

## Acts 1:15-26 *New Living Translation*

During this time, when about 120 believers were together in one place, Peter stood up and addressed them. “Brothers,” he said, “the Scriptures had to be fulfilled concerning Judas, who guided those who arrested Jesus. This was predicted long ago by the Holy Spirit, speaking through King David. Judas was one of us and shared in the ministry with us.” (Judas had bought a field with the money he received for his treachery. Falling headfirst there, his body split open, spilling out all his intestines. The news of his death spread to all the people of Jerusalem, and they gave the place the Aramaic name *Akeldama*, which means “Field of Blood.”) Peter continued, “This was written in the book of Psalms, where it says, ‘Let his home become desolate, with no one living in it.’ It also says, ‘Let someone else take his position.’ “So now we must choose a replacement for Judas from among the men who were with us the entire time we were traveling with the Lord Jesus— from the time he was baptized by John until the day he was taken from us. Whoever is chosen will join us as a witness of Jesus’ resurrection.” So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. Then they all prayed, “O Lord, you know every heart. Show us which of these men you have chosen as an apostle to replace Judas in this ministry, for he has deserted us and gone where he belongs.” Then they cast lots, and Matthias was selected to become an apostle with the other eleven.



## Witness: Acts of The Apostles *The Gamble*

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### Suggested Questions:

- The first part of this selection is a little gruesome with Peter talking about the death of Judas. In his words you sense that Judas not only betrayed Jesus, he betrayed the other disciples, because Peter is trying to make sense of the event and Judas’ death. He quotes Scripture and says, “See there, it was talking about Judas!” The author of Acts notes that the place where Judas died was called “Field of Blood.” It was all super dramatic! But when you put yourself in their position, having lived with this guy for three years, you begin to see what was happening. So here’s the question: Have you ever done this before? Ever tried to make sense of a big event in your life, especially one that was hurtful?
- One of the major issues facing the early church was how to discern God’s will. Think about it: For 3 years the disciples were with Jesus and it must’ve been pretty easy to know what God wanted when he walked with them every day! But now he’s gone, ascended into heaven, and they have to discern *together* what God wants them to do. This raises a question for us: How do you think about God’s will in your life? Meaning, how do you think about what God wants you to do and how God wants you to live? Do you think about God’s will as it pertains to the decisions you make?
- How does Scripture help us to understand what God desires for our lives? (For some inspiration you might read Mark 12:28-34.)
- One of the funniest things about this story is that the disciples took a gamble in choosing the person to replace Judas. Despite the humor, what might be the bigger lesson they are teaching us about discerning God’s will? For example, how is *having faith* connected with the act of discerning God’s will in our lives?
- Discerning God’s will is not easy and it requires prayer and support from others! So if you’re in a group, divide into pairs of two people. Briefly share with the other person where you are currently discerning God’s will and then pray for one another. You’ll be amazed at the power of this practice!