

## CHOOSING SERVANTS

Acts 6:1-7

### INTRODUCTION

Understandably, because the Lord was demonstrating his miraculous power and because the believers were boldly and obediently living for the glory of Christ— the church was growing! This flourishing of the church was exciting and bearing fruit, but it also came with its own sets of challenges. How do you get a group of people from diverse backgrounds and perspectives to work together?

### THIS WEEK:

Discover from Acts 6:1-7 and other related passages the means and the methods God uses to raise up and commission godly workers who manage and serve his people.

### OBSERVATION What does it SAY?

Discover key details of the passage by reading Acts 6:1-7 and answering the following questions:

1. What was the nature of the complaint that arose among the believing Jews (v. 1)?
2. How did the apostles respond to the complaint (vv.2-4)?
3. What goal did the apostles have in mind as they considered a solution to the problem (vv. 2, 4)?
4. What were the five qualifications that the leaders were to possess (v. 8)?

5. In what way did the apostles commission the men who were selected (v. 6)?
6. What three benefits resulted from the way the church handled the complaint (v. 7)?

## **INTERPRETATION** What does it MEAN?

**Use the Bible to interpret the Bible. Look up the cross references and use them to interpret the passage under study:**

7. What was going on in the community of faith that could explain why conflict arose among the believers (Ac 6:1; cf. Ac 2:41; 4:4; 5:14)?
8. According to the Apostle Paul, what qualifies a widow today to receive ongoing support from the church's funds (1Ti 5:3-16)?
9. What qualities, according to Exo. 18:13-23, Deut. 16:18-20, 2 Chr. 19:4-10; and 1 Tim. 3:8-13 qualifies one to serve as a leader among God's people? Why is it important that these qualities be present?
10. Peter and the other apostles were reflecting in vv. 2-4 a principle known in leadership circles as the "Jethro Principle" (Exo. 18:13-23 ). Look up the following passages and list the benefits of utilizing this principle in ministry:
  - a. From Paul's words in Rom. 12:3-8 describe the reason(s) why the delegation of duties is a benefit to individuals and to the church:
  - b. Examine 1 Cor 12:4-26 and try to discern God's overall intention for delegating different responsibilities to different people:
  - c. Read Eph 4:11-16 and explain how leaders delegating ministry responsibilities disciplines believers in the faith:

## **APPLICATION** Why does it MATTER?

Now that you have discerned what the passage means, how does it apply to your life?

11. Verse 1 makes reference to two distinct groups of Jewish believers in the church. Those who were from Palestine and spoke primarily Aramaic and those who grew up in the Diaspora and spoke primarily Koine Greek. There were certainly cultural and racial overtones in this situation. What kinds of problems can occur in a church when it rapidly grows its congregation with people from different cultures, backgrounds, languages, economic statuses, and age? What principles found in this study can alleviate some of the challenges faced by a church experiencing these "growing pains"?
12. What are some 'complaints' a church needs to guard against in order to keep the church moving forward in unity and effectiveness?
  - a. What kinds of complaints come with age differences?
  - b. What kinds of complaints come with economic differences?
  - c. What kinds of complaints come with political differences?
  - d. What kinds of complaints come with culture differences?

## **TAKE AWAY** How does this change me?

13. What does this passage reveal about God?
14. What does this passage reveal about humanity?
15. What is the Holy Spirit revealing in this passage about your life?

Have your kids do the word find puzzle on the next page or read to them Acts 6:1-7. Use the following questions to have a discussion about how God wants believers from diverse backgrounds to work together for the gospel.

## Observing Key Details:

1. What problem did the early church face in this passage?

Possible Answer: The widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food.

2. Who were chosen to help solve this problem?

Possible Answer: Seven men, described as "men of good repute, full of the Spirit and wisdom," were chosen to help.

3. How did the apostles respond to this problem?

Possible Answer: The apostles prayed and then chose the seven men to help with the distribution of food.

## Interpreting the Meaning:

4. What does James 1:27 say about taking care of those in need?

Possible Answer: James 1:27 says, "Pure and undefiled religion before God the Father is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained from the world."

5. What can we learn about working together from Ecclesiastes 4:9-12?

Possible Answer: Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 talks about how two are better than one and how working together makes tasks easier. In Acts 6, the apostles worked together with the chosen men to solve the problem in the church.

6. How does 1 Corinthians 12 show us the importance of everyone's role in the church?

Possible Answer: In 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, it talks about how the body of Christ is made up of many parts, each with its own function. Similarly, in Acts 6, different people were chosen to help with different tasks, showing that everyone has a role to play in the church.

## Applying the Meaning:

7. What are some ways we can help people in need like the early church did?

Possible Answer: We can donate food to food banks, help elderly neighbors with chores, or spend time with people who might feel lonely.

8. How can we work together with others in our church to solve problems and serve God?

Possible Answer: We can volunteer for different tasks, listen to each other's ideas, and pray together for guidance, just like the early church did in Acts 6:1-7.

# WORD FIND

Acts 6:1-7

F U L L L P B S T D B T B B  
D A I L Y P W I A A R O S E  
H F S P I R I T W H O L E I  
G A I N O G O O D W T D R N  
T I S U V P R E A C H I N G  
W T T M E T D F Y U E S C I  
E H E B R A I C S J R T O V  
L A R E L B S T U W S R M E  
V C S R O L C H M A J I P J  
E O E I O E I E M I E B L R  
U M V G K S P R O T W U A E  
S P E H E L L E N I S T I C  
A A N T D S E L E C T I N L  
I N C R E A S E D L E O T I  
D Y R E P U T A T I O N V L

In those **days**, as the **disciples** were **increasing** in **number**, **there arose** a **complaint** by the **Hellenistic Jews** against the **Hebraic Jews** that their widows were **being overlooked** in the **daily distribution**. The **Twelve** **summoned** the **whole company** of the **disciples** and **said**, "It would not **be right** for us to **give up preaching** the word of God to **wait** on **tables**. **Brothers** and **sisters**, **select** from among you **seven** men of **good reputation**, **full** of the **Spirit** and wisdom, whom we can appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." This proposal pleased the **whole company**. So they chose Stephen, a man **full** of **faith** and the Holy **Spirit**, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor,

before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. So the word of God spread, the **disciples** in Jerusalem **increased** greatly in **number**, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.