

B. "the word of God spread"

- i. David Pao suggests that **the word of God** should be considered **the central character** of Acts.
- ii. In 6:7 we see that the Word has conquered Jerusalem, which prepares the way for it now to go out from Jerusalem beginning in 8:4. This fulfills Isaiah 2:3.
 - a) Revelation 19:11-15 The Word of God conquers the nations for the worship of God.
 - b) LXE Isaiah 45:23 *...my words shall not be frustrated; that to me every knee shall bend, and every tongue shall swear...*

LIVE THE STORY

We must not only love the Gospel Story, we must begin to live the Gospel Story, indeed, to have the Central Character live in us.

- Explain how this scene might question whether the increase of Christ's governance and the peace has found its limit.
- If the book of Acts begins the fulfillment of the promise of Christ's world-wide increasing governance, what can we learn from this text about how it will increase?
- Explain what you think Jerry means when he says, "Salvation is not divided, but our labor is?"
- What does it mean to say, "*Righteousness is not by works, but it does mean work.*"
- Why were widows some of the most susceptible of the poor amongst them in the time of Acts? Who do you think are the most susceptible in our day? Think more specifically than, "the homeless."
- What are some ways we can practice this kind of practical care and justice in or through our community groups?
- Why must proclamation of the Word of God remain central in the church's ministry, but not exclusive?

The Increase of Christ's Government and Peace

Jerry Cisar — July 27, 2014

Text: Acts 6:1-7

Introduction: Have We Reached the Limits?

- B. The church continues to increase.
 - i. Acts 6:1, 7
 - ii. Isaiah 6:6-7

C. Reminder about series

I. The Widow's Complaint (6:1)

A. The Crisis - Zoomed In

- i. God's regathering is part of His redemptive plan. However, His redemptive plan for them led to conflict.
- ii. What occasioned the suspicions?
 - a) Acts 2:44-45
 - b) Acts 4:32-35

All that wonderful togetherness, that magnificent community, that glorious selfless selling of houses and lands is what stands behind this scene.

B. The Crisis – Zoomed Out

- i. Not just about these widows, but about care for the weak and poor. (Luke 20:46-47)

- ii. The failure of leaders to bind up the broken and needy.
 - a) Zechariah 7:9-10
 - b) Isaiah 1:17

II. Salvation Means Work (6:2-6)

A. The Apostles Response

- i. Conflict is a time to come together, not flee!
- ii. It would certainly not please God for them to stop preaching in order to serve tables, nor if the poor in their midst were neglected!

B. V3 The Apostles Present the Solution to the Congregation

- i. *Brothers, choose seven men...*
 - a) Wisdom is imparted by the Spirit (Isaiah 11:2; Ephesians 1:17).
 - b) Wisdom was necessary for making just judgments.
- ii. Although salvation isn't divided, labor is.
 - a) Righteousness is not by works, but it does mean work.
 - b) Both roles—the apostles' and that of the Seven—required them to be full of the Spirit.

C. V6-7 Implementation

- i. This text is not *prescriptive* for how we must choose leaders but *descriptive*, it is however *instructive*.

- ii. The whole community who saw the wisdom in this.
- iii. Laying on hands serves two purposes:
 - a) Demonstrates the delegation of authority (4:35).
 - b) For additional Spirit filling for wisdom (Deut. 34:9)

III. The Seven, Deacons, and Gulf Coast Community Church

A. The Seven were appointed when needed.

B. The primary duty of the Seven was “*social*.” (Gal. 6:10)

C. Community Group Leaders and Deacons

- a) 1 Timothy 3:11
- b) Romans 16:1

D. Our form and roles are different, but as the Word bears fruit in our midst, the effect will be both proclamation of the Word and doing the Word which results in justice and wise judgment being exercised in the care of God's people.

E. The division of labor in the ministry of the church...

- i. ...keeps Gospel proclamation and Christ central.
- ii. ...produces the administration of justice and the cause of the needy being upheld.
- iii. ...aims for a whole salvation among all the people.

IV. Jerusalem Conquered (6:7)

A. The word of God (ὁ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ) (Acts 6:2, 4, 7)