



Groups

Thanks for checking out our sermon-based Study Guides! If you've never used our Study Guides before, you'll find some basic instructions beginning at the bottom of page 2.

NEW this year: These study guides will be written by thoughtful and experienced Life Group Leaders. As always, use these guides as a head-start in your own preparation as the needs and culture is different from each group. And of course, please continue to give us feedback.

LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE
for the Sermon given on June 11, 2023
by Blaire Jenkins
ONE THING LED TO ANOTHER - Acts 6:1-7



Question: Who will be here decades from now, impacting the next generation after them? What can you do for the next generation of Christ followers, because someone did it for you and your generation?

Bottom Line: Because of how you love Jesus, how you loved like Jesus, and how your life points to Jesus, and because He did it first, one thing led to another.

Welcome to Celebration Sunday, where after the second service we will celebrate God's work in our church community over the past year and look forward to the ministry year to come. Today we are going to take a well-deserved respite from the book of Revelation. As the Director of Student Ministry at our Foxboro campus, I am going to talk about the importance of stepping up and serving our church community together.

Our goal as a church is to discover life with God for the good of the world. Our goal in student ministry is similar. We are about leading students to discover and own their faith. We aim to create safe and welcoming environments and opportunities for all students to discover and own something about who they are, who God is, and who they are to God and who God is to them. We do that because someone (many people) did it for us. What are you doing because someone did it for you? What are you doing, or what can you do for the next generation or for someone else, because someone did it for you and your generation ... or maybe you wished they did?

Let's begin in prayer before we begin reading and discussing our text.

Main Scripture Reading: Act 6:1-7 [NLT]

6 But as the believers rapidly multiplied, there were rumblings of discontent. The Greek-speaking believers complained about the Hebrew-speaking believers, saying that their widows were being discriminated against in the daily distribution of food.

² So the Twelve called a meeting of all the believers. They said, "We apostles should spend our time teaching the word of God, not running a food program. ³ And so, brothers, select seven men who are well respected and are full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will give them this responsibility. ⁴ Then we apostles can spend our time in prayer and teaching the word."

⁵ Everyone liked this idea, and they chose the following: Stephen (a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit), Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas of Antioch (an earlier convert to the Jewish faith). ⁶ These seven were presented to the apostles, who prayed for them as they laid their hands on them.

⁷ So God's message continued to spread. The number of believers greatly increased in Jerusalem, and many of the Jewish priests were converted, too.

Group Discussion Questions:

1. Blaire opened the message by explaining that how she became a youth pastor because of all the impact her youth pastors had in her life. The example she used was the reason she dressed up funny for a youth ministry event was because her youth pastors did the same...for her.
 - Can you name one person who became a role model for you? Take turns sharing what it was about that person (or your relationship with that person) that inspired you? What did that person do that is inspiring what you are doing today?

2. After the Festival of Pentecost, the message of Jesus Christ continues to spread. The religious leaders arrest the apostles. But the apostles experience a miracle where the angel of the Lord broke them out of jail. Blaire points out that God sends the apostles back to the scene of their arrest. In her words, “this isn’t a rescue *from* a situation. This is a rescue *mission into* a situation.”
 - Revisit and read Acts 5:12-42 (feel free to shorten the reading passage).
 - Take a moment to envision yourself being a Christian during the days of the apostles. Imagine yourself in the apostles’ shoes. What is admirable about their faith? From their examples, what would you like to adopt and model in your life?
 - Like what the apostles experienced, have you personally experienced God sending you “back into a situation?” Or do you know someone who exemplified courage to proclaim Christ, despite the threat?
3. From Acts 6:2-4, Blaire points out two important things concerning the Apostles.
 - 1) Apostles were not passing off responsibilities they don’t want to be bothered with or are too lowly for them. Apostles acknowledge they can’t do everything.
 - 2) Leaders have to call other leaders because even Jesus (who could have done it all) called people and chose to commission people.
 - As believers, we all have varying degrees of responsibilities, influence, and leadership. What about the Apostles’ example is sticking out to you right now? What is the task(s) God assigned you to? Is God calling you to call on others for other tasks? How can you intentionally invite others to take part of God’s mission?
 - If you have volunteered to serve in any of the GC ministries, tell us about your experience. Who has been impacting you, a role model for you in your ministry? What impact do you think you are having on those you are serving?
4. Blaire asserts, “we need dozens of you. You need dozens of you. Your campus needs you. You need you.”
 - How can we as a church grow in collaboration?
 - For those of you who haven’t engaged yet, consider taking a step to serve, whether it’s in the lives of young people around you or in the life of this church family. Discuss with your group which ministries might be a good fit for you.
5. Decades from now, who would you like to see in relationship with God because of you... how you loved Jesus, how you loved like Jesus, and how you pointed to Jesus by your life?

Take Home Message:

God's not done yet. We are not done yet. You are not done yet. So, who will be in relationship with God, added to his family because they met you ... and you listened to them ... and you saw them ... and you invited them over for a meal ... and you let them ask questions ... and you let them make mistakes ... and you forgave them ... and you withheld judgment ... and you loved them?

Homework Until Next Time:

Ask the members of your LG to complete the Discipleship Planning Tool and the GPS Assessment Tool before your next meeting. Here is some fresh language:

We're all on a journey; where is yours taking you?

The beauty of the way of Jesus is that it's not just good for us, it's good for the world around us. But that kind of beautiful life doesn't come from just hearing the words of Jesus; it comes from putting them into practice. Three kinds of practice, actually:

- The with-God life of our personal habits and routines;
- The with-others life of our genuine and life-changing relationships; and
- The for-the-world life that makes an impact beyond our immediate homes and families, into our communities and beyond.

Growing as disciples of Jesus will make a Kingdom difference in our world and a transformative difference in our lives as believers and as a group. And these resources are helpful in identifying the next steps for our journeys.

Let's Pray

Support for the Leader (These Teaching Points are provided to help the group leader make connections from the message to their group with both insights from the Biblical text and also opportunities in the life of our church).

Teaching Points:

- Disciples are active students of a teacher
- Apostles are those sent by the teacher into the world to teach others
- The disciples are cowards, but the apostles are not
- Seeing the resurrected Christ and sharing breakfast with him 3 days after the crucifixion is what transformed the disciples into apostles
- The apostles could not be everything to everyone. Because they had witnessed the resurrected Christ they were uniquely prepared to spread the Good News. In order for the early church to continue to grow and flourish, the apostles called upon others to lead equally important ministries
- If you enjoy any of our small group ministries, you need dozens of you. Our campus pastors, women's or men's group leaders, small group leaders are not equipped or called to be everything for everyone

- Providence means every relationship matters and that every encounter has eternal possibilities
- Revelation is not a book that tells us how we will escape the end times, but about how God is sending us into it. He wants to use us to bring people to himself through the relationships they have with us, with you, and ultimately with Jesus.

How to Use These Study Guides:

- Consider sending out the Scripture passage to your group members ahead of time.
- Begin each meeting with a short time of checking in with one another.
- You may want to begin the discussion by reading the Scripture passage together out loud, or by summarizing the passage if everyone has read it ahead of time.
- Don't feel like you need to discuss every question included in the Study Guide. Pick one or two to start with, and see how the conversation flows.
- If your group meets over Zoom:
 - You may need to do more overt facilitating over Zoom than you would in person. Feel free to call on people to invite them to share.
 - Try to be sensitive to attention spans over Zoom—keep the meetings shorter than they would be in person.
- Be sure to set aside time for sharing prayer requests and praying together.

Group Leader Support: Please reach out to your Campus Pastor or your Coach if you have any questions about leading your group or concerns about your group dynamic. If you have questions about or feedback on the Study Guides, please reach out to Pastor Tim or Grace Lee from the Group Life team.