

# Message to Conversation Guide: The Church - Acts 6:1-7

## Main Text

### **Acts 6:1-7**

6 In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, **the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food.** 2 So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. 3 Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known **to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them** 4 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

5 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. 6 **They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.**

7 So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith. NIV

## Discussion Questions

1. We tend to idealize the early primitive church but the early church had problems and challenges. Every church, family, marriage, business, company or government has problems and challenges. Discuss the principle it is problems and challenges are not the issue it is how we handle the problems and challenges that is the issue.
2. Discuss the quotes below as it relates to handling problems or challenges. The principle outlined in the quotes is that problem and challenges develop our leadership and coping skills.

*"It is not the absence of problems that really help us to grow in our skills a leaders it is the presence of problems that help us to grow." Danny Tice*

*"A smooth sea never produced a skillful sailor." Anonymous*

3. The two groups of people in the early church in Jerusalem were the locals and the non-locals. The locals were raised in Jerusalem or the surrounding area and were steeped in Hebrew culture and spoke Aramaic. The second group of people were the non-locals that were Jews that were raised in various places of the Roman empire and spoke greek. These people were represented by the list of people that

were at the day Pentecost. Examine the verses below to get a feel for where these people were from.

**Acts 2:5-12**

5 Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews **from every nation under heaven**. 6 When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. 7 Utterly amazed, they asked: "Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? 8 Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? 9 **Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, 10 Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome** 11 (both Jews and converts to Judaism); **Cretans and Arabs** — we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" NIV

4. Discuss the importance of getting problems out in the open (the first step used by the Apostles to resolve a problem). How do the verses below illustrate this principle?

**Acts 6:2a**

2 So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together

**Luke 6:6**

6 On another Sabbath he went into the synagogue and was teaching, **and a man was there whose right hand was shriveled**. NIV

**Luke 6:10**

10 He looked around at them all, and then said to the man, "**Stretch out your hand.**" **He did so, and his hand was completely restored**. NIV

5. Own what is important to you. Lay your cards on the table of what is most important to you. Ownership of what is important to us is imperative in solving problems. We cannot make false promises in conflicts but must own our true position. Discuss the verse below.

**Acts 6:2**

2 So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "**It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables**."

6. We must come up with practical solution in conflict. How did the early church do this in this conflict in **Acts 6:17**?
7. What was the net result of the wise solution designed by the Apostles and the early church?

**Acts 2:7** **So the word of God spread.** *The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.*