiers!
2. through a Gospel of peace, not a declaration of war!
3. through the Holy Spirit, not by force!
4. through truth, not propaganda!
5. through genuine faith, not by works!

**The power of the Kingdom of God is seen in the Holy Spirit working in peoples hearts, restoring God's rule to peoples hearts, His salvation and Lordship!**

#### **THE DIVINE PRAYER TEAM! V12-14**

So Jesus had remained with the disciples for 40 days, from His resurrection, and appeared to many people during that time, on one occasion appearing to more than 500 people at the same time (1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians Ch15:6), instructing the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the power of God through God the Holy Spirit (Ch1:4-8), before ascending back to heaven (Ch1:9-11).

**V13** – Is this the same room upstairs used for the last supper (Luke Ch22:12) and for sightings of Jesus after His resurrection (Luke Ch24:33-36)?

**V13-14** - Luke now lists, for Theophilus, the 11 disciples, the same list (albeit in a slightly different order) that he compiles in Luke Ch6:12-16, hence the song! With the eleven, are also the women, that presumably include **Mary Magdalene** (Matthew Ch27:56, Ch27:61, Ch28:1; Mark Ch15:40, Ch15:47; Ch16:1, Ch16:9; Luke Ch8:2-3; Ch24:10; John Ch19:25, Ch20:18), **Joanna** (Luke Ch3:27, Ch8:2-3, Ch24:10), **Susanna** (Luke Ch8:3), **Mary the mother of James and the others who found the empty tomb** (Matthew Ch27:56, Ch28:8; Luke Ch24:10+22), along with **Jesus mother, Mary, and His brothers** who hadn't always believed (Mark Ch3:21, 31-34; John Ch7:5)!

**V14** - What are they doing? **Praying!** “They all joined together .....

, meaning not just in the same place at the same time, John Stott uses three “A’s” to describe this togetherness “.... seems to go beyond mere assembly, and activity to agreement about what they were praying for” (John Stott Commentary on The Message of Acts, pg 53). What a fantastic model for Church prayer, think about committing to joining us for Church prayer from September 5<sup>th</sup> - 9<sup>th</sup> between 7pm – 8pm.

David Peterson notes that **“It is striking that at almost every important turning point in the narrative of God's redemptive action in Acts we find a mention of prayer (e.g. Ch1:24; Ch8:14-17; Ch9:11-12; Ch10:4, 9, 30; Ch13:2-3)”** (David Peterson, The Acts of the Apostles, pg118).

Luke records for us that Jesus, at times of crucial decision making, also prays;

1. Luke Ch6:12-13 – Praying before choosing the 12 disciples
2. Luke Ch9:28-29 – Mount of transfiguration
3. Luke Ch22:40-46 – Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane

### **THE DIVINE NECESSITY TEAM! V15-20**

**V16 Fulfilled!** What on earth is “The Divine Necessity Team” I hear you say? Well, quite simply, v16 “..... the Scripture had to be **fulfilled** in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago .....

 We think of the word “Divine”, meaning of God and “necessity” (v21) meaning unavoidable and indispensable, a bit like pain in childbirth, the pain is unavoidable and its indispensable, because its part of the curse!

Who makes up the “Divine team?” Firstly, God the Holy Spirit, who around about a thousand years before Jesus comes to earth, gives King David a prophecy. Secondly, this prophecy comes through the Psalms, namely Scripture! Peter, in verse 20 quotes directly from Psalms 69:25 and 109:8. The third part of the “Divine Necessity Team” is King David, the man that God chose because he was a man after God's own heart (1<sup>st</sup> Samuel Ch13:14). The fourth part of the team is Judas, chosen for destruction (John Ch17:12), we are told because he loved money (Matthew Ch26:14-16; Luke Ch22:1-6; John Ch12:4-6).

What's the necessity? Not just a fulfilling of a prophecy (v16 + v21 - a prediction about what will happen in the future), but also:

1. God is doing something!
2. The disciples did not always understand what this was!
3. Scripture was needed, two Psalms here, to interpret what was happening!

### ***What happened to Judas, was foretold, recorded in Scripture and then came fully to pass!***

Peter uses two verses from two Psalms, 69:25 and 109:8. Through the first Psalm, we see what happened to Judas, his defection and death, in the second Psalm we see the need for him to be replaced! Judas was a wicked and deceitful human being, who loved money more than he loved the Saviour (John Ch12:4-6), was filled with remorse rather than repentance (Matthew Ch27:3-10) and ended his life in an awful way, alone and destined for Hell (Ps. 69:25)!

John Stott highlights that “Psalm 69 is applied to **Jesus five times** in the New Testament. In it, an innocent sufferer describes how his enemies hate and insult him without cause (Ps. 69:4), and how he is consumed with zeal for God's house (Ps. 69:9). These verses are both quoted in John's Gospel, verse 4 by Jesus Himself (John Ch15:25) and verse 9 by His disciples (John Ch2:17), while Paul twice refers this Psalm to Jesus (Romans Ch11:9-10; Ch15:3). **Towards its end (Ps. 69:24) the psalmist utters a prayer that God's judgement will fall on these wicked and impenitent people. Peter individualizes this text and applies it to Judas on whom indeed God's judgement has fallen: May his place be deserted; let there be no-one to dwell in it (20a).**

Psalm 109 is similar. It concerns 'wicked and deceitful men' who without justification hate, slander and attack the writer. Then one particular person is singled out, perhaps the ringleader, and God's judgement on him is requested (Ps. 109:8); May another take his place of leadership (20b). This verse too, on what Dr Longnecker calls 'the commonly accepted exegetical principle of analogous subject', Peter applies to Judas" (John Stott Commentary on The Message of Acts, pg57).

### **THE DIVINE FOUNDATIONAL APOSTOLIC TEAM! V21-26**

To be an apostle, what four things were required?

- To be chosen by Jesus (v2 + v24-26)
- To be witnesses of the life and resurrection of Jesus (v3 + v21-22)
- To be commissioned by Jesus (v8 + v22-25)
- To receive the power of the Holy Spirit by Jesus (v5 + v14)

So at The Mission Church we would promote that there are no apostles today because there are no eye-witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus, however, we recognise that there is space for "apostolic ministry" involving Church planting and strengthening. We also recognise that other Churches may well promote that there are apostles in today's Church!

Before the "Casting of Lots" the apostles, understood from Scripture that another person was needed, they kept the same requirements attributed to them and Judas, they prayed and knowing that God knows all hearts, "Cast Lots." ***The "Casting of lots" we see in Scripture, Leviticus Ch16:8 (Scapegoat); Numbers Ch26:55 (Land); Proverbs Ch16:33 (Decisions are the Lord's); Jonah Ch1:7 (Who's fault is the calamity).***

***The apostles become, through their eye-witness accounts, guarantors of the Gospel!*** These apostles, were to be honoured, as they would judge the 12 tribes of Israel (Luke Ch9:1-6 + Ch22:28-30, along with being "foundational apostles" (Revelation Ch21:14)! Where the 12 tribes failed, the 12 apostles are to succeed in their mission for Jesus!

### **APPLICATION**

Perhaps its time to reflect on our role praying when it comes to praying with other Christians, is there anything that needs to change?

Scripture still speaks today, everything that God wants us to know about things important to Him, can be found in the Bible.

What can you learn about how the disciples sought God's will when they appointed the 12<sup>th</sup> apostle?

We may not be apostles, but we are still witnesses.