

Approaching God

Read this portion of Psalm 2 and begin with an opening prayer

I will proclaim the decree of the Lord: He said to me, "You are my Son, today I have become your Father. Ask of me and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. (Psalm 2:7-8)

Psalm 2 ushers us into God's throne room. It reminds us that God's promise to Israel in the Old Testament was that through a future King he would bring his final kingdom to earth forever. Jesus is the King referred to in Psalm 2, and his messianic desire is for the nations to be reached with the good news of the gospel and to experience grace & love under his rule & reign. Take a minute to thank God that he has brought you in, possessed you! - so that you might belong to him, and be apart of reaching others.

Acts 1:12-26

Passage Introduction:

At the conclusion of their conversation with the angels in vs. 11, the disciples now move to action. For almost three years, the disciples relied on Jesus for everything from their itinerary and food supply to spiritual guidance. Consider what must have been going through the minds of the disciples after Jesus ascended into heaven and left them alone. They undoubtedly would have been filled with uncertainty, anxiety, and fear. In a matter of a few days, they'd gone from lamenting the loss of their Savior to rejoicing over the reality that he was alive. After all this, they now faced a crucial and urgent question: what now?

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words.

Use the space in the margin to jot down notes, or themes/ideas that stand out as important.

Acts 1:12-26 - 12 Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. **13** When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. **14** They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. **15** In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) **16** and said, "Brothers and sisters, the Scripture had to be fulfilled in which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus. **17** He was one of our number and shared in our ministry." **18** (With the payment he received for his wickedness,

Judas bought a field; there he fell headlong, his body burst open and all his intestines spilled out. **19** Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) **20** “For,” said Peter, “it is written in the Book of Psalms: ‘May his place be deserted; let there be no one to dwell in it,’ and, ‘May another take his place of leadership.’”

21 Therefore it is necessary to choose one of the men who have been with us the whole time the Lord Jesus was living among us, **22** beginning from John’s baptism to the time when Jesus was taken up from us. For one of these must become a witness with us of his resurrection.” **23** So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. **24** Then they prayed, “Lord, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen **25** to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs.” **26** Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.

Questions for Reflection & Meditation

- What are the main things the first followers of Jesus do after his ascension into heaven? What are some things that you observe in the text?
- Are there any words, phrases, or themes that stand out to you as important or related?
- Who was Judas and what happened to him? Why was it important to replace him and what characteristics must his replacement have according to the passage?

Key Takeaway:

Are there any personal applications that are important for you to consider as a result of today’s study? What does this passage point to in your life and heart that needs attention?

Close in Prayer:

Thank God for the way in which the message of the gospel has been protected throughout history by faithful witnesses of Jesus. Ask God to create a devoted unity to prayer in all his followers.