

The Appointment of the Seven Deacons

The apostles appoint seven men full of the Holy Spirit to serve tables, establishing the office of deacon and allowing the apostles to focus on prayer and the word.

Acts 6:1-7

CHARACTERS: The Twelve Apostles, Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, Nicolas

THEMES: Church Organization, Servant Leadership, Unity, Prayer, Qualifications for Ministry

AS THE NUMBER of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem, the growing church faced its first organizational challenge. The Grecian Jews murmured against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration of food and care.

The twelve apostles gathered the multitude and said, 'It is not reason that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables.' They instructed the congregation to look among themselves for seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom they might appoint over this business.

The saying pleased the whole multitude. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, along with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas. The seven were set before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands upon them.

The result was immediate and powerful—the word of God increased, the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and even a great company of the priests became obedient to the faith.

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