

Week 10—Acts 6:1-7 (for Sunday, March 8)

Begin each day of your study by asking the LORD to speak to you through His Word.

Day 1

1. Read Acts 6:1-7. Make note of what most stands out to you or questions you may have from this passage.

2. Read the box below. How does that help you better understand this dispute? Where and how might we see this kind of prejudice still today?

Hellenistic Jews...Hebraic Jews—While the Jerusalem church was still entirely made up of Jews, there were two types of Jews who lived in Jerusalem. Hellenistic Jews were Jews living in Jerusalem who had come from the Diaspora [refers to the time when Israel and Jerusalem were conquered by the Assyrians and Babylonians and many of the Jews left the Holy Land and settled in foreign nations]. These Jews adopted Greek customs and the Greek language and worshiped in separate synagogues. The Hebraic Jews were native to the Holy Land and spoke Aramaic or Hebrew as their first language and were resistant to Greek culture. This is important because, as *The Expositor's Bible Commentary* notes, “Jews from the Diaspora lands were frequently categorized by native-born Jews of Jerusalem as second-class Israelites” (p. 804). There is evidence that this prejudice continued on into the early church (see 2 Corinthians 11:22) and is possibly why Paul often has to defend his true Jewish heritage.

3. How can you be more aware of “those on the outside” in your life today? How might you reach out to them?

Day 2

1. *Read Acts 6:1-7.* This section records the first internal division within the early church. What is the division? How does this add to what we have already learned about Satan's tactics against the church?

2. How do the apostles handle this potentially divisive situation? Do you find it significant that all 7 of those chosen were most likely from the Hellenistic group? Why or why not?

3. In what ways were the problem and its solution in 6:1-7 unique to their day? In what ways can we learn from their example about how to handle division today?

Wait on tables—Behind this phrase lies the Greek word from which we get the word *deacon*. The seven were probably not given a title Deacon as a distinct office, but the churches continued to assign deacons (or “servants”) to care for the material needs of people in the church. Cherry Hills has a Benevolence Team that serves this purpose for our church body today.

Day 3

1. *Read Acts 6:1-7.* Why did the apostles delegate the social work to others? What were the results of this action? What can that teach us today?

2. What does this passage teach us about the importance of caring for *both* spiritual needs *and* physical needs as a church? Are you tempted to focus on one over the other? Why? How can you focus on both?

3. From Acts 2:42-47, 4:32-37, and 6:1-7, summarize the things that mattered to the early believers as they learned to do *life together*. What do you learn from them?

Day 4

1. Read Acts 6:1-7. What does this passage show us about how God designed the church to function as a “body?” How do the passages below add to your understanding of this?

Romans 3:3-8—

1 Corinthians 12:1-31—

Ephesians 4:7-13—

1 Peter 4:8-11—

2. How has the Holy Spirit uniquely gifted you to serve the Body of Christ? Are you using those gifts? If so, how? If not, why not?

[NOTE: we regularly offer a class called *Network* at Cherry Hills where you can discover your spiritual gifts and passions, because we firmly believe we cannot be the body Jesus created us to be unless we are *all* working together the way God designed us. You can check our website or bulletin to see when the next class will be offered!]

Day 5

1. What is the significance of the apostles laying their hands on the 7 and praying? How do the following verses add to your understanding of this?

Genesis 48:13-20—

Numbers 27:22-23—

Mark 10:13-16—

1 Timothy 4:14—

2 Timothy 1:6—

2. Who could you physically or metaphorically “lay hands on” this week as an encouragement?

3. *Big picture question:* How might Acts 6:1-7 plant the seed for the further fulfilment of Acts 1:8? Explain.

Conclusion

1. What most stood out to you as you studied Acts 6:1-7 this week? *Why* do you think this was the case?

2. What is the Holy Spirit prompting you to *do* as a result of this? Be prepared to share with your group!