



EKKLESIA

Swartz FBC Leader Discussion Guide



SCRIPTURE: Acts 6:1-7

SERIES: Ekklesia

TITLE: Different Roles – Same Goal

BIG IDEA: The Lord has provided leadership for His church (Ekklesia) with varying roles but with the same goal – the spiritual growth and wellbeing of His people.

SUMMARY

The church is getting its legs under it for the first time and learning to live as a united people of God from different cultures and social contexts. When people from different backgrounds come together, there is a ripe environment for miscommunication and drama. This is what happens with the church here in Acts 6. The church had taken on the responsibility of feeding widows who had no ability to feed themselves. Yet, in the distribution, there were widows from a certain social and racial background who were being overlooked. This is a real problem. The leaders understood this. Yet, they were placed in a situation where they had to choose between two very important responsibilities – feeding the needy and shepherding the people with the Word of God. Both are very important. Neither can be neglected. Both must be done. Yet, there are only so many leaders to accomplish this. They gather qualified men for the task, set them apart, and give the responsibility to them. This is a beautiful example of different roles having the same goal.

TEXT

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. ²And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. ³Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. ⁴But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” ⁵And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. ⁶These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

⁷And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

([Acts 6:1–7](#), ESV)

1. EVERYONE HAS SPIRITUAL STRENGTHS.

- What do you feel your spiritual strengths are?
 - How are these useful for Kingdom work?

- Is there someone in the room you have observed a spiritual gift in? Please share it and encourage them.

- Why is it important to focus on varying strengths and gifts when distributing spiritual responsibilities?

- Why is it important to see in the text that both the feeding and the teaching were both equally important?

Application Question: How are you using your strengths to spiritually help others?

2. SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP COMES WITH SPIRITUAL STANDARDS.

- Why is it important that there be spiritual standards for those serving and leading?
- Why are these specific standards given to these first deacons in Acts 6?
- What do standards ensure?
- How do these standards speak to us individually?

Application Question: What standards are you living by?

3. GOD'S DESIGN FOR LEADERSHIP IS HIS DESIGN FOR GROWTH.

- What is different about God's design for leadership compared to what we see elsewhere?
- What is the connection between God's design for leadership and the growth of the church?
- What did the leaders in this situation prioritize in Acts 6?
- How does this story help us to see the great value of every form of leadership in the church?
- How does this encourage each of us to participate in spiritual leadership?

Application Question: Where is your place of spiritual service and leadership?

Head / Heart / Hands

- What does this text teach me?

- What does it tell me to feel?

- What does it tell me to do?