|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Title:*** | For the Work of the Ministry (Eph. 4:11-12) |
| ***Text:*** | Acts 6:1-7 |
| ***Subject:*** | How do the Apostles go about seeing that the church does that which it was indeed responsible to do? |
| ***Compliment:*** | They continue perfecting the saints, who then intern join them in the work of the ministry. |
| ***CIT:*** | Because the Apostles were committed to their responsibility of enabling the saints to fulfill their responsibility the church was able to fulfill its responsibility! |
| ***Purpose:*** | To help the saints see the purpose of the preaching in their lives and the purpose of their lives in the church! |
| ***Homiletic Idea:*** | Pastors and teachers today must stay committed to their responsibility of enabling you, the members of the body, to fulfill your responsibility, so that the church might fulfill its responsibility! |
| ***Intro:*** |  |

Our society is poor in the area of responsible people; people who will simply be passionate about doing what they are supposed to do, the way they are supposed to do it! This is so much the case that when society finds a person who will do all that they are supposed to, the way they are supposed to they keep him busier than he is able to manage.

The more he does the more there seems to be for him to do, which in the area of employment is a good thing, but it presents certain difficulties. That is sort of where we find the Apostles here in Chapter 6 of the book of Acts!

1. ***The number of the disciples multiplied. V1***
	1. Disciple means a learner, or pupil.
	2. This means that there had been many converts in order for the number of disciples to have multiplied.
		1. The estimation is that the church before that statement ran around 5,000.
		2. To multiply means they at least doubled.
	3. This also means that the Apostles had stayed very busy.
		1. I am assuming their rate of conversion was much higher than ours.
		2. That being said the average rate works something like this. (on average)
			1. You knock on 10 doors you talk to 1-4 people.
			2. You talk to 10 people before one gets saved.
			3. You lead 10 you get 1 to join the church.

Transition: Now I don’t know that all the conversions came this way, I’m just saying in order for them to see this kind of growth they had to be busy. Not only were they busy reaching out with the gospel, but they were working to fulfill the great commission. Because the number of the disciples multiplied means that …

1. ***The number of disciples multiplied. (I know I already said that, but we dealt with how, now we are dealing with the implications that must have had.) V1-2***
	1. These converts needed to be trained to observe all things.
		1. They needed to be baptized.
		2. They needed to grounded in the Scriptures.
	2. This meant that someone had to teach them.
		1. Whether it was in their homes or in a congregational setting this took real work and real time.
			1. So much so that they were aware that some of the practical needs of the ministry were not going to be met by them.
			2. Why? It was because their real time and their real effort was already committed and occupied by something else.
		2. They would need to study and prepare.
		3. Then there is the actual dispensing of the duty itself.
		4. Not to mention the work of pursuing people with their need for being under the teaching and preaching. (I don’t know if you have noticed but people don’t just show up where they need to be and when once they get saved. I mean, just look around.)

***Transition:*** Not only did the number of the disciples multiply, but …

1. ***The number of practical needs multiplied along with the Cultural diversity of the group.***
	1. A church is supposed to care for its own.
		1. We try to immolate that here in the class.
		2. We try to help with moves, with meals when folks are in need, with encouragement, things of that nature.
	2. One of the responsibilities of the local New Testament church is to care widows who are widows indeed.
		1. This is referring to a widow with no family to take care of her.
		2. The members of her local New Testament body are responsible for providing her with care, which apparently included helping with food.
	3. The cultural diversity mattered because it caused some to give preferential care.
		1. There were Grecians and there were Hebrews.
			1. The Grecians were Greek speaking Jews, Jews that had returned from having lived in many different nations. Acts 2:5
			2. The Hebrews were Hebrew speaking Jews that had always abode in Jerusalem.
		2. The Hebrews were getting special treatment, or the Grecians were simply being neglected.
			1. The fact was that there were so many people that the ability of the church to give attention to all was inadequate.
			2. There was a legitimate need.
				1. It was simply addressed the wrong way.
				2. We can’t take care of all so we will just take care of the other Hebrews.

***Transition:*** So how do the Apostles go about seeing that the church does that which it was indeed responsible to do? They continue perfecting the saints, who then, in turn, join them in the work of the ministry! Ephesians 4:11-12 (read)

CIT: Let me put it this way, ***Because the Apostles were committed to their responsibility of enabling the saints to fulfill their responsibility the church was able to fulfill its responsibility!***

1. ***They were not willing to lay aside the preaching of the book for a serving plate! V2, 4***
	1. What work was it that landed them all of their converts? The preaching and teaching of the Word and Prayer.
	2. What work was it that helped grow those converts into ministering members? The preaching and teaching of the Word and Prayer.
	3. If the preaching, teaching, and prayer are responsible for all of the growth that has been taking place, does it make sense to lay that aside to focus on something else?
		1. The preaching of the book got them converts!
		2. The preaching of the book also got them workers!
	4. They set a very important precedent as to what was to be preeminent in Church life; The Preaching of the Truth of God’s Word!
		1. It was worthy of all of their attention because of the nature of its content; it is the Word of God!
		2. It was worthy of all of their attention because in order to “rightly divide” it and live it one must spend ample time it!

Transition: So they weren’t willing to lay aside the book for a serving plate, but…

1. ***They were willing to employ the saints in the work they had been trained to participate in! V3-4***
	1. These were church members that they called!
		1. Look you out seven men among you!
		2. The work of the church was the work of the church members!
	2. Not just any church members would do, but trained, faithful, obedient to God type church members!
		1. Ministry in any official capacity is a privilege not a right!
		2. These men had to have a good testimony of walking in truth!
		3. They had to be spirit filled; walking with and sensitive to the things of the Lord!
		4. They had to be men of experience; mature.
2. ***So that is what they did! V5-6***

***Transition:*** So what happened? What usually happens when people do things God’s way? we have seen all through these first six chapters of the book of Acts! God blesses their efforts!

1. ***The result was the increase of the Word of God and in the number of disciples including a great company of the priests. V7***

***Transition to Application: So what does that have to do with us today?***

***Homiletic Idea:*** Pastors and teachers today must stay committed to their responsibility of enabling you, the members of the body, to fulfill your responsibility, so that the church might fulfill its responsibility!

* Pastors and teachers must pastor and teach!
* Saints must carry out the work!
	+ Pastors and teachers are saints.
	+ But so is every other saved person!
	+ Remember the work is a privilege not a right, though it is required!
	+ God demands a good testimony on the part of His representatives!
* When this happens the church will fulfill the commission.
	+ People will be saved.
	+ They will be baptized.
	+ They will be equipped and employed!
* God will give the increase.
* The opportunity for difficulty will accompany that increase!
	+ There may be a number of new faces.
	+ There may be a culturally diverse group.
	+ There may be a diversity of personalities.
	+ There may be a diversity of opinions.
	+ But needs still need to be met, care and attention still need to be given, and the commission still needs to be pursued.
* Therefore we must all stay committed to our roles in the work so:
	+ The difficulties can be overcome.
	+ The church can continue to do what God put it here to do and what Jesus Commissioned it to do!
* We cannot take our eyes off of the big picture!
* Pastors and teachers must stay committed to their responsibility of enabling you:
	+ I must teach the Book!
* Saints must stay committed to their responsibility of doing the work!
	+ We all must participate!
	+ The faithful church member occupies a significant role!
* The church will then fulfill its responsibility of carrying out the Commission!
* And God will give the increase!
	+ Everything else is little in comparison!

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ***Dates and Locations Delivered*** |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |