

SERIES:

SUBJECT: THE FIRST CHURCH BUSINBESS MEETING

READING: ACTS 1:12-26

Introduction:

I titled this lesson the THE FIRST CHURCH BUSINBESS MEETING which was appropriately held after the first prayer meeting. After Jesus had ascended into heaven two angelic beings reminds them and us that Jesus will one day return to the that very same spot on the mount of olives.

Following Christ's final instructions those who were Jesus' closest disciples returned to Jerusalem and met in the upper room; which was according to Luke "a sabbath day's journey" a distance that the leaders of Judaism kept changing but here it was less than a mile.

Acts 1:13; And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.

First identified at that first meeting were the Apostles less Judas Iscariot who had betrayed Jesus.

1. Their first activity was prayer Act 1:14 *These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.*
 - a. Luke's first words were that which should identify the mood of every church service and business meeting; *These all continued with one accord,*
 - i. After such a significant event as the passion week division could have occurred;

The members of the Lord's family might have claimed special recognition,

Or Peter could have been criticized for his cowardly denial of the Saviour.

Or perhaps Peter might have blamed John, because it was John who brought him into the high priest's house (John 18:15-16).

John might well have reminded the others that he had faithfully stood at the cross, and had even been chosen by the Saviour to care for His mother.

- ii. *Previously they had argued concerning who was the greatest but now*

But there was none of this. In fact, nobody was even arguing over who among them was the greatest!

- iii. Luke identifies the key attitude that prevailed; **These all continued with one accord.**

1. Six times this phrase was used in Acts!
2. There was among these believers a wonderful unity that bound them together in Christ *the kind of unity that Christians need today.*
3. "I do not want the walls of separation between different orders of Christians to be destroyed," said the godly British preacher Rowland

Hill, "but only lowered, that we may shake hands a little easier over them!"

- a. If we must strive let it be to acknowledge our differences of interpretation by careful examination of the scripture to strengthen our Biblical convictions.
- b. In striving let us acknowledge that there are great and important understanding of the Bible that we can all agree upon and focus on them.
- c. It is those things that we can effectively minister together.

4. It is not enough for Christians to have faith in the Lord; they must also have faith in one another.

- a. To these 120 people (Acts 1:15) the Lord had given the solemn responsibility of bearing witness to a lost world, and none of them could do the job alone.
- b. They would experience severe persecution in the days ahead, and one of them, James, would lay down his life for Christ.

5. For us beloved as a church persecution based on our biblical stand may be just around the corner.
 6. It was not a time for asking, "*Who is the greatest?*" or, "*Who committed the greatest sin?*" It was a time for praying together and standing together in the Lord.
- iv. They engaged in two aspects of prayer; **in prayer and supplication,**
1. We come to God in prayer for a variety of reasons—to worship Him, **to confess our sins and ask for forgiveness,** *to thank Him for His blessings,* **to ask for things for ourselves,** and/or to pray for the needs of others.
 2. The Hebrew and Greek words most often translated “supplication” in the Bible mean literally “*a request or petition,*” so a prayer of supplication is asking God for something.

Unlike the prayer of petition, which is praying on behalf of others, the prayer of supplication is generally a request for the person praying.

Numerous examples are found in the Psalms of David where asks for mercy in [Psalm 4:1](#),

Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.

For leading in [Psalm 5:8](#),

Psa 5:8 Lead me, O LORD, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before my face.

For deliverance in [Psalm 6:4](#),

Psa 6:4 Return, O LORD, deliver my soul: oh save me for thy mercies' sake.

For salvation from persecution in [Psalm 7:1](#),

Psa 7:1 O LORD my God, in thee do I put my trust: save me from all them that persecute me, and deliver me:

3. The New Testament is where we live and here in the book of Acts we find prayers being offered for...

guidance in making decisions (Acts 1:15-26)

and for courage to witness for Christ (Acts 4:23-31).

In fact, prayer was a normal part of their daily ministry (Acts 2:42-47; 3:1; 6:4).

Stephen prayed as he was being stoned (Acts 7:55-60).

Peter and John prayed for the Samaritans (Acts 8:14-17),

and Saul of Tarsus prayed after his conversion (Acts 9:11).

and Peter was on the housetop praying when God told him how to be the answer to Cornelius' prayers (Acts 10:9).

Act 9:10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, **Ananias**. And he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord.

2. The Lord Jesus was no longer with them to give them personal directions, but they were not without the leading of the Lord, for they had the Word of God and prayer.
 - a. In fact, the Word of God and prayer formed the foundation for the ministry of the church as recorded in the Book of Acts ([Acts 6:4](#)).

Act 6:4 *But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.*

- b. Prayer is to be a part of every believers life as it was for those who had gathered in the upper room and waited and prayed;

Act 1:14 *These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.*

Praying together is an important part of the church community!

3. Acts 1:15 introduces us to a post resurrection Peter may have moderated in his impetuous behavior but not in his leadership role;

Act 1:15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

- a. Peter has been criticized for taking charge, but I believe he was doing the will of God. Jesus had made it clear that Peter was to be their leader

Mat 16:19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Luk 22:31-32 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat: (32) But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, **strengthen thy brethren.**

Joh 21:15-17 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, **Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?** He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, **Feed my lambs. (16)** He saith to him again the second time, **Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?** He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, **Feed my sheep. (17)** He saith unto him the third time, **Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?** Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, **Feed my sheep.**

- b. Peter was "first among equals," but he was their recognized leader. His name is mentioned first in each listing of the Apostles, including [Acts 1:13](#).
- c. But some ask should Peter and the others have waited until the Spirit had been given?
 - i. We must not forget that the Lord had previously "breathed" on them and imparted the Spirit to them [John 20:22](#)).
 - ii. When the Spirit came at Pentecost, it was for the purpose of filling them with power and baptizing them into one body in Christ.
 - iii. We must also remember that the Lord had opened up their minds to understand the Scriptures ([Luke 24:45](#)).
 - iv. When Peter referred to [Psalms 69:25](#) and [109:8](#), he was not doing this on his own, but was being led by the Spirit of God.
 - v. Therefore it is clear that what Peter did was in the will of God when he presented the congregation with their first order of business as the fledgling church at Jerusalem and as the example for churches that would eventually spring from it!

Act 1:15-23 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) (16) Men *and* brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. (17) For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. (18) Now this man purchased a field with the reward of

iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. (19) And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood. (20) For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take. (21) Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, (22) Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. (23) And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

- vi. After reminding them of Judas Iscariot's demise as a result of his betrayal of Christ; Peter gives them the qualifications for one to be an Apostle;

(21) Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, (22) Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

1. One who was a follower of Christ Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us,
2. One who had been with them through Christ's resurrection must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

3. This eliminates any so called Apostles of Christ in our present day!
- vii. Two men we presented from among the 120 who were assembled;

(23) And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.

- viii. The process seems simple enough two men were qualified. **Could there have been more?** It is likely, but the facts reveal there choice would be between just two;
- ix. They Prayed concerning their decision:

Act 1:24-25 And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all *men*, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, (25) That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.

- x. The vote by the entire assembled church was taken;

Act 1:26 And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

- xi. Nothing was left to be done except turn the world upside down for Christ.
- xii. **But this they could not do.** *They were still powerless to witness.*
 1. They could gather in fellowship, they could pray, they could act in unity,

they could make decisions regarding the corporate life of the assembly,

2. They could have assurance among themselves that their actions were right, they could talk to each other about Jesus, pool their expenses, share their stories, memories, and impressions.
3. But they were powerless to witness.
4. *A hostile world lay beyond the walls of their upper room. They were powerless to impact that world for Christ. For that they needed the Holy Spirit, and for Him they had to wait.*