

ACTS: The Next Chapter
LOOSE NUTS & ANCHOR BOLTS
Acts 1:12-26

As much as I love to read about the history of Christianity, as someone who sees the Church as a divine institution, I find it challenging. Why? Because the Church's closets are full of skeletons. With all of its



divisions, scandals and wingnuts, why on earth would anyone see the Church as anything special, never mind sacred?

This is by no means a new question. I suspect it was a question that Theophilus asked two thousand years ago, just a few years after the Church was born.

Luke wrote Acts to convince Theophilus that the ministry and movement Jesus started didn't end with his return to heaven. Rather it continues in and through the community of his followers, beginning with his twelve Apostles.

The Gospel of Luke tells how Jesus chose and appointed his twelve disciples to be his Apostles. They were to be the leaders of his movement after he left and the anchor bolts of the Christian Church.

Beginning in Luke 22, however, the wheels fall off the bus. The first nut to fall off the wheel was Judas, who betrayed Jesus. The second nut to come loose was Peter, who denied Jesus three times. After that, all of the nuts flew off the wheel, as the rest of the disciples all abandoned their Lord and Leader

during his darkest hour. Why on earth would Jesus entrust his ministry and movement to these loose nuts?

Acts 1:12-26 answers that question. This passage shows that, despite their failure, after they encountered the risen Christ, the eleven disciples who remained developed four qualities needed to move the mission of Jesus forward and become the anchors bolts of the Church. These verses also show that the failure of the disciples was no setback in God's plan. In fact, he foresaw it and worked it into the story.

Loose nuts become anchor bolts when they become

_____ - vv. 12-13a

Loose nuts become anchor bolts when they become

_____ - v. 13b

Loose nuts become anchor bolts when they _____

_____ - v. 14

Loose nuts become anchor bolts when they become

_____ in God's Word – vv. 15-26

The story of the Christian church is messy. Right from the beginning, it's full of loose nuts, including some wingnuts. But here's the thing: Whenever those loose nuts and wingnuts become obedient to Jesus, whenever they get over their differences and unify around the Gospel of Jesus, whenever they start praying together and looking at things through the lens of Scripture, look out, because amazing things happen. That brings us to Acts 2 ...