

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How can we minimize murmurings that may arise in the church?
2. How important is organization in the Church? (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)
3. Is there a “ladder of success” in the Church?
4. How can we better find our proper place within the Church?

SUMMARY:

Wherever God’s work is being done, Satan also is there to seek to disrupt this work. Much wisdom and prayer is necessary on the part of leaders to be able to overcome this menace. It is necessary to distribute responsibility to others to avoid being overcome with “care-taking”. However, those assigned to such responsibilities must meet certain spiritual qualifications.

Young people in their zeal often fail to see their God-given place and desire to be leaders. God’s will is that they be submissive and humble, and learn to resist the devil so that when God calls them to greater service they will have proved themselves. (1 Timothy 3:6, 10)

NOTES:

APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Bible Lesson #2

January 8, 2017

First Quarter

THE FIRST CHURCH OFFICERS

LESSON TEXT: *Acts 6:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-11*

LESSON SETTING: In the first churches in Jerusalem.

TIME: During early stages of the development of the church after Christ’s ascension to His Father. Approximately 33 A.D.

I. PROBLEMS IN THE CHURCH. Acts 6:1

- A. Murmurings (vs. 1) 1 Corinthians 1:11, 3:3; 2 Corinthians 12:20
- B. Favoritism Charged (vs. 1) Genesis 37:4; Matthew 20:12; Luke 15:23

II. SPIRITUAL ORGANIZATION IN THE CHURCH. Acts 6:2-7

- A. Spiritual Laborers (vs. 2-4) Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 13:17
- B. Laborers in Other Matters (vs. 3) Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8
- C. High Qualifications (vs. 3)
 1. A Good Name - Acts 16:2
 2. Filled with the Spirit - Ephesians 5:18
 3. Wisdom - Luke 21:15

III. RELATIONSHIP IN THE CHURCH. 1 Peter 5:1-11

- A. Elders (vs. 1-4)
 1. Feed the Flock - Jeremiah 3:15; 23:4
 2. A Ready Mind - Titus 3:1
 3. A Christian Example - Titus 2:7
- B. Younger People (vs. 5-11)
 1. Submission - 1 Corinthians 16:16; Ephesians 5:21
 2. Humility - Micah 6:8
 3. Resist Satan - Ephesians 6:11; James 4:7

GOLDEN TEXT: *AND WHEN THE CHIEF SHEPHERD SHALL APPEAR YE SHALL RECEIVE A CROWN OF GLORY THAT FADETH NOT AWAY.*
1 Peter 5:4

NEXT SUNDAY'S LESSON: Acts 6:8-15; 7:1-60

SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES: 1 Kings 21:1-24; 22:1-28

QUARTERLY THEME: The First Church Officers

TOPIC: THE FIRST MARTYR

INTRODUCTION:

Stephen, originally chosen to “serve tables” in the capacity of a “deacon” according to man’s terminology, proved himself to be so faithful that God inspired him to do greater things. He was given power to perform great miracles and wisdom so that he could confound those who questioned him. Naturally, when men become confounded, they often retaliate with illegal means. So it was that false witnesses were gathered to accuse Stephen.

With much boldness and without fear, he recounted Jewish history and then made accusations concerning their lack of acceptance of God’s messages through His prophets. They understood his accusations but instead of repenting, in great wrath they stoned Stephen.

They failed to realize that they were opposing a man of God and He would give a greater reward to His servant. He was preparing a heavenly place for this man just as He has prepared a place for all those who faithfully and fearlessly serve Him.

CENTRAL TRUTH: Our faith and our love for Christ should make us willing to live or die for Him.

GOLDEN TEXT: *BE THOU FAITHFUL UNTO DEATH, AND I WILL GIVE THEE A CROWN OF LIFE.* Revelation 2:10

Stephen in his greatest hour of trial now came to realize the blessedness of the promise of God. Many through the ages had given their lives in the service of God, but Stephen is the first recorded martyr of the early church.

Surely the account of the heavenly vision which he saw, the glory of God and the Lord Jesus at His right hand, has been recorded to encourage us to be faithful in the dark hours of trial. We can be sure trials shall come. The greater our service and the more blessed of God, the more severe will be the trials. Satan will try every means to overcome the work of the Lord.

Let us never become so burdened with our trials that we become ready to lay down our cross, but as Stephen bravely, and boldly stand on God’s Word and in His power, carry on. Then we, too, can some day see the heavenly vision.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF January 9 – 15

M. *Stephen’s Trial. Acts 6:8-15

T. God’s Covenant with Abraham. Acts 7:1-8

W. God’s Dealings with Joseph. Acts 7:9-16

T. Moses Misunderstood. Acts 7:17-29

F. Moses’ Leadership. Acts 7:30-43

S. Stephen’s Accusation. Acts 7:44-53

S. Stephen’s Death. Acts 7:54-60

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