

Acts 6:1-7

Effective Churches Are Not “One Man or One Woman” Teams

Problem v1

Good News: The early church (like the 1st century Jewish synagogue) would routinely provide food to widows who had no family to help them.

Bad News: A specific category of widows MAY have been overlooked in this process

Hellenistic Jews = born outside of the land of Israel-1st language Greek

Native Hebrews = born in the land of Israel-1st language Hebrew

Solution v2-4

The 12 Apostles delegated the task of providing food in a timely/fair fashion to all of the qualifying widows in the Church so they (the 12) could focus on “the Word/prayer”

The first “Deacons” who would oversee this ministry to the widows were to be men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom

Implementation v5-6

Selection

- 1: Stephen a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit
- 2: Philip (called the Evangelist to distinguish him from Philip the Apostle)
- 3: Prochorus
- 4: Nicanor
- 5: Timon
- 6: Parmenas
- 7: Nicolas a (Gentile) proselyte (to Judaism) from Antioch (of Syria)

Recognition

The laying on of hands was an act of public affirmation/identification and accompanied by specific concerted prayer for empowerment/effectiveness in ministry

Progress v7

The Word of God kept on spreading; and the number of disciples continued to increase in Jerusalem and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

This is the second of seven “progress reports” Luke includes at key points of his description of the growth of the Church (2:47; 9:31; 12:24; 16:6; 19:20; 28:31)

Take This To Heart

Effective Churches are Not “One Man/One Women” Teams! and The Purpose Driven Church didn’t start with Rick Warren/late 20th century!

No one believer (not even an Apostle) can do “everything” the Church can/should do! While all Christians should be involved in specific areas of service in the Church, Church leaders must also constantly focus on the overall function of the Church and do what is necessary to ensure that the ministry of the Church “majors on the majors” (the POGs).

Jesus Ascends to Heaven

Establishment of the NT Church

Salvation of a Lame Beggar

Unleashing of Persecution vs the Church

Sin in the Church (Ananias and Sapphira)

Influence of Diligent Deacons

Stephen Stoned to Death for the Faith

Abroad with Philip (Samaria and Gaza)

Life Comes to Saul/Paul

Impartation of Salvation to Cornelius and His Household

Verification of Gentile Salvation by Grace through Faith

Execution of James/Escape of Peter

