

Series: Acts IX

Text: Acts 6:1-7

HI: God's word increases through a unified church

Title: The Small Stuff

Main Idea: God's word increases through a unified church

READ Acts 6:1-7

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. 2 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." 5 And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6 These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. 7 And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

READ Acts 6:1

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.

- I. Problem: The growing church can't support all needs**
 - a. The church is growing (v. 1a)
 - b. The church is imperfect (v. 1b)
 - c. Unity is threatened (v. 1c)

READ Acts 4:32

Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common.

READ Acts 6:2-6

2 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." 5 And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6 These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

- II. Solution: God's community shares the responsibility**

- a. Church leaders don't take their eye off the ball (v. 2)
- b. Through community, unity is preserved (v. 3-5a)
- c. A wise community affirms healthy leaders (v. 5b-6)

READ Acts 6:3-4

3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

READ Exodus 18:17-18, 21-23

17 Moses' father-in-law said to him, "What you are doing is not good. 18 You and the people with you will certainly wear yourselves out, for the thing is too heavy for you. You are not able to do it alone. 21 Moreover, look for able men from all the people, men who fear God, who are trustworthy and hate a bribe, and place such men over the people as chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties, and of tens. 22 And let them judge the people at all times. Every great matter they shall bring to you, but any small matter they shall decide themselves. So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. 23 If you do this, God will direct you, you will be able to endure, and all this people also will go to their place in peace."

READ 1 Timothy 3:8-9

8 Deacons likewise must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. 9 They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.

READ Acts 6:3-4

3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

READ Acts 6:5-6

5 And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6 These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

III. Outcome: A healthy church witnesses to a broken world

- a. The church continues to grow (v. 7a)
- b. Even those most set against God are changed (v. 7b)

READ Acts 6:7

7 And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

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