



# MISSION CONTROL "The Leadership of the Church " Part 1

Acts 1:12-26  
May 3, 2015

The \_\_\_\_\_ God (Vs 12-14)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Togetherness

Some ways they were together...

A. Physically

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer is primary. It's the First Thing the Church Does  
Prayer Maximizes HE and minimizes me!

The \_\_\_\_\_ of God (Vs 15-22)

1. They Considered It to Be \_\_\_\_\_

2. They Considered It to Be \_\_\_\_\_

3. They Considered It to Be \_\_\_\_\_

4. They Considered It to Be Instructive

The WILL of God (Vs 23-26)

1. They Engaged in \_\_\_\_\_ Prayer

2. They Got All the \_\_\_\_\_

3. They Trusted God's \_\_\_\_\_

4. They Made Sure Their \_\_\_\_\_ Were Right

5. They Made a \_\_\_\_\_ and Went With It

*God's Desire for Us Is That We Would \_\_\_\_\_ His  
Way, to \_\_\_\_\_ His Word and to \_\_\_\_\_ His  
Will Above Everything Else.*

### How Will Respond?

- ✓ Would you accept the greatest gift you could ever receive the Gift of Eternal Life? Would give Him your heart & life today? Remember it is as simple as **ABC!** **Admit** to God you are a sinner, **Ask** for His forgiveness, **Believe** Jesus is God's Son, **Confess** Him as Savior & **Commit** Your Life to Him as Lord. (the Boss of your life)
- ✓ Have you asked Christ into your heart but never made it public. Have you not been baptized? You can come & make that decision today public today. He was willing to humble Himself and be obedient, will you?
- ✓ Are you a part of a church family? If not, you need one! Is the Lord calling you to Petal FBC today? Why wait any longer? Step over the line and join us in reaching this community with the gospel of Jesus Christ! Help us tell others that the King has come and is coming again!
- ✓ Are you being obedient to God in the little areas of your life? Name an area you need to give to the Lord...
- ✓ How are you doing in the area of Togetherness? Are you making **being connected physically** a priority for you and your family? Are you connected to a LifeGroup? If not, make the changes necessary...
- ✓ Are you excited and passionate about our **purpose – Vision 2020**? Are you going to be a vital part of it and help others be excited about it as well?
- ✓ We all need to **Pray more**. Will you commit this week to pray with your family every day this week and for your Church as we seek to be on mission together?

# THE ACTS: MISSION CONTROL

“The Leadership of the Church”

*Acts 1:12-26*

May 3, 2015 AM Service

**Mission Control** – We stopped with the launch of the Church over 3 Sundays from the 1<sup>st</sup> part of Acts. The launch is the most important part – everybody loves that and knows the astronauts names. However, there is a part many don't know about and most if all of them are anonymous.

Remember back to the movie Apollo 13 – we knew about this bunch though didn't we – they were critical to the mission we discovered - The same is true here – we will be taking a look at the Mission Control of the Church and many of them we do know their names but there are many of them we do not. In fact, we only know about Peter, James, and John from this point forward (even including Mary – Jesus' mother) but each had an important part to play and each was a leader in their own right

In order for the church to go forward, to be all that God was calling it to be would rise and fall on leadership

Leadership is a hot topic, seminars, conferences, books, etc.

Realization that so much of what we do hinges upon leadership

3 Motivations/Directives (After the Ascension)

to develop the right kind of leadership that God wants to be in place

## **The Way of God** Vs 12-14

Sabbaths Day Journey  $\frac{3}{4}$  a mile, not a Sabbath day, just a measurement.

List of the disciples Only one name missing, Judas Iscariot

Here was the leadership vacuum for the early church, one position that was empty, left open that needed to be filled in order to move ahead, had to be enlisted.

These 11 disciples or apostles were joined by some of the women (those who had helped bury Jesus and others) also his brothers, who had been skeptical and not believed were now counted among those who believed that Jesus was the Messiah 120 total were there

The disciples acting out the way of God. **2 Things** that are happening here

1. **Obedience** – Vs 12, then they returned to Jerusalem remember Jesus had instructed them specifically to go back 1:4 & 8

The disciples did exactly what Jesus had told them to they were in the Upper Room and going to the temple regularly. Completely obedient to his direction, without any reservation and really with no more information than that. Some of us might have said, well I'll go, but a I need a few more details, a few more assurances this is where I need to go and be doing. NO they went. This is a big.

Remember there were still those that were angry about Jesus and his claims and angry at his followers over these claims of his resurrection.

People that wanted to take these disciples out

Probably were not able to find a job, many were against them

Each other was all that they had.

At this point, most of us would not be concerned with the spiritual things,

but I gotta find a job, protect myself, how can I support my family, hide

Maybe some of them were ready to go out right then and start the Church –

why wait? Just fresh off the resurrection and now the ascension – there

had to be an excitement in the air – why not hit it why it's hot?

Most important to them, **simply obedience.**

Number 1 thing we must do as the church, as we seek his heart and move forward into Vision 2020, this vision that God has for us, is to simply be obedient.

To do the things that He is calling us to do (to be obedient)

We have no right to get impatient with the Lord especially if there are

areas in our lives where we are not being completely obedient to the Lord.

Starting with the simple things.

## 2. Togetherness Vs 14

They were together in this upper room which quite possibly could have been the room where they shared the Passover meal and the Lord's Supper and maybe even where Jesus had appeared to them too. Don't think they just stayed up in this one room 24 hours a day, some things in the passage that indicate that they were in the temple so back and forth, but their lives were woven together by their gathering together.

### A. Physically

Seems obvious. But all important! Physical presence of a congregation

coming together to worship the Lord each and every Sunday, and even

Wednesday night to pray. In Worship One thing that many would love to

leave out, yet they could not have studied the Bible very close to see that being together physically is one of the most important aspects of the church! No different today!

In Small Groups, studying God's Word, LifeGroups is the vehicle we use to do that. It is the place where we grow more in our walk with God than any other place!

You don't know everything about the Bible and neither do I

There are no lone ranger Christians, ministry is done in the context of relationships, good ones, hard ones, joyful moments, crying moments. Some people get upset, well nobody called me when I was sick, or this person died, many times we trace it back and they were not connected! Can't do this in a worship service!

We have to sit down eye to eye, talk share and pray and hear God's Word taught! And we need to do this in our homes too!

Moms and Dads, our children know and pick up very quickly, that if it's not good enough for Mom and Dad, then no big deal for them. It's not a place to drop them off, or a place to come when we can get up on time, or nothing else better is happening, or I haven't had too busy of a week!

We need to be obedient in our physical presence!

**B. They were together in their purpose** (With one mind, accord)

**Acts 1:14; 2:1, 46; 4:24; 5:12; 15:25**

They were like-minded! Thinking about the same thing

General reference to unity, but that isn't all. Not just that they were together, no fights going on, everybody was getting along, no splits about to happen, those things were given.

Let's not minimize this though. Not who is the greatest, who messed up, who first and whose last, no they were together in purpose, unified.

There had to have been tensions among the group, some had believed quickly, some not so quickly, - they were all so different, even Jesus' brothers were there who had not believed until much later – perhaps even after the resurrection. This was a bunch of people like us, faithful sometimes and faithless, on the mark and others failing.

Are we? Are we together, all on the same page? Again, it doesn't mean we are the same, all copies of each other, just means that we are together, all here for the same reason.

But it goes beyond this. They were unified about something that was far greater than them and when they were focused on that any differences were melted away and their hearts were laser focused on what mattered most! They were together in their thinking about a particular item

The agenda of this fledgling congregation, [Vs 4, 8](#),

The Holy Spirit is coming, and you shall be witnesses! That was it!!

It wasn't about filling Judas' spot!

The agenda had been outlined, why they were together!

By the way, we are not in the waiting period anymore! (This text does not apply to us)

They were like minded about being a witness for Jesus Christ!

The mission of the church, it is hard work!

Let's look at what I believe made them so unified, together

### [C. They were together in prayer](#)

This was this main reason. **Prayer is primary** – It is the first thing the Church does – no potluck supper, no fellowship, no conference – praying and in fact when you read through the book of Acts you see them praying all the time in all kind of situations – in fact you see it in almost every chapter!

[Matthew 18:19; Ephesians 1:17-19, 6:18-19](#)

**Prayer Maximizes HE and minimizes me!**

[Matthew 9:38; 1 Thessalonians 3:10-12; 1 Peter 4:7-8](#)

When we pray together we can stay together.

Have you ever prayed diligently about something with a group of people for an extended period of time and you get through and your hearts just seem connected. It's because they are. Because we have been talking to the One who connects us through the Holy Spirit.

**It's primary, they were persistent, patient, persevered – 10 days continually devoting** themselves, see all the time throughout the early church. Are we devoted, much less to it continually?

Look at these Scriptures. [Acts 1:14, 24, 2:42, 3:1, 4:24, 6:6](#),

This is one that the Lord has certainly dealt with me about and one that we must do! We have to come together and pray!

Praying in our families, praying with our spouse and children, praying as a Church Family, praying as LifeGroups, praying with each other. I want to challenge us to be a people and a Church of prayer! It is essential!

“Prayer is both the thermometer and the thermostat of the local church: for the spiritual temperature either goes up or down, depending on how God’s people pray.” Weirsbe “Prayer is a shield to the soul, a sacrifice to God, and a scourge to Satan!” John Buynan

**Too often this is our way – Proceed** – this isn’t working, well let me back up and get **plan** together and then perhaps that doesn’t do it either and we say oh yeah, I need to **pray** . The way we should is to **Pray, Plan, Proceed** Prayer is not trying to talk God into our ideas and for Him to bless mine!

When we do this – I want Your idea, Your plan, Your power and for You to do your plan in my life

“Pray the largest prayers. You cannot think a prayer so large that God, in answering it, will not wish you had made it larger. Pray not for crutches but for wings.” Do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men. Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks. Then the doing of your work shall be no miracle, but you shall be the miracle. ” Phillip Brooks

### **The Word of God Vs 15-22**

What’s taken place had to be fulfilled: Let’s fill it, the office has been vacated, the Scripture says that it needs to be filled, so let’s fill it!

They quote from the OT – they believed in the Word of God to provide direction for their lives! Jesus had often quoted from the OT and they followed his lead in allowing this Scripture to be a part of their lives.

Everything that is happening here is centered around the Word of God.

How did they know how to interpret what happened to Judas?

Well, Peter quotes from [Psalm 69:25](#) Luke provides the background in [Vs 18-19](#) They looked back to the Word of God - [Psalm 109:8](#)

There activities were prescribed, laid out for them and they followed them

### **Their submission to the Word of God Vs 16**

1. They considered it to be infallible (Had to be fulfilled) No maybes, might be, no way, if the Scripture says it should happen, it will.

This is huge! We cannot and must not ever compromise this truth. This not just some other book. It is the Holy written Word of God.

There are no mistakes, and lets be clear, I dare say any of us disagree on that, however, if we believe that so strongly, then why does it not reflect

daily in our lives and in our obedience?

2. They considered it to be inspired (which the Holy Spirit spoke through David) Wasn't man's idea, it was God. He used people to speak, but it was all through the Holy Spirit direction and guidance.

3. They considered it be interpreted Vs 18-19

Reflects a theme, the Scriptures are interpretive with regards to historical events, exactly what happens, David told us about, (Judas) he was numbered in our midst, but he abandoned us - Luke tells us the whole gory story there. Important, oh by the way, the Scripture told us this was going to happen **Interpreting our world context through the lens of Scripture** Not fulfillment of prophecy necessarily in our lives today, but how it the Scripture applies to our everyday life.

**Example: Christians shocked when persecuted** or Satan opposes us

**Notice, they did not allow the culture to interpret the Word of God, but the Word of God to interpret the culture**

The problem for some of us, we can't interpret what is going around us, because we don't know the Word of God.

It's not your LifeGroup leader's responsibility, or the pastors, or the youth minister for your kids, it is your personal responsibility.

Their starting point, and so should ours be, was the Bible!!

Matthew's gospel, so that it might be fulfilled, this happened, etc, what the prophet said, OT said, what Moses said. etc.

Constantly interpreting the events of the ministry of the Lord Jesus in view of the OT Scriptures.

We now have the NT Scriptures to help us and guide us as well

If we are going to have the Christian world view that we desperately need to recapture is to always look through the lens of Scripture first!

Our Starting point to look at anything in this world, must be God's Word!

We cannot separate any of these 4 things from the other, all connected.

If you separate them, if the Bible is not infallible or not inspired, then they all breakdown, then our view is cracked, it does not work

4. They considered it be instructive Vs 20, let another take his office, Vs 21-22, therefore. We have a job to do, find somebody to take his place, says it is not supposed to be vacant. Gave them instructions of what they were to do found from God's Word.

[Psalm 109:8](#) Therefore Here is what the OT says, We have to do it. Saw the Word of God as binding upon their lives as what they were to do We don't know if Jesus sat down with his disciples and said, ya'll need to get together and get another disciple, if he did there is no record of it. What we do know though, Jesus has checked out, gone back to heaven, and they immediately go the Word of God, that which Jesus said was part of his life, and his very words Jesus was not leaving them without instructions and how they were to live their lives, and operate as the people of God. They looked straight to the Scriptures.

### **3 aspects about this office of apostle**

Here are the qualifications lists them

**1. The office exists** – Defined by 12 individuals and no more Some teach today that there is still some kind of apostolic succession, the Word of God does not teach this.

*Beginning of the office* [Mark 3:13-14](#)

It is only for the 12 [Matthew 19:27-30](#) Said there will be only 12

*It had an end* [Revelation 21:12-14](#)

### **2. What the qualification were**

Somebody who was with Jesus from the beginning all the way through his ascension including obviously the resurrection.

How many after that, the office ceased to exist after they died. Nobody else filled that description.

### **3. What the responsibilities were or the job description**

Somebody who could be an eyewitness to the life and ministry of Jesus Lead the church in being witnesses, they were the original eye witnesses Paul, he was a unique apostle and he says that, but not one of the twelve Fed into a new office, the pastoral office and evangelist

[Ephesians 2:19-22 4:11-12](#)

### **The Will of God Vs 23-26**

Are you interested in knowing the will of God? Most of us are at least curious about that.

Many Christians struggle with this issue.

Perhaps we operate in more of an unbiblical context than knowing the will of God.



There are legitimate Principles for Knowing the will of God  
Whether here in this context of the office of apostle, whether choosing a pastor or church leader or even in our everyday lives.

Whether making everyday decisions about our finances, who we are to date or marry, what job to take or not to take, where to live, to have children or not, etc.

We have to be careful about drawing out principles. Not everything is prescriptive in Scripture, some is descriptive.

Here we see descriptive, but we see these prescriptions throughout the rest of Scriptures.

Some observations about knowing the will of God, those that are not specifically addressed in Scripture. The unknowns

Jesus told them about the office, qualifications, etc., but not about who was to fill the office, that specific person

Which of two jobs to take, who you are to marry, which school to attend, etc. Don't find those specific answers in Scripture

God does not want us to be in the dark either.

There are some things we don't have to really to ask, is this God's will?

Like being a witness, yes! of course

But what about those situations where it is not clear what God's will, not written specifically in Scripture for us.

We see that here with the disciples, they knew what the qualifications were, and that somebody was supposed to fill it, but who was that person to be was the question.

### **1. They engaged in sacrificial prayer Vs 14**

Where many of us break down, we say we are going to do it, need to do it, should do it, but we don't

Vs 14, continually devoted to prayer supplication Part of their everyday life. It was a lifestyle for them

It will be much easier to answer the question of what the will of God is for a specific situation, and that is to become a man or woman of prayer. To seek the face of God about the issue.

You cannot follow these other principles if we do not first engage God here!

And let's not blame God for Him not speaking loud enough, not clear enough, if we have not prayed

They also prayed specifically Vs 24

[Luke 6:12-13](#), Jesus did this the first time

Jesus prayed all night and chose in ten minutes, and most of the time we pray ten minutes and choose all night.

What is sacrificial prayer? It costs you something, inconveniences you  
Have you prayed sacrificially for this church, for its leadership, and for God's Vision for this church? Out of the normal pattern of life.

[Mark 1:35](#) time and time again about sacrificial prayer of Jesus

How dare we blame God.

## **2. They Got all the information**

They looked at the qualifications, what was needed and they chose two who met those qualifications.

It was practical, it was rational. Let's do our homework, Sometimes though we don't do that in our everyday lives. Use our head!

Ever hear someone sitting around saying, well I'm just waiting on God, just sit back and wait for God to just plop it on the doorstep.

**Example: Marrying somebody**, check them out, know them, what is their character like now, their integrity now, their walk with God. Not what they will become, but who they are now.

Well God will change them, or we will work out those difference when we get married. It won't work that way!!

God has given us a brain, we need to use it, He expects us to use it!

## **3. They Trusted in God's Sovereignty**

Sovereign, to be in control, in charge, Lord of All, King of Kings, the one who wins it all.

God is God, and we are not! He has a will for our existence and being.

We can and must trust in the sovereignty of God!

Charles Ryrie – "They prayed not for the lord to choose but for the choice which the Lord had already made to be made known to them."

*1. They acknowledged the sovereignty of God when they prayed Vs 24*

*"You oh Lord who knows the heart of all men"*

Show which of these two YOU have chosen

*2. The realization for the Christian is the reality that the decisions that we make in life are really not our decisions, but their His decision.*

If we understood that, it would save us a lot of heartache!

And then when we make decisions and choose what is right, and we want to know what God's will is, but then to make it without acknowledging that God wants to give direction and that He loves us and He desires to be in what's going on and to bring joy and peace into our lives, to bring fulfillment into our lives who we were created to be.

Lord let us know what You have already decided the disciples said.

Lord give me direction, or do we pray Lord let me know what heaven has already decided.

Subtle difference between the two, the latter acknowledges the sovereignty of God and who He is in our lives.

*3. The methodology they used in determining the mind of heaven*

Been easy it seems if God has just shouted from heaven, go with Mathias, that it is the one.

That is the way we would like for it to be in our own lives, that God would just shout it, send us a certified piece of mail, or even an email would be fine.

Let's see how real and practical and relevant this is!

Vs 26 They cast their lots, and their lots fell on Mathias

This is not the way that the Lord would have us make decisions today, and we will see that in just a minute from the Word of God.

At this particular point, they were on pretty safe ground with their methodology because of their understanding of the sovereignty of God.

Look at [Proverbs 16:33](#)

[“The lot is cast into the lap”](#)

This had been an accepted practice for a long time in the Jewish world. Wasn't just drawing straws or flipping coins.

They took a jar, took some stones, assign the stones one of the two possibilities, wrote Mathias name on one and Justus name on the other Mark is somehow like that

Whoever stone fell out, that was the decision that was to be made.

[“It's very decision is from the Lord.”](#)

They had such a trust in the sovereignty of God that even to the point that some means and methodologies that you and I would be chance or erroneous, and that God would intervene and give direction to that.

Notice, we have to consider it in context of the book of Proverbs, that the writer assumed that they were taking into account the whole book, the wisdom of God, seeking the Lord, being obedient, walking with Him, etc. In Acts 1 they are still operating in that paradigm

Why could they use that? Because they were a sacrificial praying people and they had gotten together all the information, they had confidence in God. Doesn't seem so extreme because they had done the first two principles.

Why don't we use that today? 2 Reasons

1. Look what happens in Chapter 2, the Holy Spirit is given, what they had been waiting for. Every believer is indwelt with the Holy Spirit, had not occurred before except for certain times with a prophet to speak His Word

2. We never hear about the church again casting lots, why not? Because the Holy Spirit had come to speak to their hearts.

A great example is in Acts 6 where they chose the seven deacons to serve, here are the possibilities, here is the way to meet this need and the Bible says it pleased the whole multitude.

How did that determine that? Took a vote, don't know but somehow all the individuals in the congregation got a chance to say yes or no to these seven men.

Based on the assumption though that we are walking in tune with the Holy Spirit, praying sacrificially, got all the information and trusting in the sovereignty of God. Does God have to speak the same way today?

God is the same yesterday, today, and forever,

[Hebrew 1:1](#) It is done in various ways. Now the Holy Spirit has come and He speaks differently.

He speaks to us through the presence of the Holy Spirit and the life and ministry of Jesus Christ proclaimed through the Word of God.

Please note though God's will can be circumvented, He will ultimately prevail, yes! but

Sometimes we make the wrong decision, we sin and we cancel out the will of God because of our sinfulness, and of course Praise the Lord and He can intervene and forgive us and work it together for our good.

People blame God for what happened in their lives

**ILLUS:** Man died in car wreck wreath on the casket, Jesus came calling. No, that was not God's will! You can't say that! It was because of a sinful choice of this man, yes God knew it would happen, but God to not cause this man to go and get drunk, wrap himself around a tree and spend twelve days in a hospital and then die and leave two kids and a wife behind.

So many things get blamed on God, because it is His will!

We do the same thing, we aren't a praying people, we don't get all the information together, or we do and choose to ignore it, and go ahead anyway and say, well it must be God's will, there is nothing bad happening, nobody knows, etc. and then things go south and we wonder what happened and where is God.

#### **4. They Made Sure Their Hearts Were Right**

So confidently humbly that their hearts were right they called God's attention to that.

Based upon that, we need to know your mind Lord.

As far as I can tell, my heart is in line with what you want me to do, how you want me to live, and know I need to know your heart. Notice it is not the other way around! We want God to tell us His will and then we will get our lives right, we bargain with God.

Well, I'll start going to church when I get my life right, or I will follow God as soon as I know first! We want Him to do it in spite of the condition of our lives!

Before the disciples could pray that prayer, they had to make certain that their hearts were right.

Make sure the hearts of those selected to leadership are right as well.

#### **5. They Made a Decision and Went With It**

Picked these two guys, followed these 4 steps.

The lot fell on Mathias and he was numbered with the disciples.

We don't hear anything else about them, only tradition.

But one thing we don't hear, we don't hear the church looking back and saying we made a mistake. We blew it, should have waited on Paul. No way, Paul could not meet the criteria. Even Paul said saying he was a unique disciple of a unique order at a unique time.

They were confident in their decision. How could they be?

They had prayed sacrificially, they had gotten all the information, they had trusted in God's sovereignty, and made sure their hearts were right, and when we do that we can make a decision and moved ahead. We don't have to look back and worry, second guess ourselves.

What causes us to question our decision is to look back and see we didn't pray, our hearts were not right, and we identify we were not aligned with the principles of God's Word.

What if I make the wrong decision?

**ILLUS: Jim Shaddix's kids Wash car** and then scratch name on the car with rocks, versus wash the car and accidentally grab the brillo pads instead of the sponges and scratch the car. Compare the Father's reaction and what God would do for us.

When we operate out of the sincerity of our hearts, God will certainly take care of us.

If we followed all these steps followed the principles of God's Word, done it right, and made the wrong decision, how do you think God would respond? Of course, in love and grace!

**Do what you want to do. Psalm 37:4-5**

As we move forward in the days ahead as we seek out His blueprint for His church, specifically Petal FBC.

What your role is to play, how we are to select leaders, how we are to determine God's will and vision for our church. Here we see it right here already, part of the blueprint has been laid out.

**God's desire for us is that we would seek His Way, to search His Word and to select His will above all.**

### **OUR RESPONSE:**

- Trust Christ today, get connected to the One who loved you enough to die for you and longs to share His love with you! Give your heart and life to Him today.
- Are you struggling with God's will in a certain situation in your life right now, then take a hard look at these principles this morning and apply them to your life. Perhaps you need to come to this altar and pray, and commit to sacrificially praying for these or making sure your

heart is right. Maybe you need to bring somebody with you to pray over these issues.

- Maybe you are not connected to a church family, and as we have seen in previous weeks, part of God's blueprint is clear for the believer, we must be connected to a local body of believers, it is simply a matter of obedience
- Finally, as I have been sharing the last several weeks, for some of you in just to take the next step, go to the next level in your walk with Him personally, and also here corporately, joining a SS small group, coming every week, getting involved in LifeTraks, coming to pray, getting your children here and you coming with them, fellowshipping with the body.