

## **“A GROWING CHURCH”**

### **Book of Acts**

### **Wayside Baptist Church**

#### **I. THE GROWTH OF THE FIRST CHURCH**

**Acts 1:15-** *“in those days Peter stood among the believers and the group numbered about 120.”* That’s how many there were on the first day of the church in the Upper Room, the first record.

**Acts 2:41.** The Day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit was given. *“Those who accepted His message were baptized and about 3000 were added to their number that day.”*

**Acts 2:47-** *“Praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people and the Lord added to their number daily [circle “daily”] those that were being saved.”* That means at least 365 people were being added to the church a year because it says somebody everyday.

**Acts 4:4-** *“But many who heard the message believed and the number of men grew to be five thousand.”*

**Acts 5:14-** *“Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.”*

**Acts 5:28-** The Sanhedrin are arguing with the apostles *“We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching.”*

**Acts 6:1+7-** *“In those days the number of disciples was increasing [or multiplying]”* We’ve gone from addition now to multiplication. **v. 7** *“So the word of God spread and the number of disciples increased in Jerusalem rapidly.”* Rapid growth

**Acts 21:20-** Approximately 25 years after the day of Pentecost. *“When they heard this they praised God and said to Paul, ‘You see brother, how many thousands of Jews have believed’”*

#### **II. LESSONS WE LEARN FROM THEIR EXAMPLE**

##### **1. WE MUST MINISTER WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT POWER**

**Acts 1:4-5-** *“Don’t leave Jerusalem but wait for the gift My Father promised which you’ve heard Me speak about. John baptized with water but in a few days you’ll be baptized with the Holy Spirit...”* **V. 8** *“...You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will...”*

**Acts 4:13-** *“...You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be My witnesses.”* The power of God is given for witnessing, for ministry, for mission. *“... in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth.”*

##### **2. WE MUST MAINTAIN A WARM FELLOWSHIP.**

**Acts 2:42-44-** **Acts 2:42-44 (NIV)** *“They devoted themselves to the apostle’s teaching and to the fellowship and the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe and many wondrous and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All believers were together and had everything in common.”*

#### **THE UNITY FACTOR**

### **3. WE MUST MULTIPLY IN SMALL GROUPS (BFG)**

**Acts 2:46-47-** *“Every day they continued to meet together in the temple court and they broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.”*

#### **Advantages Of Small Groups**

\* They are unlimited **geographically** . You can start new groups far & wide. (Anywhere)

\* They promote **relationships** .

### **4. WE MUST MAGNIFY OUR VISION OF GOD.**

**Acts 4:24-** .(Notice the kind of prayer they praye). *“When they heard this they raised their voice together in prayer and said, `Sovereign Lord, You made heaven and earth the sea and everything in it. You spoke by the Holy Spirit through the mouth of Your servant David. Why did the nations rage and the people plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand, the rulers against the Lord and against the anointed one.’”*

### **5. WE MUST MAXIMIZE THE POWER OF PRAYER.**

**Acts 4:33-** *“With great power the apostles continued to testify of the resurrection and grace was among them all.”*

### **6. WE MUST MODEL CHRISTLIKE GENEROSITY.**

**Acts 4:32-37** *“ All the believers were one in heart and one in mind [there’s unity again]. No one claimed any of that which was his possessions as his own, but they shared everything they had. 33 - With great power the apostles continued to testify of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and grace was with them all. 34 - **There were no needy persons among them** From time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them and brought the money from the sales 35 - and put it at the apostles’ feet and it was distributed to anyone as they had a need. Joseph a Levite from Cipriot who the apostles called Barnabus which means Son of Encouragement...”*

#### **4 RESULTS OF LIBERAL GIVING.**

**v. 32** (There was unity in the church) All believers were of one heart and mind because they were all sharing with each other. Generous giving promotes unity.

**V. 33** says it was a powerful testimony to the community. *“With great power the apostles continued to testify of the resurrection and grace was among them all.”*

**v. 34** (There were no needy people) This is one of the most overlooked factors in the church in Acts.

**2:35.** *“Selling their possessions and goods they gave to anyone as they had a need.”*

**Acts 5:1-11** – What did they do wrong?

Ananias & Sapphira Story.

## **7. WE MUST MOBILIZE EVERY MEMBER FOR MINISTRY**

**Acts 6:1-7-** *“In those days the number of the disciples were increasing. The Grecian Jews among them complained against those of the Aramaic speaking community because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, ‘It wouldn’t be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom and we will turn this responsibility over to them and we will give our attention to prayer and ministry of the word.’ This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and also Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, tuimon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the Apostles who prayed and laid hands on them. So the word of God spread and the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly.”*

### **Seven Lessons from Acts 6**

#### **1. A Growing Church Is BIBLICAL (v. 1)**

*“In those days the number of disciples was increasing...”*

#### **2. Church Growth Causes PROBLEMS (v. 1b)**

*“... there were rumblings of discontent ...” (LB)*

#### **3. Problems Are Always UNMET NEEDS (vs 1c)**

*“The Greek speaking Jews claimed their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution food.” (GN)*

#### **4. The Pastors Cannot DO IT ALL (vs. 2)**

*“It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables.”*

#### **5. LAY MINISTERS Are To Assist The Pastors. (vs 3)**

*“Choose seven men.. full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them...”*

#### **6. The Pastors Are To Focus On PRAYING & TEACHING (vs. 4)**

*“We will give our attention to prayer and the teaching of the Word.”*

#### **7. The result of lay ministry was MORE GROWTH(vs. 5)**

*“This proposal pleased the whole group... So the word of God spread and the number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly.”*

## **8. WE MUST MOVE OUT TO ACCOMPLISH GOD’S MISSION.**

*“On that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Jerusalem Judea And Samaria. Acts 8:1&4  
Acts 1:*