

Acts 6:1-7 – How to Grow a Church

Introduction

- 6:7 is a summary statement, which looks back over the first part of Acts (see other summary statements – 9:31; 12:24; 16:5; 19:20; 28:30-31).
- This period is one of the most exciting sections in the Bible.
- The section ends with the account of a church meeting.

1. Where there is life there will be problems

- In spite of opposition the Apostles continue to preach (5:41-42)
- There are now a multitude of disciples (6:1)
- There is a clash between the Grecian and Hebraic Christians – two groups of Jewish Christians who were divided on cultural lines.
- Life leads to growth, leading to change and resulting in problems/challenges

2. Unity is crucial

- They murmur and complain (6:1)
- All 21 New Testament letters address the issue of unity – showing that it is both important and difficult

3. Leaders must lead

- The Apostles do not brush it under the carpet, minimize it, abandon the ministry or act in a heavy-handed way.
- They listen, pray and discuss it and then make a proposal to the church members (6:2-4) and this pleased everyone (6:5).
- Leaders must not be dictatorial (Luke 22:25-27), but they must lead.

4. Focus is vital

- The Apostles commit themselves to the ministry of prayer and preaching for which Christ had prepared them (Acts 1:8; 6:2,4)
- They are not saying that care ministries are unimportant - Deuteronomy 10 proves otherwise.
- However they must focus on the calling God has given them so that the church can continue to flourish.

5. Word and Works ministries are essential

- Both works ministries (6:1-2) and word ministries (6:3) are forms of “*diaconia*” or service/ministry.
- Word ministries involve teaching, preaching, witnessing, encouraging and counselling etc
- Works ministries cover buildings, budgets, spread sheets, electronic communication, catering and calendars etc.
- They are spiritual, vital and necessary to the health of the church.

6. Leaders must delegate

- They turn over the responsibility (6:3,5) and this is symbolized by the laying on of hands (6:6)
- All member ministry is the only way the church can reach maturity (Ephesians 4:7-16)

7. Good organization leads to blessing

- The problem is solved (6:6).
- The ministry flourishes (6:7).
- A new generation of leaders are identified (6:5, 8).
- The church crosses new barriers (8:4).