

LEADING THROUGH DISCONTENT

LIFE UNLEASHED—Acts 6:1-7

February 19, 2012 • Ron King



Acts 6:1-7

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

Galatians 3:28

There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

To maintain church health and vibrancy:

1. The POOR AND DISADVANTAGED matter to God.

2. When problems arose they faced them
HONESTLY AND TOGETHER.
3. The church is a body and we all have EQUALLY important yet different functions.
4. Choose ministry leaders with three primary qualifications:
Evidence of SPIRIT-FILLED life, wisdom, and faith.

Digging Deeper

1. What was the problem in the church identified in Acts 6:1?
2. Why was this a big deal?
3. What action did the apostles take to address the issue?
4. Why was honestly addressing the problem so significant to the future of the church?
5. Describe the qualifications for leaders that were identified. How are these qualifications distinctive from those sought in other leadership positions outside the church?
6. Why was the cultural heritage of the leaders chosen significant? What is being communicated about the church through this direction?
7. Why was it important to bring the whole church into the decision-making process?
8. Why did the apostles limit their ministry roles? What did this decision communicate about the gifting and service of others in the church?
9. When the church found health, what happened? (see verse 7)
10. Why do you think Luke includes the detail “and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith”? What connects this statement to the previous chapter?

Taking It Home

The early church took Jesus’ example of caring for the poor and at risk seriously. And when things became inequitable, they addressed that problem. The Bible teaches us clearly to care for the poor and disadvantaged. If you need an avenue to help you do this consider our Benevolent Fund or contact Pastor Nate.

This passage also provides a model of shared ministry. Everyone was taking ownership in the church. If you have been sitting on the sidelines at Bridges, it’s past time to get in the game. Check out one of the many ministries and ask a leader how you can help.

The passage also speaks to the issue of leadership in the church. Start praying about who might fulfill the character requirements we find in this text to be a part of our next Elder team.