

STUDY GUIDE

Reading for week 4: Acts 6



WHATS THE STORY?

The church addresses its first major internal conflict. By delegating responsibilities, the church is able to maintain its cohesiveness and community. The church also continues to find itself threatened by the outside world, who see this fledgling movement as a disruptor of the status quo.

LECTIO DEVINA

Prepare: Find a calm and quiet place to read and absorb the passage.

Read: Read through the passage. Listen for any words or phrases that jump out and listen for what God has to say.

Reflect: Try to understand what God could be saying to you through this passage.

Respond: Journal or pray to God, communicating about what you think God was telling you through Scripture.

Rest: Spend time contemplating, allowing God to work.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How might each member of our church contribute to our communal existence?
- What does it mean to be a person “of the Holy Spirit”?



FAMILY STUDY

Discuss: Why is the Church so important?

What does it mean that the word of God spread?

What did this early Church look like?

A Deeper Look

Acts 6 begins with conflict in the Church. The Hellenistic Jews (Jewish people who were more involved in Roman culture) were frustrated that the Hebraic Jews (Jewish people who felt it important to abstain from most things in Roman culture) were seemingly getting special attention. The Hellenistic Jews claimed that the widows of each group were treated differently, and that their widows were treated a lesser. The Apostles saw that the concern had merit, but seemed to be frustrated themselves that their priority to preach about the word of God was being hampered by other leadership responsibilities. The frustration that arose out of this conflict was resolved by doing what Moses did in Exodus 18 with some healthy delegation. It is of note that it was the people rather than the Apostles who chose the 7 new leaders. The Apostles were presented with these men and laid hands on them and prayed for them. Luke adds his important repetition here that the Word of God continued to spread, and even priests began to have faith in Christ as their Lord.

The chapter ends with Stephen (one of the seven leaders who was known for being full of faith, full of God's grace and power, and of the Spirit) being seized for performing great wonders and signs. There were some who tried to argue with Stephen but, like Christ, the Spirit gave him wisdom in the moment. In response, the opposition went off to stir up anger inside the Jewish leadership similar to the Jewish leaders in Matthew 27:20-22. It was then that they looked at Stephen and saw his face light up like an angel, a call-back to Moses' own encounter with God on Mt. Sinai. (Exodus 34:29-35)