

## Sermon Discussion Questions for Sunday, November 29, 2015

"The Seven Servants"

Acts 6:1-7

I hope you had a great time gathering with family and friends at Thanksgiving. Telling the stories of God's faithfulness. Testifying to the grace of God in the goodness of Christ. Today we get to hear such a story from the first church. If it happened today, it would be their thanksgiving testimony. :-)

We come today to one of those great passages of scripture in the book of Acts. It started with a problem, moved to a solution, and resulted in many people coming to faith in Christ. The problem, widows being overlooked in the daily distribution food, led to the church organizing to meet a need. Both needs and responsibility must not be overlooked in the church. Discuss any positive and negative examples you recall.

The result was that unity was preserved (6:1-2), responsibility was prioritized (6:3-5), and ministry was promoted (6:7). Talk about the beauty of such a process and result.

The main idea: When a church preserves unity and prioritizes responsibility it promotes ministry. Basically, God uses a church that trusts Him and acts wisely. People are flexible, focused, and free to serve God's purposes. How have you seen this happen (or not happen) in churches?

**Acts 6:1-2** Preserve Unity...it is a safeguard for the church. As Jesus said in John 13:35 All man will know that you are my disciples if you have love one for another.

**Acts 6:3-6** Prioritize Responsibility... The apostles' main priority was prayer and the ministry of the Word. They delegated to others the job of taking care of distributing the food. And keeping the peace.

**Acts 6:7** Promote Ministry... The outcome of this good decision on the part of the church leaders in the church was that many more people came to faith in Christ. That's the result of the church organizing appropriately. It frees people up to serve and it opens the door for God to work. \*What if? We more than ever trusted God more than ourselves and we preserved unity, prioritized responsibility ...what kind of ministry would God do through us?

### Read and discuss the following:

1. God ordains, orchestrates, and orders He does for His own glory and redemptive purposes in Christ; so that even the seven servants chosen in Acts 6:1-7 served God's Gospel purposes. In response to a problem that arose in the first church their choosing preserved unity and prioritized responsibility in order to promote ministry. And the Word of God continued to multiply and many became obedient to the faith. Jesus saves in amazing ways.
2. Jesus makes no distinctions. God shows no partiality. Jesus cares for everyone's needs. He cares for widows and orphans. He cares for the homeless. He cares for the gluttonous. He cares for the greedy. He cares for the selfish. He cares for the lonely. He cares for the discouraged. He cares for the doubting. He cares for the downtrodden. He cares for the dejected. He cares for downcast. He cares for the lost. He cares for the found. He cares for souls. He cares about you. And the church grew.

3. And once again, in spite of us, God's mercy remains. Amidst a multitude of sins, Christ's blood is absolutely effective for multitudes who are turned by God's mercy and grace to look upon the only Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. As 1 John 4:10 says, "In this is love, not that we loved God but that He loved us, and send His Son to be the propitiation for our sins."

**Pray together utilizing the P-R-A-Y acrostic.**

Praise God. Acknowledge His character.

Remember the Gospel. Recount Gospel truth.

Admit your need. Declare your dependence.

Yield to God. Commit everything to His sovereign good pleasure.