



Bethany Bible Study & Discussion:

Wednesdays
7.30-8.30PM

ACTS 6

Biblical Approach to Problem Solving & Third Persecution

Some questions to guide your thoughts as you meditate on Acts 6

- 1. Solving Problems** (1-7): a. What lead to murmurings? b. What was disciples response? c. What does disciples priority teach us? d. What was the criteria for choosing 7? What does it say about those serving in church? e. what was the outcome? f. what can we learn from disciples approach to murmurings?
- 2. Revisit** ... death of Ananias and Sapphira (chapter 5)

Postponed for next week

- 3. Third Persecution** (8-15): ... concludes in Acts 7

Chapter 6
June 17, 2020

Murmurings/complaints

a. Reason for Murmurings (1)

- Church growing and some tasks not executed well
- Grecians feel neglected relative to Hebrew widows

b. What was disciples response? Pick one

- a) Ignore/Silence
- b) Attack the complainers
- c) Procrastinate
- d) Take Action

1. In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews^[a] among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food

Learn more about ministry to widows
I Timothy 5:3-16

Disciples priority

4. and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.

c. Disciples priority

- Disciples will remain devoted to prayer and ministry of the Word (v.4)

What do we learn?

- We should know our calling within the local body
- Crisis and Challenges should not distract us from our vision/calling
- God's pattern: All members have a role and everyone must contribute to strengthening the local church, based on their God given gifts and talents

Selection of Seven Men

d. Criteria for choosing seven men (v.3)

- Honest Report (good testimony)
 - Full of Holy Ghost (born-again, spiritual)
 - Wisdom (ability to practically apply knowledge, *maybe* mature/experienced)
-
- 7 chosen of Grecian background (Stephen and Philip, the prominent ones) (v.5)
 - Apostles confirmed the choice through prayer and laying on of hands (v.6)

3. ... look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, ...

6. They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

Selection of Seven

- Not everyone can serve or take leadership role in church. They must meet the criteria set by the elders (as per God's will).
- Only 7 chosen from the multitude. Those not chosen should not be jealous or feel discouraged.
- Once chosen, they must be prayed for by elders before starting work.
- There was unity in thinking (v.5); Unity avoids confusion and conflicts; However, unity does not always mean correct decision. Decisions should not be made to please the majority (if not in God's will)



**Decision
making
Tips**

Disciples collaborative approach to Problem Solving

- Recognize the Problem
- Set Clear expectations (3 criteria, 7 people)

- Seek Input from everyone
- Take Decision

- Delegate & Empower
- Pray & Send

**Result:
Blessing**

Outcome of Godly decision making (7)

1. Word of God spread
2. Disciples multiplied
3. Jewish Priests obedient to Faith

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.

**Result:
Blessing**

Yes, there can be Positive outcomes from Murmurings!

1. Drew attention to the problem (so murmurings and complaints should not be ignored or shut down)
2. Revealed God's pattern in managing church (that is, delegation to effectively use the gifts within local church)
3. Disciples could focus more on prayer and word (by reducing some of their burden of routine matters)
4. Growth in church

**Result:
Blessing**

Revisit ... From Acts 5

5. When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died
10. At that moment she fell down at his feet and died

- Did Ananias and Sapphira lose eternity in heaven?
- Assumption: Ananias and Sapphira were part of the group in Acts 4:31 that was filled with the Holy Spirit
- Fact: Gift of Holy Spirit is given only to born again believers (Acts 1:38)

Scenario (Esther, fictional)

Born again, Baptized, and blessed with Holy Spirit, January 1, 1975

Faithful to the Lord and local church until June 15, 2020

Told a lie to the pastor on June 16, 2020

Died suddenly on June 17 of heart attack before having an opportunity to confess

Esther: In Heaven or Hell?

Revelation 21:8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and **all liars**—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.”

Eternal life:
Can it be lost?

What is Eternal Life?

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.
(John 17:3)

The Promise ...

What is the length of “everlasting life”?

EVERLASTING ... FOREVER ... ETERNAL

**John 3:16, John 5:24, John 10:28,
Ephesians 1:13**

What is the
basis for
Eternal Life?

By grace,
and not
works

Ephesians
2:8-9

Who is
qualified?

Everyone

Acts 2:21

How to
receive it?

Confession

Romans
10:9

What are some consequences of sin in the life of believers?

- Not Loss of Everlasting Life

Chastisement, unanswered prayers, loss of joy, loss of spiritual/other blessings, loss in ministry, loss of rewards

- Opportunity for Full Restoration through Confession: **I John 1:9**
- Exception: Blasphemy against the holy spirit: Mark 3:29

Question

- Does the “assurance” of eternal life give us a license to sin? Why not continue a lifestyle of sin, if eternity In heaven is guaranteed? ... is that the best of both worlds?
 - Truly born again believer will not like to continue a lifestyle of sin as salvation elevates you to a higher/better experience ... a saved person has entered a better world ... going back to sinful world is going down (and not up) in life.

Why can't a true believer continue in sin?

- **Romans 6:1** What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? **2** God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?
- **II Corinthians 5:17** Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.
- **Ezekiel 36:26, 27 ...**

If no change in our lives, **we must question** our salvation experience ...
salvation does not make us perfect but puts us on the path to perfection
through continuous sanctification/purification

Acts: Quick Review

1

- Author of Acts, Kingdom of God, Lord's Ascension
- Waiting for Holy Spirit, The Mission, Replacement for Judas

2

- Arrival of Holy Spirit, Difference in spirit between OT and NT
- Speaking in Tongues (Source, Purpose, Appropriate use) Peter's Sermon (Message, Last days) when is Holy Spirit given, Birth of Church and Characteristics

3

- First Healing (how? Parallel to sinner's experience)
- Peter's Sermon model (Question, Introduces Jesus, Confronts Mistakes, offers path to Repentance & Restoration, refers to Prophecies, Result)

Acts: Quick Review

4

- First Persecution-reason and verdict, Sanhedrin, Peter & John's response, Church Response, God's response, Caring Church, 2nd pouring of the Holy Spirit

5

- Church Discipline: Purpose, Example, Outcome
- Second Persecution: Reason, Peter's message to council, Response to beatings, Impact on Ministry

6

- Addressing Problems in church using godly decision making process
- Delegating to effectively exercise priority in use of gifts and talents

