

When “The Disciples Multiplied Greatly”

Acts 6:7

Introduction:

- A. Jerusalem church *united* and *growing*. (Acts 2:41,46,47; 4:4,24,32; 5:12,14; 6:7)
- B. Jerusalem church demonstrates some important *factors* in church growth.
 - 1. Divine providence.
 - 2. People longing for kingdom of God.
 - 3. Member's own performance of God's will—individually and collectively.
 - 4. We have little or no control over (1) or (2), but we do over (3).

Discussion:

- I. Complete Conversion.**
 - A. Changed attitude:
 - 1. Toward Jesus. (ch. 2:36).
 - 2. Toward past life of sin. (ch. 36,37).
 - B. Changed relationship to God and sin. (ch. 2:38,41,47).
- II. Constant Service.**
 - A. Steadfast in worship. (Acts 2:42).
 - B. Diligent in service.
 - 1. Daily teaching. (ch. 2:47; 5:42).
 - 2. Daily attending to needs each others (ch. 2:44-46; 6:1).
 - 3. Daily religion far beyond Sunday morning.
- III. Constructive Solutions.**
 - A. To problem of internal sin. (5:1-11).
 - 1. God directly removed leaven - later Corinth to remove leaven by discipline.
 - 2. Served to deter sin in others. (5:11; cf. Gal. 2:14; 1 Tim. 5:20).
 - B. To the problem of internal unrest. (6:1).
 - 1. Apostles could get handle on this unrest!
 - a. Knew where complaining was coming from and what it was about.
 - b. Understood the gripe and had workable solution.
 - 2. We cannot always get as good a handle on unrest.
 - a. By chronic grippers (cf. Mt. 11:18,19).
 - b. By “Greener pastures syndrome”—Jerusalem solved problem—no place to run.
 - c. By carnally minded thrill seekers who find divine way dull. (1 Cor. 1:21ff).
 - 3. But, we can always handle unrest.
 - a. By addressing legitimate complaints.
 - b. By refusing to be stampeded by chronic complainers.
 - c. By firmly dealing with spreaders of unrest. (Tit. 3:10; Rom. 16:17).
- IV. Competent Organization.**
 - A. Divinely organized by Apostles—under their oversight at first, then later elders. (Acts 15:2)
 - B. Efficiently organized for growth. (Acts 6:2-4).
 - 1. Work load passed around.
 - 2. Each “office” expected to “major” in his field.
 - 3. When everything everyone's business, soon becomes no one's business.
- V. Compelling Conviction.**
 - A. Had to speak truth. (4:20,31).
 - 1. Not overly concerned with technique—had to speak it. (cf. “Durty Skkunk”)
 - 2. Not overly concerned with consequences or results—had to speak it.
 - B. Had conviction that it was only way for folks to be saved. (4:12).
 - C. Considered honor to suffer shame for the gospel. (5:41,42).

Conclusion:

- A. What would happen in this area if had these thing going for us?
 - 1. No one can tell for sure, don't know God's providence or other's hearts.
 - 2. Can know that growth would be enhanced.
 - 3. Can know that personal responsibility would be met.
- B. Why not do all we can to develop these things?
 - 1. Then can really plant and water in way pleasing to God.
 - 2. Then God will produce results that pleases Him for this time and place.