

UNIT ONE

The Beginning of the Church



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The Gospels: Part Two



Friends. Everyone wants to have them, and everyone needs them. Friends are people we like and who like us. Friends are loyal. They stick by us even in the toughest of times, and we stick by them. Friends are people we enjoy being with. We share our time and secrets with them, and they share with us. Often friends share the same values. Friends are people who care about us and love us, and we feel the same way toward them. We forgive our friends when they hurt us, and we help them whenever we can.

Think about one of your friends. On the lines below list one way that your friend has:

1. shown you kindness

2. been loyal to you

3. shared something with you

4. forgiven you

5. helped you

G O D ' S F R I E N D S

St. Luke, one of the four Gospel writers, wanted to do more than write a narrative of Jesus' life, death, and Resurrection. He wanted to finish the story by telling what happened on earth when Jesus returned to His Father in heaven. Luke's continued story is known as the Acts of the Apostles. In the Acts, Luke talks about the beginning of Jesus' Church. Luke addresses his writing to a person he calls "Theophilus". The Greek word *theophilus* means "friend of God". In writing to Theophilus, Luke writes to all people who want to be God's friends.

Jesus returned to heaven when His public life on earth was ended. However, He chose to be with us forever in a new and exciting way. Jesus is always with us through the Church. As a friend stays loyal to us, helps us, and forgives us, so Jesus through the Church shows us these same signs of friendship.

On the lines below, write examples of ways in which the Church shows us loyalty, shares with us, and forgives us.

Loyalty

Sharing

Forgiveness

A true friendship has to be a two-way street. What we receive from a friend we should give back in return. This mutual loyalty, sharing, and forgiveness keep the relationship alive and healthy.

List some ways you can be loyal to the Church, share with the Church, and show forgiveness to other members of the Church.

Loyalty

Sharing

Forgiveness

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You Are to Be My Witnesses

Jesus' public life ended at His crucifixion and death. On Easter Sunday He rose from His tomb, conquering sin and death forever. For forty days afterward, He appeared at different times to His Apostles and other followers. Eventually, however, the time came for Jesus to return to His home in heaven.

Read Acts 1:1–10 and then answer the following questions:

1 Whom did Jesus promise to send to His Apostles?

2. What instructions did Jesus give the Apostles?

After these final instructions, Jesus ascended to heaven and the Apostles were left alone. They began the walk back to Jerusalem where they would wait for Jesus to fulfill His promises to them.

In Jerusalem the Apostles were staying in an “upper room”. Perhaps this was the same place the Apostles had rented for the Passover meal, or it may have been a room in the house of the Gospel writer Mark. The Apostles, Jesus’ Mother, Mary, and other followers of Christ were gathered in prayer there for nine days. During this time Peter made his first decision as new leader of the Apostles: to replace Judas and bring the number of Apostles back to twelve.

List from memory as many of the twelve Apostles as you can:

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 10. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 12. _____ |

