

**Group discussion** *Each number below includes questions that relate to the scripture. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for “the big question.”*

Read Acts 1:12-26 aloud.

There were four characteristics of this church that could bless us as individuals and as a group.

1. Obedience.

When the disciples returned to Jerusalem, how were they being obedient? *See verse 4.*

After Jesus rose, what were the risks of remaining in Jerusalem?

How well had the disciples done with obedience prior to this?

How could our group grow in obedience?

*We don't have specific instructions like “remain in Jerusalem,” but there are many other calls from God.*

2. Prayer.

What did Jesus' followers do with their time while they were waiting in Jerusalem? *See verse 14.*

What do you think they were praying about?

What is the longest time you have spent in prayer?

What is your biggest challenge with prayer?

3. Unity.

Who was involved in this gathering of Jesus' followers?

How well had this group done with unity prior to this moment? Which personalities might have had a problem with one another?

*Peter the doer vs. John the thinker.*

*James & John vs. the other nine.*

*Tax collector Matthew (pro-Rome) vs. Zealot Simon (anti-Rome).*

How well did Jesus' family get along with his followers?

*See Mark 3:21.*

What enabled this diverse group to develop unity? Had they made a pact to be “color-blind” and ignore their differences?

*When people love Jesus, their common faith draws them together.*

*The song “A Common Love” captures this spirit of unity.*

4. Openness to the Holy Spirit.

How did this group select a replacement for Judas?

What role did the Holy Spirit play in the selection and what role did the people play?

*The people set the criteria (guided by the Spirit).*

*The people chose the two men.*

*They prayed.*

*God showed which one he had chosen by means of the apostles' drawing lots.*

How do you recognize the Holy Spirit's work in our lives? How do we cooperate with him?

† **The million-dollar question** *If you ask only one question, this is it. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It's okay to pass, but even the quiet people deserve a chance to respond.*

Of the four characteristics, which is the biggest challenge for you and how can we encourage you?

- Obedience – doing what God has called you to do?
- Prayer – making time to converse with God?
- Unity – working with other believers to honor God?
- HS openness – trusting God to work and guide you, rather than feeling like you are responsible for controlling everything?

## Resources

### Bible notes

- Casting lots: “The exact procedure is unknown. Perhaps marked stones were drawn from a container.” This is the last time the NT mentions casting lots, so this method of determining God’s will could have been outdated with the Spirit’s coming in chapter 2. (Ash’s commentary on Acts, 1979.)
- The importance of replacing Judas. 12 apostles lined up with 12 tribes of Israel, showing that the church was the chosen people of God. The desire for 12 apostles diminished later, because they did not replace James in Acts 12.

**Kid-friendly activity...**kids & adults growing together.  
Celebrate the good things God has done this last week!

Play “Simon Says” – An old favorite

- The person who is “it” calls out an action: pat your head, jump on one foot, run in place, make a silly face.
- The players follow the instruction ONLY if “Simon says...”
- If a player does something that Simon didn’t say to do, that player is out until the next round.
- A trick – Give a series of quick commands, then say “stop.”
  - “Simon says stick out your tongue. Simon says spin around. Simon says raise your hands. Hands down.”

What is the secret to winning at Simon Says? *Listen & follow.*

How is that like living with God?

Read Acts 1:12-14 aloud.

Who was in this story? What were they doing?

How were they following Jesus’ instruction from Acts 1:4?

What are some things that are difficult about waiting?

Why is it hard to obey? Why is it important to obey?



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## **LIFE Group Guide**

### **Acts 1 – foundations of an effective church**

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme for this conversation: **being people who wait on God.**

Kevin has begun a series on “Living the Dream,” based on the church in Acts. This week’s text in Acts 1 could be seen as wasted time, a break in the action. But God continues to work through down times, preparing us for his next work.

Our last discussion featured the amazing moment when the Ark of the Covenant entered Jerusalem. While we love mountain top experiences, we spend the majority of our days like Acts 1. We go to work, fix our meals, pay our bills, and do it again tomorrow. But God is active every day– the miracle of the “mundane.” Acts 1 gives clues for faithful living while waiting.

Leadership tip: Who was the last person you invited to your group? If you need ideas, give me a call.

**I. Relate** *Use a few of these to introduce the theme and “break the ice.” No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage individuals through these questions.*

- ❖ What has been your best experience of Christian unity?
- ❖ What is one way you struggle with prayer?
- ❖ If you could design the perfect church, what would it be like? I’ve always wanted to be part of a church that...