

Having considered our Savior's ascension last week (vv9-11), we come now to verses 12-14, and the disciples return to Jerusalem. Thus, I want to consider these three verses under these three questions: where did they go, who were with them, and what did they do?

I. Where Did They Go?

II. Who Were with Them?

III. What Did They Do?

I. Where Did They Go?

1. V12—"Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey."
2. By "a Sabbath day's journey" is meant about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile (it's called a Sabbath day's journey, because this was the distance allowed to be travelled on the Sabbath).
3. And so, here we learn, the disciples returned to Jerusalem in obedience to what our Savior told them.
4. V4—"And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, which, He said, you have heard from Me."
5. Curtis Vaughan—"The Eleven, being Galileans, would not naturally have chosen Jerusalem as the center for their activities. It was the scene of their Lord's recent execution, and was hardly the safest place for them to be. Their return, then, must be thought of as an act of obedience to Christ's command. Jerusalem, in the plan of God, was to be the beginning point of the evangelization of the world, and they had been specifically instructed not to leave the city until the Spirit has come upon them."

II. Who Were with Them?

1. Luke mentions four people or groups of people—the apostles, the women, Mary the mother of Jesus, and His brothers.
2. Now, before I consider these people, I want to say a few brief words about the first part of verse 13.
3. V13—"And when they had entered (that is the city of Jerusalem), they went up into the upper room where they were staying."
4. Several commentators suggest this refers to the same room they ate the Passover in several weeks before.
5. It's also possible it's the same room our Savior appeared to His disciplines on the day of His resurrection (and then the following week).
6. Most houses had lofts on the roof that were cheaply rented-out for travelers who came to Jerusalem to worship.
7. Thus, it appears they remained in this rented room for the remaining ten days until the Day of Pentecost.
8. (1) The apostles—here I want to consider two brief things about the apostles: their office and their number.
9. (a) Their office—as I've said before, the office of apostle was a unique and temporary office in the church.
10. As we will see next week, in order for a person to be an apostle, they must have witnessed the earthly ministry and resurrection of Christ.
11. In addition to this, an apostle had to be personally selected by Christ Himself, to serve as eye-witnesses.

12. Lk.6:13—"And when it was day, He called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles."
13. It's for this reason, as again we will see next week, in replacing Judas they cast lots, so that Christ Himself, would select the replacement (through the lot).
14. Thus, there were only 12 apostles chosen by Christ to uniquely lay the foundation upon which the church would be built.
15. (b) Their number—we find 11 men named in v13—the Judas mentioned is different from Judas Iscariot.
16. Why our Savior chose 12 apostles isn't told us—it's likely because they reflect the 12 tribes of Israel.
17. The 12 tribes of Israel represent the OT people of God and the 12 apostles represent the NT people of God.
18. Rev.21:12—"And she had a great and high wall with 12 gates, and 12 angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the 12 tribes of the children of Israel" v14—"Now the wall of the city had 12 foundations, and on them were the names of the 12 apostles of the Lamb."
19. This is a description of "the great city, the holy Jerusalem," who is also described as "the bride, the Lamb's wife."
20. (2) The women—By "the women" is likely meant the various women who accompanied Christ through His ministry.
21. Lk.8:2-3—"And the twelve were with Him, and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities—Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance."
22. Lk.23:49—"But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things (His crucifixion)."
23. Lk.23:55—"And the women who had come with Him from Galilee followed after, and they observed the tomb and how His body was laid."
24. Lk.24:1—"Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared."
25. Lk.24:9-10—"Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles."
26. And so, these women were converted by Christ, in some cases, healed by Christ, and thus became followers of Christ.
27. And I want you to notice how devoted they were, as in many cases, they were more devoted than the apostles.
28. (3) Mary the mother of Jesus—this refers to the virgin Mary who plays a large part in the first two chapters of Luke.
29. This is actually the last time Mary is mentioned, and let me ask you, what position did she hold in the church?
30. She was respected and so she's not lumped in with the woman but is mentioned as Mary the mother of Jesus.
31. (4) His brothers—this of course refers to Mary's other children, who were the half-brothers of Christ.
32. Mk.6:3—"Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas (Jude), and Simon? And are not His sitters here with us? So they were offended at Him."
33. Here we learn, our Savior not only had half-brothers but half-sisters—Mary and Joseph had children together.

34. Now we know from the gospels that our Savior's brothers initially opposed Him, and failed to believe Him.
35. Yet, here we find that his brothers, along with His mother, are believers gathered along with the apostles.
36. When were they converted? Well, while we are not expressly told, we do have a hint found in 1Corinthians.
37. 1Cor.15 says that Christ was seen, after His resurrection—"by Cephas, then by the twelve, then 500 disciples, and then James.
38. James, as you know, was one of His brothers—thus, it seems James (and likely the other siblings) were converted when He appeared to them after His resurrection.
39. Observation 1—There are no living apostles—the office of apostle was limited, unique, and temporary.
40. Thus, if anyone claims to be an apostle today, at best they are mistaken, and at worse they are deceptive.
41. Observation 2—Mary is not to be worshiped—here we learn, Mary was simply one of many disciples.
42. Furthermore, we learn that had other children after her first born, and thus, perpetual virginity of Mary is also a lie.
43. Observation 3—Women are not to be despised—along with the apostles and the brothers of Jesus, we find "the women."
44. Thus, while only men served as apostles, we learn that women played a central part in the church from start.

III. What Did They Do?

1. V14—"These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication"—Luke tells us they did two things (they gathered in one accord and they continued in prayer).
2. Now, as we shall see, in subsequent studies, Luke uses these two things to describe the church through the book.
3. Lk.2:1—"When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord (together) in one place." Acts 2:42—"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts 2:46—"So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart." Acts 4:24—"So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: 'Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them.'" Acts 5:12b—"And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch"
4. In other words, what happened here in 1:14, isn't a onetime thing—these characterized the early church.
5. (1) They gathered in one accord—"These all continued in one accord"—that is, they continued in prayer as a unified people.
6. The Greek word that's rendered "with one accord" (KJV and NKJV), literally means "with one mind."
7. Luke uses the same Greek throughout the book to refer to various unified groups who had a similar cause.
8. Acts 7:57—"Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord."
9. This of course refers to a multitude of Jews who, collectively refused to hear what Stephen said, and ran at him to kill him.

10. Together they hated what he said, refused to hear it, and sought to kill him, because of their wicked hearts.
11. Acts 8:6—"And the multitudes with one accord heeded the things spoken by Philip, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did."
12. In contrast to the previous group, this multitude collectively did three things—they heard what Philip said, they saw what Philip did, and they believed.
13. Thus, the word describes a group of people who agree on certain things (and not necessarily everything).
14. But because they agree on certain things, they also response in similar ways or as a unified multitude.
15. In the two examples I gave, one group hated what Stephen said, and so they collectively attacked him.
16. In the other group, the entire multitude heard the things that Philip said, and they collectively believed.
17. And so, we learn from v14, that this group of believers, were collectively unified with a single mind.
18. Now, before I suggest what this does and does not mean, I want to very quickly remind who were united.
19. First, there were the apostles—these were fisherman, one was a former tax-collectors, and the other are unknown.
20. But here's the point—they were all very different in education, upbringing, temperament, and personality.
21. Second, there were the women—some of these women were former prostitutes and others, seemingly, women of means.
22. Third, there was Mary and her sons—again, these were all very different in temperament and personality.
23. Thus, here's my point—this group of people gathered in this upper room, were a very diverse gathering.
24. They were all very different—some were educated, others ignorant—some were males, others female—some lived immoral lives, others religious.
25. And yet, here we find this group of people, not only in the same city and room, but of one accord (or mind).
26. (a) They were one in purpose—that is, they all had the basic same purpose—bring glory to God in Christ.
27. They had all been created by the same God; delivered by the same blood; and united to the same body.
28. This is what forms the basis of Christian unity—we'll all been delivered by the same gracious salvation.
29. What was the one thing true of every person in that rented room? They were all sinners saved by grace.
30. This is what ultimately brought them together—they desired to worship and glorify God for His grace.
31. Rom.15:5-6—"Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be likeminded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."
32. (b) They were one in practice—that is, they were all trying to work out their own salvation in fear and trembling.
33. They all had the same enemies; they all faced the same opposition; and they all sought to obey the same commands.

34. This doesn't mean they all acted exactly the same way—it simply means they were all regulated by the same law.
35. And this again, is a basis of Christian unity—we are all governed by the same word and ways of God.
36. Every Christian walks on the same path; faces the same basic opposition; and loves the same morality.
37. Perhaps I can put it like this—every Christian is being conformed into the very same image of Christ.
38. (c) They were one in belief—that is, they all believed the same basic truths found in the Holy Scripture.
39. They all basically believed the same things about God, Scripture, sin, Christ, salvation, the church, and eternity.
40. (2) They continued in prayer—the second word "supplication" is a variant and so missing in some translations.
41. But either way, all translations assert that these Christians gathered with one mind to pray unto God.
42. And remember, there are various kinds of prayer—there is prayer that praises God and prayer that petitions God.
43. (a) It was unified prayer—by this I mean, they joined their voices together in petitioning and praising God.
44. There's something unique about unified prayers—that is, prayers agreed upon by the entire congregation.
45. People who share common purposes, practices, and beliefs, typically offer common prayer and praises.
46. (b) It was corporate prayer—by this I mean, these disciples were all together in the same location to pray.
47. Now, let me just say, as we today have the internet, phones, and emails, it's possible for us to pray together without being physically together.
48. Don't get me wrong—I think that's a wonderful thing for us to do—to share prayer request with each other through the week.
49. I am all for that (and in fact, I likely forward 3 or 4 prayer requests from others to the church every week.
50. But dear friends, as wonderful as that is, there's something uniquely beneficial about in-house prayer meetings.
51. (i) If the Father delights to hear prayer from one of His beloved children, how much more does He love to hear a gathering of them.
52. Ps.87:2-3—"The LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God!"
53. (ii) If the Savior delights to reveal Himself to one of His beloved sheep in prayer, how much more does He love to reveal Him to a gathering of sheep.
54. Matt.18:20—"For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."
55. That is, He is there in a special way, revealing His power and glory to His beloved and needy people.
56. (iii) If the Spirit loves to indwell one Christian as He prays, how much more does He love to indwell a gathering of Christians.
57. 1Cor.3:16—"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you."

58. Here Paul is speaking of the Church as a collective whole, thus the pronoun "you" is plural not singular.
59. (c) It was continual prayer—they were devoted to prayer—it was something they were committed to.
60. Now, it's true that our Savior expressly commanded the apostles to gather in Jerusalem until the Spirit came.
61. Thus, for these 10 days, they seemingly remained in the same place, and continually prayed together.
62. Furthermore, it also seems likely that they specifically prayed Christ would give them the Holy Spirit.
63. I mentioned two weeks ago, how central prayer was to the early church as found throughout this book.
64. And it simply underscores the fact, that the early church wasn't made up of supermen or superwomen.
65. But it was comprised of weak men and women, who prayed to God for wisdom, strength, and courage.