

Acts 6

The First Local Church

Overview

1. The Local Church: (Introduction)

Much is written about the daily operation of the local church, especially in the book of Acts. Foundational principles are established, but the first local church at Jerusalem was far from perfect.

2. Early Development of the Local Church: (Verses 1-7)

The first major problem to arise in the local church was murmuring about the inequality between the daily treatment of the Greek and Hebrew widows. The disciples made clear to the Jerusalem church that their primary responsibility should be study of God's Word and prayer. They then instructed the people to choose seven men to be the first deacons in the church to help serve tables. Seven men were chosen and as a result of their help in the daily operation of the church, the Word of God increased and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem.

3. The Arrest of Stephen: (Verses 8-15)

Stephen was one of the seven men selected to be a deacon. He received the Word and eventually taught the Word with signs and wonders following. Stephen operated in the wisdom of God, and the religious leaders of the time could not dispute his wisdom. They had a disdain for Stephen because of the anointing upon his life. They could not debate Stephen because of the wisdom in which he operated, so they brought false witnesses against him and had him arrested.

The Challenge of Chapter Six:

Belonging to and participating in a local church is of utmost importance for every born-again believer. The main function of the members of the local church is to relieve the pastor of the daily responsibilities so he may dedicate himself to prayer and study of God's Word. Ushers, greeters, counselors, hospital workers, children, and youth workers are all vital to the successful and effectual functioning of the local church. Just as in the first local church, there are no perfect churches because there are no perfect people. But we can strive to walk free of strife and in the unity of the faith with a heart to serve one another in the body of Christ. God offers His divine wisdom to all who will ask. We can walk in the same wisdom in which Stephen operated if we will only ask.