Sermon Date: October 6, 2013

Resolving Conflict in the Jerusalem Church-Acts 6:1-7

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Introduction:

We are on the precipice of making a shift next week starting in Acts 6:8. Up until now, the gospel has been received and grown amongst the Jews in Jerusalem as many embraced the reality that Jesus was indeed their long awaited Messiah. As we will see starting in Acts 6:8, *the church continues to grow and the faith will increase in momentum beyond the borders of Jerusalem*. At this point of scripture, before we move onto the next major transition in the spread of the gospel, Luke gives us a snapshot of the "growing pains" of this early church Read Acts 6:1-7

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1.	What was the issue that was coming up in the church (Acts 6:1)? How did the apostles deal with the situation (v. 2-4)?
2.	Doug gave us an excellent description of the title of a disciple as "an apprentice or learner attached to or following a respected leader." Would you say that this definition is applicable to believers today? What does this mean to you?
3.	What was the goal of the Apostles in creating a new group of leaders? How is this similar and/or different than a church committee?
4.	What is meant by the "laying on of hands" (v. 6)? What does it symbolize?
5.	See Acts 6:7. How did the manner in which the Apostles handled this growing pain impact the church?

- a. Look up Acts 2:46-47, 9:31, 12:24, 16:5, 19:20. What is the common theme for each of these verses?
- b. These verses represent the shifts mentioned in the Introduction of this lesson: *the church continues to grow and the faith will increase in momentum beyond the borders of Jerusalem*:
 - Acts 1:1-2:47: The New Covenant message is established in Jerusalem.
 - 3:1-<u>6:7</u>: The Holy Spirit is poured out on the new believers in Christ. The Word is **extended in Jerusalem.**
 - Acts 6:8-9:31: The New Covenant message expands beyond Jerusalem. The church is growing and on the move, being extended beyond Jerusalem's borders.
 - Acts 9:32-12:25: The message of salvation is expanded to include Gentiles. The church is growing and on the move.
 - Acts 13:1-16:5: The message is extended and expands to Cyprus & Asia Minor as momentum builds to spread the gospel message "to the ends of the earth" (Matthew 28:19).
 - Acts 16:6-19:20: The message continues to burst out the seams, extends and expands out to more regions to Greece.
 - Acts 19:21-<u>28:31</u>: The gospel message, salvation in Christ continues to the ends of the earth as it extends and expands to Rome.
- c. Notice that each of the verses above conclude with the theme mentioned
- 6. Doug said "You can't quiet a disciple in love with Jesus." What do you think he meant by that?

Personal Application:

Jesus' followers have a deep sense of Who God is, who they are and an immense sense of gratitude to God for what He has done. When this happens, their cup is full and they just can't help but overflow onto others. It's not about "have-to's" or works. Historically, when followers of Jesus work out of guilt and shame, they have little rest in Who God is, what He has done and the completeness of His sacrifice, working less out of a natural overflow of gratitude and more out of driving the gospel forward out of compulsion.

Question to ask ourselves: How much do I believe the work of Christ is completely sufficient and that I do not need to add to His sacrifice by what I DO in order to propel the gospel as a natural overflow of being in love? Does my life reflect the freedom Paul speaks of in Galatians 5:1? (By the way, the entire book of Galatians is a great read, and it's short).