

## **The Book of Acts: God in a Multicultural Movement**

**Week #6 / October 27—November 2 / Acts 6:1-7**

### ***“A Case of Discrimination Resolved”***

**Introduction** – Last week we took a break from Acts and dove into the topic of “Trusting God” as a follow up discussion from Jerry Scott’s sermon of the same name on October 20.

This week we find another challenge to God’s “Multicultural Movement!” There is a struggle between believers of a common ethnic identity who come from different countries of origin, cultures and languages. Here’s the situation – for many years Greek speaking Jews from other parts of the Roman Empire had settled in Jerusalem and organized together in Greek speaking synagogues. Some had become Christians. These “Hellenists” were to varying degrees culturally diverse and different from the homeland “Hebrews” who by this period of history spoke Aramaic as their common language. *(The Hebrew language was mostly use for religious purposes, much like Latin in pre-Vatican II Catholic services.)* There is an accusation of the neglect of Greek speakers by the Hebrews (Aramaic speakers), the latter being those in position of authority (the Apostles) in this early Jerusalem church. Let’s see how they resolve the problem.

**You’ve heard the sermon** for this week. (If not just go to <http://fpcdowney.com/sermons/> and click on the sermon for Acts **6:1-7.**)

### **Getting Started**

- **Please begin by reporting** on how it went with your commitment to step out and do something in response to last week’s study. What happened?
- Have you ever been saddled with a job that needed to be done, but didn’t line up with your skills and passion? Ever happen in the church? Share about that.
- **Read the passage outloud**

### **What Does It Say?**

- 1) List all the things you learn about the community of believers at this time from verse 1 alone .
- 2) List all the parties in this crisis and discuss their interests and concerns.

3) Trace out the step-by-step process laid out by the Apostles to resolve the problem.

4) Five of the seven deacons have Greek names. Two are Hebrew names. Can you identify which are which!?!? (Don't take TOO much time here!)

### **What Does It Mean?**

1) Discuss the relationship, if any, between what is described in v. 7 and what transpires in vv. 1-6.

2) In order to truly be a "multicultural church," one of the questions FPC leaders are learning to ask about each thing we do is this: "At every step do various people and perspectives have a place at the table (in dreaming, discussing, deciding, taking action)?" Do you see this practiced in Acts 6:1-7. Identify every place in the passage you see this.

3) Another question FPC leadership is learning to ask about each thing we do and how to do it is: "Does it bring us closer together?" Discuss to what extent the Apostles were or were not successful in bringing people closer together by their attempt to resolve the problem.

### **What Does It Mean to Us/Me?**

1) If you are performing a ministry that needs to be done, but are not suited for it, AND it is keeping you from a ministry that God has gifted you for and is calling you to do, what lessons can you take from the passage for a good solution?

2) Rate FPC on a scale of 1-10 in the area of matching up people's gifts and passions with needed ministry?

3) What is one, simple, concrete thing from the sermon or today's study you believe you ought to take action on and do in the coming days? Will you commit to trying it and ask the group to ask you how it went next week when you gather again.