

*ACTS

The Continuing Work of Jesus

⁸ but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

(Acts 1:8)

Now at this time while the disciples were increasing *in number*, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic *Jews* against the *native* Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving *of food*. ² So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. ³ Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. ⁴ But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”

⁵ The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. ⁶ And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them.

⁷ And the word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.

(Acts 6:1-7)

*Serving the Word

Acts 6:1-7

Serving the Word

1. The Threat

- a breakdown in the equitable distribution of food to the widows in the church
- the potential for significant disunity along cultural lines ('Hellenistai'/'Hebraioi')

Serving the Word

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- *the greater threat was responding to this real need in a way that neglected the ministry of the word of God*

Serving the Word

2. The Solution

- they selected and appointed qualified men to oversee this ministry to widows
- the apostles devoted themselves to prayer and the service of the word

Serving the Word

3. The Result

- the continued unity of the entire congregation
- the continued increase of the word of God and the number of disciples

Serving the Word

➤ Principles

1. The ministry of the word of God is vital and irreplaceable in the church

- the primary and essential task of elders/shepherds is the ministry of the word and prayer
- as much as possible elders/shepherd should be freed up to devote themselves to this ministry

Serving the Word

➤ Principles

2. The ministry of the congregation is essential for safeguarding the ministry of the word