

January 22, 2012  
First Presbyterian Church - Coeur d'Alene

**Series: Gone Fishing - Acts 1-3**

**Message: Acts 1:12-26 - 'Made Whole**

*12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. 13 And when they had entered, they went up to the upper room, where they were staying...*

*...14 All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers. [c]*

*15 In those days Peter stood up among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 120) and said, 16 "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus. 17 For he was numbered among us and was allotted his share in this ministry."...*

*... "For it is written in the Book of Psalms,*

*" 'May his camp become desolate,  
and let there be no one to dwell in it';  
and*

*" 'Let another take his office.' "*

*21 So one of the men who have accompanied us during all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 beginning from the baptism of John until the day when he was taken up from us—one of these men must become with us a witness to his resurrection." 23 And they put forward two, Joseph called Barsabbas, who was also called Justus, and Matthias. 24 And they prayed and said, "You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen 25 to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place." 26 And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.*

1. Ice Cream Maker

- a. I remember one time making ice cream on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. The mixture goes into a steel canister immersed in a bucket of semi-melted ice. This particular time it was taking a long time for the mixture to set. Absent-mindedly I stopped the machine and lifted the canister out of the ice to check on it.
  - i. Dumb. It wasn't done, and all the slurry and chunks of ice had filled in underneath. Getting that bucket back into the groove at the bottom of the bucket would be like putting toothpaste back into its tube. It was not going to happen.
  - ii. Either eat runny ice cream or start all over again.
- b. Some things feel like that. So messed up or broken it can't go back together again, need to start over or just accept as is.
  - i. Broken places in life. A mistake you've made. A friendship or marriage that has gone sour. Relationship with God.
  - ii. Happens to people, happens to groups of people, happens to churches. Maybe it's happened to this church.
    1. This church is pretty healthy, but there have been some hard times. Decline, disappointments, departures, difficult relationships which have not ended well.

- iii. We can either accept things as they are - adjust to life with missing pieces.
  - 1. We can start over -change of scenery, hire a new Pastor, immerse in new relationships.
  - 2. But brokenness, once it happens, never just disappears or gets covered over. You carry it with you. It waits to reappear or be remembered. It keeps influencing us.
  - 3. Is there a way to be put back together again - made whole - healed - which can truly last?

## 2. Waiting Time

- a. So far in Acts chapter 1, the disciples are in a waiting time mandated by Jesus before his departure - an indefinite time with an unknown ending..
    - i. Acts 1:8 - Jesus' last words ringing in ears, giving purpose, but not allowed yet to get started on it until the Holy Spirit came upon them.
    - ii. About 10 days, sitting in upper room. Waiting. You try it. What is a few sentences for us may have felt like an eternity to them.
  - b. They weren't ready. The main reason was that they weren't healed yet. Jesus' resurrection hadn't yet erased the wounds and hurts surrounding his crucifixion and the part each had played in it.
    - i. Before moving on it was incredibly important that they be healed. Otherwise they're witness would be incomplete.
    - ii. Healing was what was going to happen next.
- ## 3. They did several things to get at that healing.
- a. Vs. 14 - Gathered together. Easy enough. What we're doing now.
    - i. "of one accord." That's a little more challenging - particularly for them. Brought some wounds into upper room.
      - 1. Peter's betrayal of Jesus
      - 2. Women disappointed with men - they ran off and hid while they stayed at cross and went to tomb
      - 3. Mary and brothers' past attempts to get Jesus to stop healing and teaching
      - 4. Suspicion of Nicodemus - former member of Jewish council that would go on to sentence him to death.
      - 5. Wariness of new people like Joseph of Arimathea -his wealth and foreign ways.
      - 6. Everyone had guilt and hurt - all thrown together.
    - ii. I believe that this is saying that instead of letting go unspoken, or bickering or fighting, they were talking about it. Asking forgiveness and granting it. Finding out the one thing they had in common: Jesus.
  - b. Worshiped - actually tidbit found at end of Book 1 of Luke's story - Gospel - last two verses of last chapter - 24:52-53.
    - i. The only place they went except these upper room was the Temple, to bring their anxieties and hurts to worship.
    - ii. Temptation to think you have to leave all that stuff at the door - dress up, be nice, act like whole people because that's what God wants to see.

1. What God wants to see in church are broken, hurting, doubting people who aren't sure of their worthiness to be there.
  2. Yet they see the cross, know of the empty tomb, and believe in and bless God as a healing God even through tears.
- c. Prayed - devoted themselves actually. One thing to pray, another to be devoted to prayer.
- i. Not praying every day, but praying without ceasing. Not an activity but a lifestyle, an ongoing conversation with God.
  - ii. Wonder what praying about? I think they were praying that God would use the waiting time to heal them, to be made whole again.
    1. Knew that was the best way to be made whole again.
- d. Studied scripture
- i. But not random or selective, led by the Spirit to hard scriptures which would most challenge them.
    1. Peter was led by Spirit to confront the ugly wound wrought by Judas - his betrayal, his suicide, their guilt, how they all needed to be healed of Judas' sin.
  - ii. The Word of God heals broken people, but often by drawing them into a discipline of confronting the toughest wounds and learning how to trust God to heal.
4. And then they chose Matthias.
- a. They were led by God to replace the empty space in the 12 disciples left by Judas, Jesus' betrayer.
    - i. Replacing Judas filled an empty chair, a reminder of an ugly stain, a reminder of the betrayer lurking in all of them.
    - ii. Of the 12 disciples and the legacy of their ministry from this point onward, the least is known about Matthias. He is quickly eclipsed when the other 12<sup>th</sup> Apostle - Paul - comes on the scene.
    - iii. His presence would have been a gift of comfort and hope for the hurting yet hopeful group of disciples in the upper room - the healing they had talked about, worshiped God to have, prayed for, and studied in scripture they could now see with their own eyes. There was Matthias, in Judas' place.
      1. The past wasn't forgotten, but it had been redeemed. They didn't have to relive it, just learn from it.
      2. They were now more ready than ever to begin.
5. This is not a place for people who have their religion and their lives all together. This is a place of healing for broken people.
- a. This is the place for the man who saw his marriage end in divorce because of his choices to have his guilt healed
  - b. This is the place for the woman who has been searching for anything - food, shopping, shallow relationships, more significant vocation - to have her frustration and disappointment and loneliness healed.
  - c. This is the place for the angry Teenager, struggling to find meaning amidst conflicts and disappointments, not finding it in music or alcohol or drugs, to come and find healing for rest of life.

- d. This is the place for the Person facing ostracism and suspicion every day because of how they dress, lifestyle they lead, place they live, condition of their body, to come and experience the healing power of love and acceptance.
6. But lets not be satisfied with talking and praying and studying healing. Let's be Matthias for one another.
- a. Let's be healing they can see. A person. A people.