

"A Complaint in the Church?"

Acts 6:1-7, ESV

Introduction: The early church was growing! Praise God. Yet, the rapid growth of the church also brought with it challenges and complaints. This text introduces us to the first identified complaint in the history of the church!! What was the complaint? How was the problem handled? What did the leadership do? What are the priorities of a minister? How is the work of the church to be divided for maximum effectiveness?

Following the Flow of the Text:

THE **PROBLEM** (v. 1).

- ❖ A **complaint** was communicated by the Hellenists [Grecian Jews] against the Hebrews [Hebraic Jews]- their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution (Food? Financial matters?)
- ❖ **Application:** Problems can be **opportunities** to examine our ministry and identify needed changes.

THE **PRIORITIES** OF LEADERSHIP (v. 2, 4).

- ❖ The leadership understood their **priorities: proclamation**/teaching of God's Word, **prayer**.
- ❖ Every ministry is important. Yet, the Apostles recognized they could/should not do **EVERY** ministry.
- ❖ D.L. Moody once said, "It is better to put ten men to work than to do the work of ten men."
- ❖ 1 Timothy 3:1-7. What is the one **skill** necessary for the Pastor? "*He must be able to **teach***" (v. 2).

THE **PROPOSAL** TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM (v. 2-3).

- ❖ The Apostles summoned the disciples and made a proposal to address the problem/complaint.
- ❖ Pick out from among you seven men: **good repute, full of the Spirit**, [*controlled by the Spirit*] and of **wisdom**, and WE will appoint them to this key duty.
- ❖ **Application:** are these seven men the first **deacons**? Bible scholars are divided on that answer.

THE **PLEASURE** OF THE CONGREGATION (v. 5-6).

- ❖ This proposal **pleased** the church, and they chose seven men.
- ❖ The Apostles prayed and laid their hands on them, thus **commissioning** them to THIS specific work.

THE **PROGRESS** REPORT (v. 7).

- ❖ In verse 7, Luke gives the reader a "progress report," a summary of sorts.
- ❖ The Word of God **increased**. The number of disciples **multiplied**. Great many priests became **obedient**.