

# Getting Ready For The Next Big Thing (Part II)

*May 6, 2017*

## I. Introduction: Review

**Acts 1:12-13** Then the apostles returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. 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.

### 1. *Place*

- A place of obedience and expectation.

### 2. *People*

- People who share your values and your hope.

### 3. *Praise*

- Praising God with my mouth, heart, mind and life.

### 4. *Prayer*

## II. 5 Benefits of Prayer

**Acts 1:14** They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.

### 1. *Prayer brings confidence in uncertainty.*

- A. Prayer is more than good vibes in space.

**Psalm 145:18** The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.

**1 John 5:14-15** This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us—whatever we ask—we know that we have what we asked of him.

B. God hears your prayers.

**Psalm 62:8** Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge.

**Psalm 62:5-7** Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him. Truly he is my rock and my salvation; he is my fortress, I will not be shaken. My salvation and my honor depend on God; he is my mighty rock, my refuge.

- Prayer reminds us that God is a sure thing in unsure times.

**Philippians 4:6-7** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- Prayer is the antidote for anxiousness.

## *2. Prayer provides insight to the scriptures.*

**Acts 1:15-20** In those days Peter stood up among the believers (a group numbering about a hundred and twenty) 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. He was one of our number and shared in our ministry." (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. Everyone in Jerusalem heard about this, so they called that field in their language Akeldama, that is, Field of Blood.) "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.'"

**Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

A. God's Word is alive.

**John 16:15** All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you."

B. Spiritual insight comes from God's Holy Spirit.

- The Holy Spirit will help you understand the Holy Bible

**Psalm 119:18** Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.

- God's Work and God's Will must always line up with God's Word.

### 3. *Prayer gives guidance to decisions.*

**Acts 1:21-26** 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, 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." So they nominated two men: Joseph called Barsabbas (also known as Justus) and Matthias. Then they prayed, "Lord, you know everyone's heart. Show us which of these two you have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry, which Judas left to go where he belongs." Then they cast lots, and the lot fell to Matthias; so he was added to the eleven apostles.

A. Making decisions begins with using wisdom.

**Acts 15:28** It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements:

B. Making decisions is confirmed by God's Spirit.

**Proverbs 16:33** The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.

**John 16:13** But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth.

C. How does God direct our decisions?

- God directs us using Passion.
- God directs us using Peace.
- God directs us using People.
- God directs us using His Promises.

### 4. *Prayer develops patience in the process.*

A. Prayer activates our faith.

**Exodus 23:29-30** But I will not drive them out in a single year, because the land would become desolate and the wild animals too numerous for you. Little by little I will drive them out before you, until you have increased enough to take possession of the land.

B. Prayer builds our faith.

- God's timing is not always our timing.
- God's plan is bigger and better than yours.

**Romans 12:11-12** Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.

- There is power in perseverance.
- When we lose patience in the process, we miss out on God's promises.

### *5. Prayer opens opportunity for blessing.*

**Acts 1:4-5** On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

**Isaiah 40:31 (ESV)** but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint.