

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

18 – Servanthood

Acts 6

Calling to Service (v.2-4)

- Daily needs remain
 - In growing churches, needs can get missed
- Every member serves
 - Ephesians 4.11-13 – offices are given for training, not for accomplishing
 - If you think the church staff can accomplish all God wants to do with our church, you are probably thinking too small about what God wants to do with our church
- Myth: I don't have a part to play (baggage / wounds / selfishness)

Equipped for Service (v.5)

- These men were called and equipped
 - The order of that depends on the situation – sometimes God equips the called and sometimes He calls the equipped
- Health follows full-function
 - 1 Corinthians 12.14-26
- Myth: I'm not of value to the body
 - Sub-Myth: If I don't have THAT gift, I'm not useful
 - Sub-Myth: If that person is succeeding, then it's bad for me (reflects bad on me)
 - The outcome of healthy body is growth and interconnectedness (v.26)

Purpose in Service (v.7)

- The gifts exist for the spread of the Word
 - Not to make a show – not to exalt the gifted one
 - Clear roadblocks
 - Create curiosity
- Myth: only the speaking gifts matter (teaching, prophecy, etc.)
 - Every gift matters like engines and tires matter – they work together for the sake of the spread of the Word (the sole priority of the church)

Variation of Service (v.8-10)

- God moved Stephen from serving to speaking
- Myth: I'll have this role forever
 - You may, but that's not necessarily so
- Myth: gifts are a measure of my maturity
 - NO! Character is the measure of maturity – the FRUIT of the Spirit not the GIFTS of the Spirit
 - Too many people depend on their giftedness instead of their character and end up flaming out and not finishing well

Questions for Discussion

1. When you look back on your spiritual history, when have you felt most useful in service or ministry? How did that grow to be? What happened as a result?
2. How would you gauge your engagement in service right now? How about your capacity to serve (are you running on empty, doing okay, pretty full)?
3. Reread Ephesians 4.11-13. When we serve in the church, what kinds of things happen according to the text? Why is it important for everyone to play a role then?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 12.4-11. How does Paul talk about spiritual gifts in the church? What purpose do they serve? Do you know your spiritual gift? What is it? Now read 1 Corinthians 12.25-26. How does Paul end this part of his teaching on spiritual gifts and employing them in service? Why do you think he ends the passage this way?
5. Why is it important to not mistake spiritual maturity for spiritual giftedness? How have you seen that go poorly?