

“The Church in Transition”

Acts 6:1-7

Introduction: Transition is always hard. The world in which we live is always changing. Change is hard and sometimes causes great conflict. Even when change is good, it still can be difficult.

When a baby comes to a family, it changes everything. A couple is totally blessed, but even in the glow of this joy there is difficulty. Car seats, less room in the car, the car may not be the right one, safety proof the house, more room in the house, relatives move in, etc. All good things but change is still hard. A new job, good but stressful. A new business or a marriage, etc.... all good in the change department but still difficult.

In this section of Acts, we see the Woodlake Baptist Church of Jerusalem growing. Some problems came up even in the growth that was good, but there is still a need to handle the change properly. The first time I preached this message was June 3, 2007. I have the bulletin to prove it. I say this because people think I am picking on them with the truth. God lined this up for this day and this time. This message fits perfectly with the leadership meeting Monday night and the new year's call to commitment messages. Don't whine when the chips fall; repent and return to the former work.

We dare not force the Holy Spirit to fit our mold. Organization facilitates what God is doing. We recently learned from *Experiencing God* that the church seeks God's will as we see where God is working and then we join Him. The church should never ask God to join its plans.

The early church's change in this chapter will show the importance of transition and growth. How many Baptist churches do we know that never grow? Why is this? What would have happened in the early church if the apostles had failed to respond

to the need for change? They needed to minister to the body, but they had their hands full teaching and preaching the Word. There was a real problem but also lots of emotional issues, jealousy, and cultural problems that accompanied this situation. Let's look at how it was handled.

**** The key to transition is to deal with it in a positive way.

- Some say they don't like the organized church. Should the church be organized at all? Some see organization as a rope to strangle the Holy Spirit. That's not correct, and yes, we should be organized.
- Some say we are to listen only to the Spirit and not organize. This is also taken too far. This is done as if some mystical force moves us along as we chant potions and prayers to God.
- Both extremes are wrong. We are not a bureaucracy, nor are we a sentimental, charismatic, emotional commune. Balance is the key.
- The church is an organism. It is alive. It has a head and a body. The church is a dynamic, fluid, living body with Christ as the head.
- The church is a theocracy, not a democracy.

Quote: John Macarthur... *"Biblical church organization always responds to the needs and to what the Holy Spirit is doing already. To organize a program and then expect the HS to get involved in it is to put the cart before the horse. We dare not force the HS to fit our mold."*

The Church in Transition: Read Text: Acts 6:1-7

When a church is in transition, what does it have to deal with?

I. Administration Problems:

- **Verse 1: Growth in numbers:** This is a good problem to have. *“In those days when the number of disciples were increasing.”* That sounds a lot better than hearing that a church is in decline or that members are leaving, right? God intends for the church to grow. **People want a growing church that’s small.** That makes no sense. We like big grocery stores. We love big retail stores (Sam’s Club, PGA Super Stores, BJ’s, Walmart). “Brisket on the board.” We love a place called **Bucees**. Some of y’all lose your mind up in Bucees. We love a place called Amazon. But we want our church to be small. Why would you want a small church? That means no one is being saved. That is a philosophy diametrically opposed to the Great Commission.

Stats:

- 15-20 percent of SBC churches are considered growing churches. All you have to do is grow by 2% to be considered a growing church.
- (2007)-1000 churches of the 43,000 did not baptize a single person. Almost a third of our churches baptized no one.
- It takes 33 Baptists to lead 1 person to Christ.
- 2005, there were 831,725 baptized.
- 16.2 million Baptists in SBC (10 years ago)
- Thank God for our growth.
- The early church had space problems.

- The church will learn to problem solve. The problems that arose were due to the growth. That's normal.
- In 4:4 there were 5000 people, and that's just men. There very well may have been 20,000 people in this church by now. **That's a lot of change.**
- Communication problems. It's hard to continue to communicate properly, but it must be done for the church to continue on the proper path of growth.
- Leadership problems arise.
- Trust problems arise from poor communication.
- New people come in.
- Some try to “steal” or “hijack” the vision.
- Space problems.
- Doctrinal issues come up. Doctrinal failures.
- Behavioral issues come up.
- “Ethnicitis,” The neighborhood changes.
- Ghost town disease. People move out.
- Conflicts within and without.

Administration:

- Staff Changes
- Communication Problems
- Leadership Problems
- Trust Problems
- Needs Problems
- Discipleship Problems

* This could have been the death of the church, but the Apostles did not let that happen.

*** Different Races: A Cultural Collision**

They had Hellenist Jews—of the Diaspora, native, or Palestinian Jews, many spoke native Greek vs. Hebrew or

Aramaic / Hebrew. The Hellenist came for Passover – were saved and stayed. The culture changed 300 years earlier because of the conquests of Alexander the Great. During Pentecost, many peoples were in the city and were saved at Pentecost. The early church had two languages in it. Boice says that, “Greek was the *lingua franca* of the day.”

Many of the OT prophets scolded the people in their writings and confrontations because of poor treatment of widows. God commanded the people to care for the widows. Jesus admonished the people in Mark 7 because they actually would call their service to their parents **Corban** and say it was dedicated to the Lord. The parents would never see the money, and neither did God.

Mark 7:11-13

But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: 'Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is Corban' (that is, a gift devoted to God), 12 then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother.

NIV

The apostles handled this perfectly. The Hellenistic Jews were of the Diaspora. The Palestinian or native Jews of the land spoke Greek, Hebrew and some Aramaic. The Hellenists who came for Passover, were saved and stayed; they spoke Greek. The Apostles and men of the church did not let these differences split the church. This could have been the death of the church. The widows had been neglected. **The modern church today is guilty of this.** Many young pastors don't make a place for seniors to serve. Sad!

Illustration: I had a professor of Sociology that did a study of an Island where the elderly lived extremely long lives. They wanted to learn what allowed the elders to live so long. The final

hypothesis was that the elderly were so well respected and cared for that it increased their life span by many years.

II. People Problems: New people come in: The church takes on a different look and feel. The history of the church has to be transmitted to others and they must be assimilated into the group or they will be lost. New classes need to be formed, or the history of the class will keep it from growing.

1. Some may try to “hijack” the vision of the church. We must communicate who we are and what we are trying to accomplish. I hope you know the vision of WBC by now. I will protect the **shepherding** ministry we have as long as I am here. Relationships are important. Encouragement is important to me. Preaching is important to me.
2. Behavioral issues will come up. Church discipline will be exercised. Many believers don’t know this is biblical.
3. Needs problems. Life skills need to be taught. We are here to teach the scriptures but also raise people up with life skills. Your witness and social skills are important to your wellbeing.
4. Different races in the church. We are the world’s example.
5. A complaint arose (Verse 1). The word for **complain** is **γογγυσμός**. This is an onomatopoetic term that means murmuring. It means discontent. We all know what murmuring will get you.

Illustration: I met a man at the county building that had just paid his new tax bill from a recently assessed bill. He was murmuring as he left. I made the mistake of making eye contact with him. Stupidly, I said, “yes, I understand. “He went off on the county. The murmuring changed to full force cussing. I was looking for the door.

6. “**Overlooked**” in verse 1 means to literally look beyond. It does not mean anything personal, but it is an **“oversight.”** To be overlooked in our day will bring lots of accusations as to why there was an oversight.
7. The Grecian Jews murmured because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. Tradition called this the **tamhuy- a poor bowl.** A **quppah** was also **poor basket.** A weekly dole for the poor that allowed for two weeks of money to buy food. One of the most prevalent causes of problems in church life comes from people feeling overlooked. Jealousy.

Phil 2:3-5

3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:
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8. Delegation and fairness? **Verse 2** tells us that the Word was the most important thing that was to never be neglected. Delegation was introduced to the early church. The Word cannot be compromised for anything. Leaders pass off responsibility to capable leaders who will work to accomplish God’s will. In Exodus 18 there is an equivalent passage from the OT.

Ex 18:13-23

13 The next day Moses took his seat to serve as judge for the people, and they stood around him from morning till evening. 14 When his father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, "What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?"

15 Moses answered him, "Because the people come to me to seek God's will. 16 Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God's decrees and laws."

17 Moses' father-in-law replied, "What you are doing is not good. 18 You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. 19 Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people's representative before God and bring their disputes to him. 20 Teach them the decrees and laws, and show them the way to live and the duties they are to perform. 21 But select capable men from all the people — men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain — and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. 22 Have them serve as judges for the people at all times, but have them bring every difficult case to you; the simple cases they can decide themselves. That will make your load lighter, because they will share it with you. 23 If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied."

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9. The pastor must take care of prayer and the ministry of the Word. Is the ministry of the Word really a ministry? If you call the church and are told you cannot speak with the pastor right then because he is praying or spending time in the Word, what would you think? What does it look like to have a pastor that prays and studies? I mean really prays and studies. Without delegation he cannot study and pray properly.

Likewise, the pastor needs help so that he can spend time with sheep in need. When you are in distress you need the man

of God. The pastor must smell like sheep. Proper delegation allows the pastor to do preparation and ministry.

1 Peter 5:2-4

2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.

4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

KJV

Key Takeaways from *Biblical Lessons on Delegation: Leadership Insights from Moses and Jethro*. CarlWillis.com

1. Delegation is Essential for Effective Leadership

- Leaders, like Moses, cannot do everything alone. Sharing responsibilities is not a weakness but a necessity for sustainable leadership.

2. Choose the Right People for Delegation

- Following Jethro's advice, leaders should delegate to trustworthy, capable individuals with integrity and the ability to handle specific responsibilities.

3. Structure Responsibilities to Improve Efficiency

- Organizing tasks into manageable levels—like Moses did with leaders over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens—ensures better workflow and faster resolution of problems.

4. Focus on High-Priority Tasks

- Delegation allows leaders to concentrate on their unique contributions and the most critical responsibilities, avoiding burnout and increasing impact.

5. Empowering Others Benefits Everyone

- Delegating tasks fosters growth in others, building stronger teams and enabling them to step into leadership roles while easing the leader's workload.

6. Barriers to Delegation Can Be Overcome

- Common challenges like fear of losing control, perfectionism, and the time investment required to train others can be managed with intentional effort and trust.

7. Delegation Reflects Biblical Principles of Stewardship

- God's design for shared responsibility, as seen in Exodus 18, emphasizes that leadership is not about doing everything but about empowering others to serve alongside you.

8. **The Benefits of Delegation are Far-Reaching**

- Delegation increases efficiency, prevents burnout, and ensures that leaders and their teams thrive in their respective roles.

Illustration: Read Deuteronomy 8. The reason that so many churches have trouble is that the Word of God is ignored. They forget all God's blessings. The church can forget where they came from. We cannot let that happen.

Deut 8:10-18

10 When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you. 11 **Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day.** 12 Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, 13 and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, 14 then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. 15 He led you through the vast and dreadful desert, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock. 16 He gave you manna to eat in the desert, something your fathers had never known, to humble and to test you so that in the end it might go well with you. 17 You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." 18 But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today.

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Quote: John MacArthur says this... The apostles' pledge to devote themselves to their ministries set the pattern for all to follow. The ministry demands total commitment, everything a man has to give. There is no substitute for hard work and discipline. A young man once said to the great Donald Grey Barnhouse (The great expositor and preacher) "I'd give the world to be able to teach the bible like you." Looking at the young man right in the eye, Dr. Barnhouse said, "Good, because that's exactly what it will cost you." Paul serves as a reminder of what the ministry is all about...

Acts 20:17-21

18 When they arrived, he said to them: "You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. 19 I served the Lord with great humility and with tears, although I was severely tested by the plots of the Jews. 20 You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. 21 I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

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III. Successful Solutions:

1. Verse 3: Doctrinal issues will arise. That's why you stick to the scripture and operate by principle not emotions. **The answer to the grumbling was to ordain deacons.** What we are seeing here is the first deacons being elected. What a great solution. Men stepped up and accepted their lead role.

2. Matriarchal vs. Patriarchal. They chose men to lead. It is a beautiful thing when the spiritual men rise up and lead. Takes time to get them on board, but when it happens, it works. It's not old fashion, it's biblical. It's not popular, but it's in the bible.

They chose the men to lead out. *As a matter of fact this decision was to help women, not degrade them. Women could do the job, but they should not have to.*

We are not given great detail at this point about the qualifications for deacons; Paul deals with the minute details later in his Epistles (Titus 1:5-9; 1 Timothy 3). A good reputation, being full of the Spirit, wisdom, and willing to be on duty were the qualifications. If these qualifications were sufficient then, why are they not good now. Notice also Titus 2:1-15, which is always neglected when we talk about the qualifications of deacons. Actually, the entire church should be held to these qualifications. Many laypeople would not be allowed to be in places of leadership as well if we held to sound doctrine.

Titus 2:1-15

You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. 2 Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance.

3 Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. 4 Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, 5 to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God.

6 Similarly, encourage the young men to be self-controlled. 7 In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness 8 and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.

9 Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, 10 and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.

1 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. 12 It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

15 These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you.

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In Titus 1:5, Paul tells Titus the reason he left him in Crete. The word in verse 5 for **straighten out** or **set right** is an orthopedic word that refers to setting a broken bone (**epidiorthoo**).

We, as a church, should work hard to teach members the Word, so that you will be able to serve Christ better, and to present you to Jesus when He returns as a chaste Bride. If you didn't know that this is the job of your husband and pastor, now you do.

Eph 5:24-31

24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, **27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church**, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. 28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— 30 for we are members of his body.

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Col 1:21-23

21 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. 22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to **present** you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— 23 if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel.

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Col 1:24-26

24 Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, **for the sake of his body, which is the church.** 25 I have become its servant by the commission God gave me **to present to you the word of God in its fullness—**

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Col 1:28-29

28 We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, **so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.** 29 To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.

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Verse 3: Greek: Select, choose, KJV- Look ye out-

episkeptomai: This word means to look out for, select, or my favorite word **inspect.** This is why we have a brief associates program to test the men before ordination. I had a group of men once that didn't want to test the guys first. They said they had never heard of such. "We have never done it that way before." That told me one thing. They didn't understand the Word.

Greek: Andras, anthropos, ανηρ, ανθροπος. This word and its roots refer to a man. This is a human man. This is not an identifying man or a robot. This word means human being man.

A genetically formed man with testosterone from testicular organs.

Greek: Reputation: μαρτυρεω— This is the English word martyr. This is the word for witness. This is a man with a good witness or reputation in public. It has been well reported that this man is good and honest. Are they filled with the Spirit? Are they men of wisdom?

Question: Call out names of men in the congregation. Are these good and honest men?

Greek: Ordain, appoint, designate, place down-καθιστημι— Kathistemi: The root of this word refers to making or establishing a covenant with these men for their appointment.

Greek: God's business, task, responsibility, duty, occasion, demand, affair: **chreia**. Followed by the demonstrative pronoun **ταυτης** from **‘ουτος**. I mention this because many interpret this as a way of saying deacons are to do the business of the church. That's not the biblical calling of a deacon. The Greek grammar speaks of that **particular** task or responsibility of tending the distribution of the food to the widows.

In verse 2 the text says, it would not be right for the preachers and teachers (Apostles) to neglect the word to serve tables, do finances, or distribute meat. To serve is the word **diakoneo**, the word for deacon. The word **trapeza** refers to tables, financial loans or counters (A bank), and four legged tables for meat. So, **serve** and **tables** go together. Deacons are servers.

This does not mean that pastors, teachers, or the Apostle are beyond serving tables or cutting grass or visiting. I actually love working with the boys outside and many of our ladies come to work days around WBC. I love to serve the ladies at their

women's tea and do my part to tend to the building and even cut the grass if needed. The issue is that I cannot do that if I have other called duties to do. Priority is the key. I cannot go to all the birthday parties or class parties and still maintain proper study time. The deacons and volunteers at WBC are my backbone. One thing that disturbs me is a preacher that thinks he is above physical labor.

Why was this so important? Because the apostles were tending to the preaching and teaching of the Word. This will lead to another problem if it is not dealt with.

3. Discipleship problems. Can you imagine how they discipled all these new Christians, started churches, and dealt with all the people and administration problem? So you want to be in the ministry?

A church that is in transition (either way- up or down) will be forced to compromise in the area of selecting leaders to just fill a slot. Here is where the rubber hits the road. I know a church that did this. The pastor ran off all the people and then replaced all the leadership with "yes" men and "yes" women and a year later the church was in peril.

Selection of qualified men and leaders is not a beauty contest or a popularity contest. All leaders need to be chosen and serve out of overflow. Many Baptist nominating committees do just that. They have so many unnecessary committees that they can never fill the slots with real leaders so they ask anybody to do things they are not spiritually gifted to do. The pastor, staff, and leaders should know their people well enough to disciple people into places of service. Then the pastors can do what they are called to do- tend sheep.

Acts 6:3-4

“We will turn this responsibility over to them 4 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”

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This is a great spot for me to say thank you to the staff, volunteers, and all the workers at WBC. You are amazing and you may have never thought of it this way before, but as you serve and help in the administrative areas of the church, as you share in the teaching, and maintenance of the ministry here, maintaining the building and property, you are actually participating in my sermon preparation and prayer time. The church at WBC has always respected this spiritual virtue and I have taken full advantage of it.

4. Theocracy vs. Democracy. God must be in charge and all people, including the staff, must seek God’s will. Again, here is how I see the NT church functioning.

- Pastor led
- Deacon served
- Committee (Teams) facilitated
- Church approved

7. The whole church was involved. Verse 2... *the 12 gathered the disciples together.* I like that. Verse 5... the whole group was involved. We call this unity.

- Stephen- Spread the gospel through his death.
- Philip- Took the gospel to the Samaritans in 8:4-25. Also to the eunuch that carried the gospel to Ethiopia and to the Government and kings of that land. His 4 daughters were prophetesses (21:8). They taught the Word but were not Apostles.

- Prochorus may have been John's amanuensis.
- Not much know of the others.

*** These men were used to keep the church from splitting during the transition period. I ask the same of you. We must at all cost take these things into account as we grow. I ask for your patience and cooperation and fellowship.

Verse 6: We are given the names of the men. The laying on of hands shows that these men were publicly approved. This is the first time that this practice was followed. ***Later, this did become the standard for ordination.*** All of these men were Greeks so it is unlikely that this was deacon ordination. If it were a greater selection of all groups would have been applicable. **The Greeks were chosen because that's where the complaint came from.**

1 Tim 4:14

14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message **when the body of elders laid their hands on you.**
NIV

1 Tim 5:22

22 **Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands**, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.
NIV

2 Tim 1:6-7

6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through **the laying on of my hands.**
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Heb 6:1-3

Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, 2 instruction about baptisms, **the laying on of hands**, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 3 And God permitting, we will do so.
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It is not my belief that there is some magical power in the laying on of hands. The writer of Hebrews seems to indicate that there was some doctrinal issues concerning this in the early NT church. I am uncertain about a lot of this process. I do think that God does empower us with spiritual gifts at salvation to do the work of ministry. I also think that we can be given gifts after salvation to accomplish God's call on our lives. Paul seems to indicate there is something that happens with the laying on of hands. I have had this done twice in my life and know that God has gifted me with what I need to fulfill my calling. I have never felt or experienced anything out of the ordinary other than a godly pride and appreciation for being chosen to serve the True and Living God. The most important thing to feel is humility.

Outstanding Results of the successful Solutions: Verse 7

1. The word spread- Flourished, multiplied.
2. Disciples increased (Rapidly or greatly).
3. Even the enemy was won over in some of the priests. This must have infuriated the Sanhedrin. The priest became **obedient to the faith.**

Rom 16:25-27

25 Now to him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, 26 but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, **so that all nations might believe and obey**

him— 27 to the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen.

NIV

V. Closing: Billy Graham quote page 40 in *Great Quotes and Illustrations* (s.v. Change).

Have you ever thought about the collapse of time? From the days of the Lord Jesus Christ until about 1830, man could not travel any faster than a horse. In 1960, a man went into space and traveled at a speed of 18,000 miles an hour. Look how far we have come in so short a time! Sometimes when I read the papers, I think we're trying to run the space age with horse and buggy moral and spiritual equipment. Technology, you see, has no morals; and with no moral restraints, man will destroy himself ecologically, militarily, or in some other way. Only God can give a person moral restraints and spiritual strength. While our world is shaking and crumbling, we need to realize that one thing will never change, and that is God. He is the same today as He was 10 million years ago, and he will be the same 10 million years from today. We are like grasshoppers; we appear, hop around a bit on the earth and then we're gone.

Karl Marx Quote: The philosophers have only interpreted the world; the thing, however, is to change it.”

We come now to an important part of the service. I have asked you to embrace change as God so leads us. The best way to do that is to embrace a God that never does change. Your chance to change is now. You must accept a God who is eternal and Holy and perfect. He needs nothing and never will. He is immutable. That means He never changes. To live with an unchanging God, you must change and become like He. There is only one way to do that.... Accept the

God who lives in an unchanging world, who sent His unchanging Son to a finite world to redeem a fallen and unsettled race of men. He is the rock you need. Many people will never see the need to change and miss heaven. Many churches never change, and they die on the vine. Think about that phrase; what does it mean? Many restaurant chains die because they don't keep up with what the customer wants. Many retailers don't change with the needs of their customers and go bankrupt. As a church, we must grow. Blackaby says, *“You can't stay where you are and go with God.”*