



Part 9

Serving Jesus, Serving His Church

Acts 6:1 –7

¹ In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. ² So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, “It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. ³ Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them ⁴ and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.”

⁵ This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. ⁶ They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

⁷ So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

WHAT SHOULD WE EXPECT IN THE CHURCH?

Revelation 7:9 – After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. (NIV)

One of the lessons we learn here is that we have to be realistic about our expectations.

I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not overcome it. (Matthew 16:18 NIV)

THREE PRIORITIES

The first priority was the ministry of the Word and prayer (v.4).

The second priority was to address this issue by appointing 7 Grecian Christians

The third priority was to ensure that the widows were properly cared for

Ministry is for everyone in the church..

Ephesians 4:11 – 13 – ¹¹ So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (NIV)

God’s design for the Church is for every Believer to use their gifts for the common good and the glory of God. When that happens we grow as individuals, the Church is built up and encouraged, God is glorified, and we become the light of the world we are supposed to be.

Ephesians 4:14 – 16 – ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (NIV)

John 13:34 & 35 – ³⁴ So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. ³⁵ Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.” (NLT)

TWO TAKE-AWAYS

1. We will only serve the way we should serve if we have a deep appreciation for having been served by God.

Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. (John 13:34) (NLT)

¹³ You call me “Teacher” and “Lord,” and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. (John 13:13–15) (NIV)

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Mark 10:45) (NIV)

2. Acts 6:7 – “So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly” . . . as each part did its work.

Are you doing your part?