
ACTS OF THE APOSTLES



- I. Sermon Recap

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SESSION 6

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH
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SERMON RECAP

Acts 6 shows us the early church moving from a beautiful “honeymoon phase” into real life together. Pastor Gary walked us through how God uses that friction not to fracture His church, but to refine it. In Jerusalem, thousands of brand-new believers are learning to live as a spiritual family. When some Greek-speaking widows are overlooked in the daily distribution of food, the complaint becomes a holy opportunity: leaders listen, the church responds, roles are clarified, and ministry expands. God adds, subtracts, divides, and then multiplies.

At the center of this chapter stands Stephen, a man “full of faith and the Holy Spirit”. He isn’t an apostle; he’s essentially a servant overseeing food distribution. Yet God uses him for “great wonders and signs among the people,” because he is not grieving the Holy Spirit and he deeply loves people. Even when falsely accused and surrounded by hostility, Stephen’s face looks “like the face of an angel.” Pastor Gary pressed us to see that what releases God’s power is not spiritual performance, but love and grace toward others, even our accusers. The real manifestation of Pentecost isn’t just tongues or dramatic moments; it’s a church devoted to the Word, to fellowship, to sacrificial care for the vulnerable, and to a Christlike, non-retaliatory spirit in suffering.

Underneath it all is a call to each of us: notice how God is “doing math” in your life. Where is He adding blessing? Where is He subtracting what doesn’t belong? Where is He dividing roles, responsibilities, and relationships for greater fruitfulness? And where does He want to multiply gospel impact through you? Especially as you walk in compassion, unity, and a willingness to share in the sufferings of Christ? Acts 6 invites us not just to admire the early church, but to become this kind of people together.



STUDY GUIDE

Key Points

Prayer & the Community of Faith

The apostles refuse to abandon “prayer and the ministry of the Word” to solve every practical problem themselves.

Healthy churches honor both: leaders who guard time for prayer/Word, and Spirit-filled servants who meet practical needs.

Personal prayer fuels public ministry; community problems drive the church to prayer, not away from it.

Identity in Christ Over Cultural Labels

The tension is between Hebrew-speaking and Greek-speaking (Hellenistic) Jewish believers.

Both groups are fully part of Christ’s body, but they carry different histories and cultural leanings.

Our core identity is not “conservative/liberal,” “traditional/progressive,” but “in Christ.” That identity then shapes how we treat one another—especially those different from us.

Stillness Before God in the Midst of Conflict

Stephen stands in front of an angry council, falsely accused, yet his face is like an angel.

This is a picture of the “peace that transcends all understanding” governing a believer’s heart.

Stillness doesn’t mean passivity; it means a settled confidence in Christ that refuses to be ruled by fear, anger, or the need to retaliate.

God's Math in Your Life: Add, Subtract, Divide, Multiply

God adds: people, opportunities, hunger for the Word (Acts 2-5).

God subtracts: removes what corrupts His people (Ananias and Sapphira; sometimes relationships or resources in our lives).

God divides: roles and responsibilities (Acts 6 - apostles focus on prayer/Word; seven men serve widows).

God multiplies: "the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly."

Ask: Which part of this "math" is God presently doing in me?

Compassion as the Channel of God's Power

Stephen operates "full of faith and power" (or "grace and power" in some translations).

Pastor Gary emphasized: miracles arise not just from bare faith, but from deep compassion and grace, a heart that truly hurts for others.

We often see more healings in innocent, vulnerable babies because our compassion is unfiltered and wholehearted. What if we approached everyone that way?

Key Scripture (Sermon Text & Verses Mentioned)

Primary Sermon Passage

Acts 6:1-15 - Appointment of the seven, growth of the church, rise of Stephen, false accusations, and Stephen's angelic countenance.

Other Verses Directly Mentioned or Clearly Quoted

Acts 2:42 - “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

Acts 3:1-10 - The healing of the lame man at the Beautiful Gate (referenced).

James 1:27 - “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows...”

Psalm 68:5 (Pastor Gary said “Psalm 65,” but the verse is 68:5) - “A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.”

1 Timothy 5 - Instructions concerning widows (referenced conceptually).

1 Timothy 3 - Deacons (implied when he notes these aren’t yet called deacons).

2 Timothy 4:5 - “But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.”

1 Timothy 1:6 (likely 2 Timothy 1:6, but quoted as) - “Fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”

1 Thessalonians 1:5 - “Our gospel came to you not simply with words but also with power, with the Holy Spirit and deep conviction...”

1 Corinthians 12 - Spiritual gifts (referenced).

Hebrews 12:2 (alluded to by describing Christ’s joy amid suffering).

Jude 1:23 - “Snatch others from the fire...” (alluded to in “snatching priests” language).

Ephesians 6:12 - “Our struggle is not against flesh and blood...” (quoted in thought).

1 Peter 3:15-16 - “Always be prepared to give an answer... but do this with gentleness and respect...”

Philippians 3:10 - “I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings...”

Other Relevant Verses

These were not all explicitly cited, but they fit the core themes of Acts 6 and Pastor Gary's emphasis.

Philippians 2:3-4

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves...”

Tie-in: Captures the heart behind appointing the seven to serve widows—humble, others-centered ministry.

Galatians 6:9-10

“Let us not become weary in doing good... let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”

Tie-in: Reinforces the call to persevere in practical care for the vulnerable in the church.

Colossians 3:15-17

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace...”

Tie-in: Speaks to unity, peace, and Christ-centered identity that allows us to face conflict with “the face of an angel.”