

Acts 6:1-7

1. This passage highlights another internal challenge that the Jerusalem Church faces and how it addresses it. In this case, the challenge is prejudice and favoritism in the church, specifically of one cultural group over another.

a. Do we still deal with the same problem today, and if so, how does it manifest itself in our churches?

b. What are some other kinds of internal challenges have you seen or experienced in the church?

2. The Apostles recognize the severity of the issue and seek to address it. What is their proposed solution?

a. What does the Apostles' unwillingness to personally take time away from preaching and prayer teach us about what our expectations should be of those gifted and entrusted with the ministry of the Word?

b. Often we struggle with this because we want our spiritual leaders to meet all our needs, or to prioritize what we prioritize. Is this a frustration that you have dealt with, and if so, what did it look like? How did you resolve it?

c. Another challenge here is that we tend to exalt those with certain gifts and callings over others. But the Scriptures teach us that we are all uniquely gifted and crucial to the healthy functioning of the church (e.g. 1 Cor 12:4-26). How have you dealt with this in your walk with Christ?

3. As we saw, their solution was to appoint seven qualified to oversee the task. The qualifications were spiritual giftedness (i.e. full of the Spirit and of wisdom) *and* proven character (i.e. good reputation).

a. Why are these so critical? What happens when you have one without the other?

4. Can you think of a time when you were appointed to serve? If so, How did serving in that way impact you? What did you learn and how did you grow personally?

a. How did God use you in that situation to impact others for His glory?

5. Though these seven were just appointed to wait tables, we find that two of them (Stephen and Philip) end up playing much larger roles in the church. This often proves the case. We start serving in small ways, and when we prove faithful, God often entrusts with more.

a. How have you seen and experienced this principle in your own life or the lives of others around you?

b. Are there any areas of ministry service that you are being currently presented with that you might serve in that you struggle with because it feels beneath you?

c. On the flip side, are there any problems or deficits in the church that you are aware of that you would like to see addressed, but you don't want to get involved because it feels too big or difficult for you?

d. How can you be part of the solution to these problems?

e. What would it take for you to respond in faith and be willing to serve in this way?

6. Some of us are already serving in a variety of ways. How do you know when you are doing too much or what to choose to do?

7. If you are already serving, what are some ways that you can help others to see the value of it and join you in it?