

WE NEED YOU

ACTS 6:1-7

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE – SEPTEMBER 13, 2026

SCRIPTURE READING

1 Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. 2 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. 3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." 5 And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6 These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. 7 And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

Acts 6:1-7 (ESV)

ICE BREAKER

Think back to the last big family gathering or group meal you were part of. What job did you end up with (cooking, setup, kid duty, dishes) and did you volunteer for it or did somebody volunteer you?

SERMON RECAP

- We should expect growth. Luke keeps reporting that the number of disciples multiplied (Acts 2:41, 47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:1, 7). He highlights this not to brag but as theological evidence that the risen Jesus is doing exactly what he promised: building his church against every form of opposition.
- There is a difference between being concerned about unhealthy growth and being cynical about all growth. Jesus came to seek and save the lost, so he wants the number of people saved by his grace to increase. Every number has a name, and every name has a story, as Nathalie's testimony illustrates.
- We should expect problems, because ministry is messy. The neglect of the Hellenist widows was partly an organizational strain ("their nets were breaking") but mainly a cultural one—the division in the surrounding culture was reproducing itself inside the church. Healthy churches aren't problem-free; they address problems in God-honoring ways.

- We should expect responsibility. The seven were chosen for character (“full of the Spirit”) and competency (“wisdom”), and all seven have Greek or Latin names. It was their background as outsiders that made them an asset the church needed. Competency without character leads to scandal; character without competency leads to a hot mess.
- The apostles weren’t claiming they were too good to serve tables; they were admitting they were not good enough to do everything. The church asked Stephen and Philip to wait on tables, and God used them to change the world — one became the first martyr, the other a gifted evangelist. You haven’t yet met the version of you God is calling you to be.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Observation: What does the passage say?

- What is the complaint in verse 1, who brings it, and what circumstance in the church seems to have produced it?
- In verses 2–4, what do the apostles say they will keep doing, and what do they hand off? What qualifications do they set for the seven men?
- What actually happens after the seven are chosen and prayed over (verses 5–7)? How does Luke describe the outcome?

Interpretation: What does the passage mean?

- Luke repeatedly notes that the number of disciples was multiplying, even while the church faced outside opposition, inside hypocrisy, and now internal conflict. What is he trying to show his readers about Jesus?
- All seven of the men chosen have Greek or Latin names, which likely means they came from the very group that had been overlooked. What does that suggest about how the apostles understood the problem and about how God uses a person's background in ministry?
- Verse 2 can sound like the apostles think they are above serving tables. Read it alongside 1 Corinthians 12:4–7. What are they actually confessing about themselves, and what does that reveal about how Christ designed His body to work?

Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?

- Pastor Mike admitted that a lot of unhealthy church growth is driven by the insecurity and ambition of unhealthy leaders, and that the temptation lives in him too. Where do you notice that same in yourself? What would it look like to want people saved simply because Jesus does?
- Acts 6 shows the divisions of the culture seeping into the church. Which difference—background, politics, style, preference, stage of life—do you find hardest to love across in this church family? What is one thing you can do to move toward that person or group this month?

- “Your background is not an accident. Your expertise is not an accident.” Name one way God has uniquely wired, prepared, or gifted you. What is one step you can take to put that to work in ministry here, and when will you take it?