



UNIT 29 | SESSION 2

## THE DISCIPLES REPLACED JUDAS

### ACTS 1

#### KEY PASSAGE:

Galatians 5:22-23

#### BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God's glory.

#### CHRIST CONNECTION:

Matthias was chosen to join the apostles in sharing what they learned about Jesus. God calls us to join in this mission of sharing the gospel, working in community, and seeking Him in prayer.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



## LEADER Bible Study

In the latter half of Acts 1, Jesus’ eleven disciples were at a turning point in their ministry. Jesus had ascended to heaven, and His followers recognized the gap Judas left. They came together, united in mission and motive as they waited for the promised Holy Spirit.

How did the disciples take their next step without Christ’s physical presence guiding them like before? To what did they cling to for hope and clarity?

Verse 14 explained that a zealous prayer life knitted together the eleven disciples and their fellow believers. This eagerness to commune with the Father not only bound them together in fellowship; it also unified them as they sought out the next leader to take Judas Iscariot’s place.

While they followed Jesus’ command to wait in Jerusalem, the disciples leaned on God’s Word as the cornerstone of their faith. Peter stood up among their community of believers, reminding them of Scripture’s supremacy and foresight. He reassured them of the Holy Spirit’s movement throughout the Old Testament and emphasized His presence and guidance amidst this new turning point for the church.

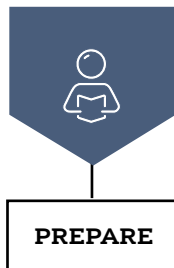
Continuing to unite themselves in prayer, they sought out the next apostle to join them

as a leader. They trusted the character and direction of the God whom they served and called for Matthias to join them. Through prayer and meditation over God’s Word, they were certain about the call on this new disciple’s life.

Consider the example set by the early church in Acts 1. When they found themselves at a crossroads, they turned to the same resources we have available today: prayer, biblical community, Scripture, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. As you prepare to lead your kids this week, be encouraged that you are using the same tools to prepare for your ministry as the early church used. God is faithful to use us for His kingdom purposes just as He faithfully used the early church to complete the mission He gave them.

### PEOPLE TO KNOW

**Matthias:** Disciple who followed Jesus from the time of John’s ministry of baptism until Jesus’ ascension, who was chosen by lot and prayer to succeed Judas as an apostle and official witness to the resurrection



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

## GATHER Supplies

Keep a regular supply of the following items available at all times: Bibles, pens or pencils, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue or tape, paper.



**WELCOME**

### Activity Page

- “Who Is the New Disciple?” activity page



**LEARN**

### Introduce the Session

- countdown video

### Big Picture Question

- Big Picture Question Poster

### Review the Timeline

- Giant Timeline

### Tell the Bible Story

- “The Disciples Replaced Judas” video
- Bible Story Picture Poster

### Questions from Kids

- “Unit 29, Session 2” questions from kids video

### Missions Moment

- “Cicero Washington Pruitt Photo” printable
- world map

### Key Passage Activity

- Key Passage Poster
- “The Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)” song
- worship song of your choice (optional)
- fake fruit, 1 per group



**LOVE**

### Review & Bible Skills

- Small Group Timeline and Map Set (optional)



**LIVE**

### Activity Choice (Option 1)

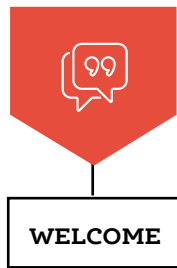
- chopsticks, 1 per kid
- candies, grains of rice, or marshmallows; 8–10 per group

### Activity Choice (Option 2)

- inflated balloons, 1 per group

### Reflection and Prayer

- Bible Story Coloring Page (optional)



## WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

| **SAY** “ If you could replace or change one thing in your room, what would it be? Why? ”

### 1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Who Is the New Disciple?” on the activity page.

| **SAY** “ Did you discover who became the new disciple? [Allow responses.] In today’s Bible story, we are going to learn how Matthias was chosen to replace Judas as one who would witness about Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. ”

### 2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

#### OPTION 1: WHO DO YOU KNOW WELL?



Prompt kids to think about someone they know well such as a friend, parent, or sibling. Lead kids to think about all the different things they know about that person. For example, maybe they know their eye color, favorite color, or what foods they like to eat. Lead kids to raise their hand and tell you one or two things they know about the person they chose.

| **SAY** “ You really know someone well when you have spent a lot of time with them. You might know your best friend well because you play together often and talk about your lives and interests. Jesus’ disciples knew Him because they had spent three years together traveling and hearing Him teach. They saw His miracles, and His death and resurrection. Today, we will learn that when the disciples chose someone to replace Judas, he had to be someone who had witnessed Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. ”

#### OPTION 2: WHAT DO YOU CHOOSE?

Lead kids to choose between two options. Tell kids that if they choose the first option, they should run to the right side of the room or if they choose the second option, they should run to the left side of the room. Consider using the following examples or create your own:

- Marshmallows or graham crackers
- Swimming or snow skiing
- Video games or board games
- Drawing or painting
- Dancing or singing

| **SAY** “ Sometimes choosing between two different options is easy and sometimes it is harder. Today, we will learn how the eleven disciples had to choose a man to replace Judas. It wasn’t an easy choice, so they trusted God to help them choose the right man. Let’s get ready to learn more in our Bible story. ”

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**





## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

# INTRODUCE the Bible Story

### 1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

**SAY** “ Hi, I’m [your name]. I’m so excited you are here today! Who brought their Bible to church? Hold your Bibles up and show me! [Distribute Bibles to kids who need one.] Today, we will be reading from the book of Acts in the New Testament.

The book of Acts teaches us about what happened after Jesus went back to heaven and how His church began. Jesus gave His disciples an important mission and because of their faithfulness to obey His command, the church grew. Let’s learn how the disciples chose a disciple to replace Judas and help them carry out this mission. ”

### 2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

**SAY** “ As the disciples began the mission Jesus gave them, they would need a Helper. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would come upon them and help them be His witnesses. Last week, we learned our big picture question about the Holy Spirit: **How does the Holy Spirit help Christians? Do you remember the answer we learned?** [Allow responses.] **The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God’s glory.** Let’s repeat the answer again: **The Holy Spirit comforts us, shows us our sin, and guides us as we live for God’s glory.** ”

### 3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

**SAY** “ Last week, we learned that Jesus went back to heaven on a cloud because He had finished the work the Father gave Him. Jesus died on the cross and rose again, making the way for anyone who trusts in Him to be forgiven of sin and given eternal life. Before Jesus left earth, He gave His disciples an important mission. He told them to be His witnesses throughout the earth. Today, we will learn how the disciples chose Matthias to replace Judas and called him to be a witness to Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. ”



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

# LEARN the Bible Story

### 1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to Acts 1. Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “The Disciples Replaced Judas.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

#### THE DISCIPLES REPLACED JUDAS

“ Jesus’ disciples returned to Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives, where they had seen Jesus ascend to heaven. They went to the upstairs room where they were staying. **These were the names of Jesus’ apostles, the eleven of Jesus’ disciples who were closest to Him: Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James.** They prayed together along with the women—including Jesus’ mother Mary—and Jesus’ brothers.

**Peter stood up among the group and said, “The Scripture said that Jesus would be betrayed, so that is why Judas Iscariot did what he did. Judas has died, so we should choose someone else—someone who has been with us during the time we followed Jesus. We will choose someone to go with us and tell the truth about Jesus’ resurrection.”**

**So they decided to choose between two men: one named Joseph, called Barsabbas, who was also known as Justus, and a man named Matthias. Then they prayed, “Lord, You know everyone’s hearts; show which of these two You have chosen to take the place that Judas left.” Then they cast lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias and he was added to the eleven apostles.**

Christ Connection: Matthias was chosen to join the apostles in sharing what they learned about Jesus. God calls us to join in this mission of sharing the gospel, working in community, and seeking Him in prayer. ”

#### STORYTELLING TIPS

**Dress up:** Invite a guest to dress up as Peter and tell the story.

**Emphasize it:** Change the volume of your voice to emphasize the importance of prayer in the story.



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

### 2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

**SAY** “ After Jesus returned to His Father in heaven, the eleven disciples went back to Jerusalem. Do you remember why they went to Jerusalem? **[Allow responses.]** Jesus had told them to go to Jerusalem to wait for the Holy Spirit. While they were waiting, they prayed together. Praying is such an important part of a Christian’s life. We pray to know how to follow God and ask Him to help us trust Him. Praying also shows that we want to spend time with God and depend on Him.

Then Peter stood up and reminded them about how Judas betrayed Jesus because God’s Word said that would happen. They needed to find a replacement for Judas. Could Peter and the other disciples choose just anyone to replace Judas? Why not? **[Allow responses.]** The man who replaced Judas would have to be someone who had been a witness of Jesus’ resurrection. It was important that this man be able to tell others what Jesus said and did because he had heard and seen it for himself.

The disciples needed to decide between two men, Joseph and Matthias, who knew Jesus to be the new disciple. Then the disciples prayed over their decision. Why do you think they prayed? **[Allow responses.]** Praying helps guide our decisions and shows that we need God to help us make the right choice. Praying shows our trust in God. God chose Matthias to be one of the twelve disciples.

From this time forward, Matthias and the other eleven disciples were known as apostles. An apostle means one who is sent on a mission. The twelve disciples became known as apostles because they had been sent by Jesus to be His witnesses in the world. The twelve apostles were witnesses of Jesus’ resurrection. ”

### 3 CHRIST CONNECTION

**SAY** “ Matthias was chosen to join the apostles in sharing what they learned about Jesus. God calls us to join in this mission of sharing the gospel, working in community, and seeking Him in prayer. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

### 4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 29, Session 2” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. How can we know God hears our prayers?
2. Why is it important to continually pray to God?

### 5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display the “Cicero Washington Pruitt Photo” printable as you teach about the missionary.

**SAY** “ C.W. Pruitt was born in 1857. In his early teenage years, he became a Christian. He felt a strong desire to teach God’s Word and to preach in China. When C.W. was 24, he arrived in China. He then met his wife, Ida Tiffany. Sadly, his wife died two years later.

While in China, C.W. served alongside Lottie Moon from 1881 to 1891. C.W. later married his second



## THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

wife, Anna. During their time in China, C.W. and Anna faced many difficulties including a war and a rebellion. Even though they experienced many challenges, they remained faithful to their work of telling others about Jesus. Together they served as missionaries in China until 1936. ”

Close in prayer, thanking God for the Pruitts’ faithful witness of the gospel in China. Pray that many more Christians will obey Jesus’ command to tell all nations about Him.

### 6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Galatians 5:22-23 together.

**SAY** “ The Holy Spirit is our Helper. The fruit of the Spirit forms in us when we choose to follow His leading in our lives. As we do, we look more like Jesus. ”

Form kids into two small circles or for larger groups, four circles. Lead kids to sit down and give a kid in each circle a fake fruit. Explain that they will pass the fruit around the circle while calling out each fruit of the Spirit from the key passage. Challenge groups to compete against one another to see who can say the fruit of the Spirit first. Repeat as time allows.

Lead kids to sing “The Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).” You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

### 7 PRAY (2 minutes)

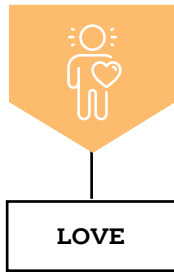
Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

**SAY** “ God, thank You for giving us the Holy Spirit to help us live with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Please forgive us when we struggle living by Your Spirit. Help us follow You. Amen. ”

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**







## THE GOD OF THE GOSPEL

# LOVE God by Applying the Story

### 1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles. Guide kids to open their Bibles to Acts 1. Remind kids that the book of Acts is the fifth book of the New Testament following the four Gospels. Lead kids to practice turning to Matthew and then flipping over to Acts.

Choose a volunteer to read aloud Acts 1:14,24 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verses aloud. Consider pointing out the location of Jerusalem (H4) on the New Testament Israel Map.

**SAY** “ The disciples waited in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit to come. In these verses, we see that while they waited, they prayed. The disciples were gathered together and united in prayer. Prayer was how they asked God to help them decide who should replace Judas.

As Christians, when we pray together and ask the Lord to be our guide, we can accomplish so much more. And as we read more from the book of Acts, we will continue to learn that the Holy Spirit uses prayer to guide us. ”

### 2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

**SAY** “ What can we do when we have to make a decision but don’t know what to choose? ”

Remind kids that the disciples had to make a decision about whether Matthias or Barsabbas should replace Judas. Prompt kids to recall how the disciples prayed to God and asked Him to show them who to choose. Tell kids that God knows everything and that when we pray to Him, He will help us make wise choices that honor Him.

**SAY** “ When do you pray by yourself? When do you pray with other people? ”

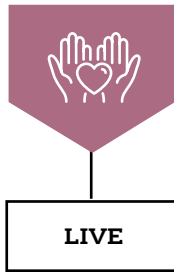
Answers will vary. Discuss how sometimes we pray by ourselves when we are at school or at home or participating in an event. Share how we sometimes pray with others when we are with our families or our church. Encourage kids to remember that we can pray no matter where we are or who we are with. Explain how prayer is a way we show that God has all the answers and how we ask Him to help us make a decision and live for Him.

**SAY** “ The disciples replaced Judas with someone who knew Jesus. How can we get to know Jesus better? ”

Discuss how knowing and trusting in Jesus is the only way to be forgiven of our sins. Tell kids that we can study our Bibles, pray, go to church, and ask parents and adult leaders questions to help us know Jesus better. Share how knowing Jesus better helps us share more about Him with others.

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**





## THE MISSION OF THE GOSPEL

### **LIVE** the Mission

#### 1 **ACTIVITY CHOICE** (10 minutes)

##### **OPTION 1: CHOPSTICK CHALLENGE**



Tell kids that chopsticks have been used as kitchen and eating utensils in East and Southeast Asia for many years. Explain that they are traditionally made of wood, bamboo, metal, ivory, and ceramics.

Distribute chopsticks or craft sticks to each child. Lead kids to use their chopsticks to pick up and move grains of rice, candy-coated chocolate pieces, or marshmallows. Form kids into groups of three or four and challenge them to transfer the small objects from one plate to another the fastest. As an alternative option, consider leading younger kids to work together and use their chopsticks to form letters and numbers you say aloud.

**SAY** “ When missionaries, like C.W. Pruitt, move to different countries, they have to learn about the country’s culture such as using chopsticks. As they get to know the people and their culture, they also have opportunities to tell them about Jesus. Let’s pray more people will go to China to tell others about Jesus. ”

##### **OPTION 2: BALLOON UP**



Choose two kids to keep an inflated balloon in the air. Lead the other kids to sit off to the side and cheer on their friends. If you have a larger class, begin with two balloons and two pairs of kids in separate areas of the room. After 30 seconds, add another kid to assist them. Then every 30 seconds or so, add another kid until everyone is participating in keeping the balloon in the air. Keep extra balloons on hand in case a balloon pops. Remind kids to work together and be united to keep the balloon from touching the ground.

**SAY** “ How did the game change as we added additional kids to help? [Allow responses.] Adding more kids meant there were more hands to help keep the balloon in the air. This made the activity easier. However, it did require working together and being united as a team. Matthias was added as a disciple to be a witness for Jesus and be united in the mission Jesus gave His disciples. We can also work together to help share the gospel with people we meet. ”

#### 2 **REFLECTION AND PRAYER** (5 minutes)

Distribute a sheet of paper and pencil to each kid. Ask the kids to write about or draw a picture to answer the following questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Who can I tell about this story?

Be sure to send the sheets home with the kids along with the activity pages so parents can continue to discuss the Bible story with their kids.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the Bible story coloring page. Pray for your group.