



Some Internal Complaints & An External Crisis Acts 6-7

Introduction

The early church continued to have to contend with issues from “all sides.” A new threat arose from an unlikely place...from within (6:1). The consistent Jewish opposition increases to a fever pitch, resulting in their murderous actions of a disciple (7:58, 60). Such actions would most likely crush any “fledgling” movement. The kingdom of the Lord was not just any “movement”...it had been planned in eternity and was under Divine protection. She would rise above these obstacles and flourish all the more.

The Selection Of The Seven (6:1-6)

- 1) How is the church’s growth chronicled? (v. 1a; cp. 2:41; 4:4; 5:14)

- 2) What problem arose to “threaten” the church? (v. 1b; cp. 2:44-45; 4:32) *Thought question:* how was this “threat” different from what the church faced in chs. 4-5?

- 3) How did the apostles solve this problem? (vv. 2-4) What couldn’t happen & what had to happen? Are there any applications we can make of this passage in local church work?

- 4) How were these “special servants” described? (v. 3) How did the brethren receive the apostles’ instructions? (v. 5a) Who did they choose? (v. 5b)

- 5) What else happened? (v. 6)

The Two Treatises

Lesson 31

The Church Continues To Grow (6:7)

- 6) How is the church's growth described? What significant development was occurring? (v. 7b)

Stephen's Preaching & Martyrdom (6:8 – 7:60)

- 7) What actions of Stephen are recorded in 6:8? Who responds to Stephen's preaching and miracles? (6:9a) Research question: find out what you can about the "Freedmen."
- 8) What was their response to Stephen? (6:9b-10) What did they do as a result of their "failures?" (6:11-14) Where was Stephen taken? (6:12) Does this sound familiar?
- 9) How is Stephen described in 6:15? What do you suppose this means?
- 10) Who formally questioned Stephen in 7:1?
- 11) Since Stephen's response is a sermon (7:2-53), be able to summarize it in the space provided below, outlining it with its major points.

The Two Treatises

Lesson 31

- 12) Based on Stephen's rebuke (7:51-53), how did the council receive it? (7:54) *Thought question:* compare this verse to 2:37. What is similar and what is the obvious difference?

- 13) What is recorded in about Stephen in 7:55-56? Do you think this is significant about Jesus' description? (cp. Heb. 10:10-13)

- 14) Upon hearing Stephen's words in 7:56, how did the Jews respond? (7:57-58a) Was this "legal?" (cp. Jn. 18:31) Who else is mentioned for the first time in Luke's "Second Treatise?" (7:58b)

- 15) *Thought question:* how much of an impression did these events make upon Saul? (cp. 1 Tim. 1:12-15; Acts 22:20)

- 16) What were Stephen's last words? (7:59-60) Write some closing thoughts about these words and how they compare to Mt. 10:25a & Lk. 23:34.