

Upside Down | the character of the Jesus movement

Ministry of the Mundane | Serving

Acts 6:1-7
August 6, 2017

Review: What did you learn about yourself and about God when you reflected on your own convictions about resisting religious authority? How have you seen the authority of God revealed in the Bible?

Introduction: If you follow Jesus, you're a part of a movement. You're in with others. The movement of Jesus is about the people. Jesus invites us individually but deploys us corporately. House by house, Luke tells us, the Lord added to their number those who were being saved (Acts 2:46-47). It wasn't about the buildings; it was about the people. The biblical word for 'house' (oikos) meant family. Jesus added to their numbers when his followers lived like his family with one another and with their neighbors. The movement wasn't defined by their ideas or rules but by the way they lived together, by the way that Jesus lived in their shared life. The book of Acts invites us to stop coming to church and start being the church. Summer in Seattle offers a wonderful opportunity: Our neighbors are coming out of their houses. Will we welcome them into his? If we do, maybe they'll say what the Greeks said, "These people who have been turning the world upside down have come here also..." (Acts 17:6).

This week the church leaders face questions of priority as the numbers of believers saps their capacity to meet all of the needs.

Pray: Lord Jesus, open our hearts and minds to your teaching as we consider the challenges of doing work in your name. Give us insights on our own lives and service even as we see the early church struggle with cultural pressure and change. Amen

Read: Acts 6:1-7

Discussion:

1. What is the complaint that is raised by the Hellenist (Greek-speaking) Jews? Read Acts 2:41-47 for some context. What does the church do in response?
2. What pressures are facing the early church? What similar pressures does our church face today? What pressures did the early church face we don't face? What pressures do we face the early church didn't?
3. In verse 2 "serving tables" and "the ministry of the word" in verse 3 use the same Greek root from which we have our word Deacon. What reason did the apostles give for a division of labor?
4. What support did the first deacons have for their service assignment? Is that same support available to kingdom workers today?
5. What service have you been called to do? How has God called, confirmed, ~~and~~ supported and equipped you in your service?

Application: If you are not sure where and how you are called to serve will you commit to seeking God's place for you through prayer and conversation with trusted friends?

If you are serving now will you commit to pray for direction and power to serve as God desires?

Pray: Lord, help us this week discern your calling in our lives and give us the courage and strength to answer your call. Amen