

THE CHURCH'S FIRST INTERNAL CRISIS

Acts 6:1-7

Introduction:

- A. We have seen the Church's leadership endure persecution and pressure
- 1) They were put "in hold" 4:3
 - 2) They were "threatened" 4:17
 - 3) They were put in the, "common prison" 5:18
 - 4) They were "beaten" = dero = "to skin, flay, of animals; then slang, "to cudgel", "to thrash".

- B. This is the first recorded post-resurrection problem recorded in the Bible. (God solved the problem of Ananias and Sapphira)

- 1) This incident really occurred.
- 2) It is written for our learning.

I. The Crisis Was Created by Multiplying vs. 1a

- A. "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied."

- 1) In contemporaneous time.
- 2) "multiplied" = plethuno = "to make full", "to increase", "the number kept growing, at this time"

- B. The growth of almost anything will create the potential for problems.

- 1) Solomon said so...Ecces. 6:11 "when goods increase, they are increased that eat them."
- 2) Children, families, countries, schools, etc.

II. The Crisis was Caused by Murmuring Vs. 16

- A. "there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations."

- 1) "arose" = ginomai = "implying origin", "to come into being", "to become, or result", "to take place"
- 2) "murmuring" = gogguzo = "to utter in a low voice privately", "probably from the sound of air in a shell", "to manifest complaints"
- 3) This may have been true, but it was an improper way to react because it offers no solution, only the worsening of a bad thing. (Based on some truth, erroneous interpretation and motive.)

- B. God's people should never murmur.

- 1) It is unscriptural! Matt. 18:15-20
- 2) It invariably grows and involves others.
- 3) It is too dangerous! I Cor. 10:1-12

III. The Crisis was Shared with the Multitude

- A. "Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them."

- 1) It was church business
- 2) The entire church was informed

B. The greater harm of the problem

- 1) "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables."
- 2) "reasonable" = harestos = "pleasing", pleasing to God, therefore it is not proper, fitting, in His sight.
- 3) Read 5:29 - This truth applies no matter who makes the request!
- 4) Pastors ought to obey God rather than men out of the Church or men in the church.

IV. The Solution was Suggested by the Apostles Vs. 3

A. The Church was to choose men.

- 1) "look you out among you"
- 2) "Pick out from among yourselves"

B. They were to choose qualified men

- 1) Vs. 3
- 2) We have no right to overlook and to excuse what God commands! I Tim.3:7

C. What did the Pastor's plan to do?

- 1) Vs. 4
- 2) People who attend church regularly rarely need visiting or counseling.

V. The Proposal Pleas'd the Church and They Acted on it Vs. 5-6

A. "And the saying pleased the whole multitude"

- 1) The church came into unity
- 2) They then, could act on truth

B. "Whom they set before the Apostles"

- 1) They co-operated in the effort
- 2) Satisfaction and unity = co-operation

VI. The Crisis was Solved. Three Great Benefits Accrued to God's Work Vs. 7

A. "And the word of God increased" 7a

- 1) "increased" = auzano = "to receive increase", "to grow", "to grow up" "to grow"
- 2) This is the only positive approach to doing God's work. Everything else always has built-in flaws that become instruments of total destruction. This is history's best lesson.

B. "and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; 7a

- 1) "number" = harithmos = "a definite number"
- 2) "multiplied" = plethono = "to make full; hence to multiply", "increase", passive = "to be multiplied" They did not multiply themselves!
- 3) "disciples" = mathetes = "a learner", "a pupil", one who follows both the teacher and the teaching.
- 4) The increase or growth was "greatly", but this was not in Sunday School attendance. It was a growth in "learners and followers"

C. "and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith"

- 1) The word of God affected false religion
- 2) "company" = ochlos = "crowd", "very many"
- 3) "obedient" = upakouo - "to hear" (with the idea of stealth, stillness, or attention in order to answer) "to listen and as a result to obey."
- 4) This was, "to the faith", the whole thing.

VII. When Problems are Resolved According To God's Word, Things Always Work Out Well