

## LIVING THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Stephen: A Profile of Courage

Acts 6

Week 6 October 1, 2006

Pastor Mike Popovich

*And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.*

Acts 2:42 NAS

This is what an Acts 2 church does.

They devoted themselves...Who are the 'they'?

*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. So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples...*

Acts 6:1-2a NIV

They were Jews from all over the world following Jesus.

### JESUS TAUGHT THE APOSTLES TO BE SERVANTS

*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. 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 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." Acts 6:2-4 NIV*

1. The early church took seriously the combination of spiritual and material concerns in carrying out its God-given ministry.
2. The early church seems to have been prepared to adjust its procedures, alter its organizational structure, and develop new posts of responsibility in response to existing needs and for the sake of proclaiming the Word of God.

### SERVANTS ARE TO BE SPIRITUALLY QUALIFIED

*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. They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. 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. Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people.*

Acts 6:5-8 NIV

### FULL OF FAITH

The opposite of faith in God is to have doubts in God.

*You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit!*

Acts 7:51 NIV

### FULL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

*And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, Ephesians 5:18 NAS*

### FULL OF GRACE

*While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep. Acts 7:58-60 NIV*

### FULL OF POWER

Power is the result of having the Spirit control of your life.

What they failed to realize was Jesus fulfilled the law so we do not worship the word or scripture of God, we worship Jesus who is the living Word of God.

*Ask yourself, "Who is in control of my life?"*

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