

“Glorious Church” 2026 - #4 – Another Necessary Step (Deacons)
Acts 5:42, 6:1-8

We continue our series, *Glorious Church*.

Last week we saw **What a Glorious Church looks like in the real world - The first church in Acts 2.**

- They trusted Jesus
- They were surrendered to Him
- Their actions day by day reflected the Christ they knew who was working in them!
- They grew!

Today, we continue their story, our textbook. Let's set up what we will find with a question and an observation.

- What happens when God's glorious church demonstrates that it is comprised of people? Sometimes, less than glorious people?

A glorious church isn't a church without problems. It's a church that handles its problems God's way.

And, it should be no surprise to learn, each of us is part of God's answer.

I. Progress 5:42

- **Persecution** hadn't slowed them.
- **An inside attack** was met with Divine intervention.
- **Despite pressure and pushback, they kept doing** what they were supposed to do and they kept reaching people for Jesus. Growing!

So – one might assume the lesson would be...

- *“And they kept Jesus first. Kept doing everything they were supposed to do. Kept reaching people for Jesus and growing.”*
- In short – to borrow the typical story line: ***“They lived happily ever after”***.

But we know - even before we read the account - that life doesn't work that way. Churches aren't like that. Not in the real world; not all the time.

In fact,

- Our stories are stories of redemption.
- Of imperfect people being saved and indwelt by a perfect Savior who breath by breath works to conform them to His image
- Stories of sinful, broken people learning to love and live like Jesus.

Seemingly out of the blue, a problem surfaced.

(II. The Problem.)

They always will. When we have people, we have problems.

**It was in a way a problem that could have been anticipated.
It was created by explosive growth.**

A. The problem. 6:1

The wheels feel off of the meals on wheels program. Explain.

B. It is a paradox:

The problem was caused partly by growth, but if mishandled, the problem could have killed the growth.

C. The Problem with Problems:

Inevitably, **problems can change our focus, and that is the real problem.**

They weren't perfect. Neither are we.

- The problem was real.
- The widows were real.
- The perceived inequity was real.
- The natural response- the flesh, accusations, murmuring – were very real!

Pretty much everything shut down.

When their attention turned to themselves rather than Jesus, everything else was affected.

- That is true in our lives.
- That is true in our church.

****A simple test: Look at the fruit. If it is lacking, deteriorating, ugly – the focus is off track. Maybe legitimately, maybe not. But the result is the same.**

So, what did they do? What is our lesson? What new next step was revealed?

III. The Provision.

The apostles don't respond by pretending, “We're a Spirit-filled church. We don't have problems.”

A. They responded.

God brought it to their attention, and they prayerfully and faithfully addressed the problem and need.

- Will we when we find ourselves in a time of trial and testing?
- Will we look for a quick fix, and seek God's answer?

B. The answer wasn't an immediate fix. Most aren't. It was a God led process.

C. The honest acknowledgment by leadership.

- “The need is legitimate.”
- “We can't meet it. We can't do it all, and shouldn't try.”
- That is not God's plan!

D. The Answer: (Maybe playing in the background – “We need a little help from our friends...”

- 1. Spiritual, qualified servant leaders. Deacons.**
- 2. Chosen from among the congregation to help with daily needs.**

E. Details.

- These men were not chosen to **monitor** the Pastors/Apostles.
- They were chosen to work under the direction of the God ordained leaders to serve the people, freeing the leaders to focus on the greater spiritual needs.

They were to be men – vs. 3

- Saved and filled with the Spirit of God
- Already demonstrating their spirit and character
- Already serving

Cf. 6:8 – Stephen!

F. As time passed, and the churches multiplied, this office became one of the two God ordained positions in His churches: Pastors/Bishops and Deacons.

- **1 Timothy 3:8-13** records a list of qualifications for New Testament Deacons. It was simply an expression of what we find in real time in Acts 6.

(Read.)

G. Note: Each church- Unique.

- Number.
- Needs.
- God ordained to serve within the nature and character of each individual church!

H. ESBC –

- Faithful attendance and support
- Examples and models.
- Godly.
- Servants who will lead others to serve.

Plus:

- A member at least two years.
- Divorce after salvation.

Another Next Step:

East Somerset Baptist Church has voted to prayerfully begin the process of choosing additional deacons.

We need help.

The Biblical process: Begin to look around and pray for God to put godly choices on your heart. As the church prays, and plans,
In a few weeks we will give you the opportunity on a Sunday morning to write down up to three choices on your heart.

IV. The Product

A glorious church isn't a church without problems. It's a church that handles its problems God's way.

A. They did what God directed them to do.

B. They each became a working part of His plan:

- The Apostles/Pastors couldn't even begin to keep up with everyone and everything.
- Seven men could organize ministry to a large and rapidly growing Jerusalem congregation, but they weren't personally carrying every plate to every widow.
- Acts doesn't tell us everybody who served. Yet somebody did.

Nobody does everything. Everybody does something.

With their focus is on Jesus, each allowing Him to work in them AND through them, God did what only He could do! He always will! 6:7