



The Acts of the Spirit

GATHERING THE CHURCH

ACTS 6:1-7

"THE TABLES"

SEPTEMBER 3, 2023

AT A GLANCE

Our responses to interruption to meet the needs of others says a lot about our heart. How do you respond when faced with new challenges? Do you see it as an opportunity for growth?

CONTEXT

The Book of Acts is the theological history of the church. In the previous weeks, we explored how God's people (the church) have become where heaven and earth meet. The church is growing rapidly, and with it, opposition from the outside and obstacles from within. The apostles are resolved to continue preaching about new life in Jesus, healing people in His name, AND leading this new community to be a radical expression of that new life where they meet people's needs with integrity.

SERMON SUMMARY

Pastor Jeff preached this week about the growing pains of the early church. However disruptive growing pains can be, they are necessary for the church to become who we are meant to be. Pastor Jeff expressed that the catalyst for this growth comes from being confronted by other people's needs. In fact, he said, "God grows us (and the church) as we respond to others' needs."

Understanding that disruption is an opportunity for growth is the necessary perspective we must all take if we hope to experience joy and growth in the community.

Also, the event outlined in the scripture this week shows us that the two functions of the church (Word & prayer/meeting people's needs) require top-notch leaders. The primary requirement is their Godly Character, followed closely by their gifting. It is the church's job to find those leaders, but it is our job to become those leaders.

Pastor Jeff challenges us to accept the invitation to grow by meeting each other's needs. We must start by living a gritty, spirit-led life while using our gifts to build this community into a radical expression of new life in Jesus.



ACTS 6:1-7

The Acts of the Spirit
GATHERING THE CHURCH

Read Acts 6:1-7



This document can be used for either personal or group reflection.

Group facilitator: you do not need to ask every question but can select the best ones for your group dynamic.

DISCUSSION

Expand Our Awareness

Pastor Jeff said, "God grows us and the church when we respond to the needs of others." The invitation to respond to others' needs initiates us into a growth process.

- Do you believe this is true? Why or why not?
- How have you experienced this at Faith church?

Pastor Jeff said people's need to create complexity and adversity to our agenda/comfort. This often is perceived as discomfort. But we should not be surprised by that; it is normal; growth requires growing pains. And the more significant the growth, stereotypically, the greater the stretch it creates in our lives.

The success of growth in our lives depends on the choices we make in the face of the opportunities. And we always have two options; we will either respond with a:

Fixed Mindset: It is the view that adversity is a threat/risk that must be neutralized to achieve your goal. OR

Growth Mindset: It is the view that adversity is a challenge/opportunity to grow toward achieving your goal.

- What do you think causes someone to interpret adversity as a threat or an opportunity?
- How do you think these mindset impact someone's (or a communities) ability to reach their goals?

Explore Your Experience

To experience the growth we desire, we must understand how we respond when growth causes adversity/discomfort.

- When you have faced the disruptive need to grow, what feels threatened or at risk of losing?
- How does that feeling of threat impact you? How does it affect the church?



ACTS 6:1-7

The Acts of the Spirit
GATHERING THE CHURCH

Becoming who we were meant to be through growth always brings more lasting satisfaction than maintaining a state of comfort.

- What would change if you viewed the disruption as an opportunity to become who we were meant to be through growth?
- How would the church grow if we embraced disruption/adversity with a growth mindset?

Extract the Truth: Re-read Acts 6:1-7

Pastor Jeff mentioned that the church has two responsibilities that need attention and high-quality leadership. If one of those is lacking, the church is out of balance.

The two ministries are:

1. The Ministry of Word and Prayer
2. The ministry of meeting people's needs

- How would the church suffer if those things got out of balance? (i.e., Word/prayer without needs OR Needs without Word/prayer)

The scripture points out how important meeting people's needs is to the church by requiring a high leadership standard.

- What jumps out to you about the Apostle's instructions for finding leaders? Why do these qualities matter for the task at hand?

Pastor Jeff summarized that it is the church's job to find the leaders who excel in these three qualities:

- Gifting for the task
- Godly Character
- Gritty Perseverance

- Why are these three qualities essential for the mission of the church?

Experience Transformation

If it is the church's job to find those leaders, it is OUR job to become those leaders in the power of the Holy Spirit.

- How would our church change if we focused more on becoming leaders worthy of the task?



ACTS 6:1-7

The Acts of the Spirit
GATHERING THE CHURCH

In order to BECOME these leaders, we need to cultivate a strong sense of the following:

- Love for Christ and His church
 - Clear Understanding of our gifting.
 - Commitment to growing Godly Character
 - Grit against opposition/distraction.
- Which one of these do you feel prompted to explore/develop more for yourself and why?
 - What things can you do to cultivate that area further?

Engage the World

Once we've begun cultivating these four pillars, all that is missing are opportunities to meet a need.

- What needs do you see around you that you could meet with Joy?
- How can a growth mindset help you press into meeting that need?
- What is one small step you want to take to move towards that need this week?

Pray End by praying for the following:

- Growth Mindset
- Grit against opposition
- Grace for the process of growth
- God-given love for the needs of others.
- Personal Needs



It may be appropriate to ask your group if anyone has any needs they feel comfortable sharing and how the group can help them. These can be emotional, spiritual, or physical needs.

**PREPARE FOR
NEXT WEEK:**



Read Acts 6:8-15