

Being a 1st Century Church in 2009: Respond to Need
Wylie United Methodist Church
Pastor Jeff Hatcher – Nov. 1, 2009

Acts 6:1-7

1 In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. 2 So the twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. 3 Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them 4 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." 5 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. 6 They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. 7 So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

1. THE CHURCH HAS A MISSION FROM CHRIST HIMSELF

(Matt 28:19) "Go and make disciples"

2. THE MISSION CREATES GROWTH

(Acts 6:1) In those days when the number of disciples was increasing...

(Acts 2:41) Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

(Acts 2:47) the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

(Acts 4:4) many who heard the message believed, and the number of men grew to about five thousand.

(Acts 5:14) more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number.

3. THE GROWTH CREATES A NEED

Church had become too big for Apostles to care for alone (Acts 6:1) ... their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food

4. RESPONDING TO THE NEED REQUIRES OBEDIENCE AND CHANGE

(Acts 6:2) So the twelve gathered all the disciples together...

(Acts 6:3) ... choose seven men from among you...

(Acts 6:3) ... turn this responsibility over to them

(Acts 6:4) ... give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

(Acts 6:5) This proposal pleased the whole group.

What if the disciples had just Grumbled or Left the Church when the problem arose? Or what if the disciples just didn't Care? That's the Apostles job!!

What if the Apostles had Resisted the Change?

What if the 7 hadn't Responded to the Call?

5. THE OBEDIENCE AND CHANGE LEADS TO CONTINUED GROWTH

(Acts 6:7) So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

The risk of Growth and Prosperity is Contentment, Apathy and Complacency.

To be a 1st Century Church we must, Respond to Need.