

Introduction:

Good Morning!

ME:

- Have you ever realized no one else is coming — you're in charge?
- You are the most adultly adult in the room
- Tell the crappy story...
- This is when you discover the difference between a spectator and a servant.
- Lots of things like this in the church -needs that need to be taken care of
- Example: lawns mowed, gardens weeded, tasks quietly done
- Church doesn't run on magic; it runs on people who care

- Acts 6 shows a thriving church and its secret weapon

The church's greatest miracle isn't what happens to people on Sunday, rather it's what happens through people every day of the week

WE:

- Growth brings problems. Our church is 250-350 people. People complain about stuff not meeting expectation, or things not going well, or people being missed — this is all expected with a group this size!
- Complaints are natural with more people than systems
- **Acts 6:1 Greek-speaking widows were overlooked in food distribution**
- This wasn't a scandal, but it was a result of the growth they were seeing

- You can't have growth without tensions. But how they handled it was beautiful because they didn't shift blame, they opened their hands. They discovered that when everyone plays their part, the whole body gets stronger.

A healthy church doesn't avoid problems — it activates people

GOD:

Turn to Acts 6 verse 1. We will see that God's solution to their problem wasn't magic, it was ministry.

ACTS Chapter 6:1-7

Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.

Hellenists = Greek-speaking Jews

Hellenists is what the Greeks called themselves before they were called Greeks

4th century Alexander conquest – adopting cultures.

Translated (Hebrew Bible into Greek) called the Septuagint

Hebrews = more traditional linguistically and culturally Jews

Many other groups too! Alexandrians, Cyrenians, Cilicians, Asians, Freedmen etc. in Acts

Historian Josephus wrote about different groups that were around too.

Not tension so much as cultural backgrounds.

2 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables.

Summoning hundreds (or thousands) of disciples.

Not derogatory. Just more literally “distributing food” They understood there was a lot to do that needed oversight.

3 Therefore, brothers,[b] pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. 4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” 5 And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6 These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them.

7 And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

- Priests believing is probably some of the cause of growing tensions that result in the death of Stephen.
- 7 are chosen who have integrity, the Spirit, and wisdom – these would have been the ones to oversee, probably not actually distribute food (because there were hundreds and likely thousands of people)
- The result was the number of disciples “multiplied greatly in Jerusalem”
- Church multiplied not because of sermons but because people were willing to serve
- Spirit-filled people taking Spirit-led action spreads Word further and faster
- Secret weapon = people full of the Spirit and willing to serve
- Churches function best when the right people are in the right roles
- Apostles modeled leadership: empower others, don’t try to do everything

- **“Deacon” = servant; leadership = serving in your lane**
- We at SVBC try to model our leadership structure after this passage.
- This is why we ask you all to choose people from among you to put their name forward to nominate them for these roles.
- Qualification matters:: people chosen to serve must have integrity, Spirit evidence, wisdom

We all need to be Serving together = church operates effectively and is able to maintain spiritual priorities

The secret weapon of the church isn't magical — it's people filled with the Spirit who are willing to serve”

YOU:

- So if Act s6 was happening today, who would be chosen?
- Are you ready to serve? Do you know where you would want to serve if you had the opportunity?
- Ministry challenges exist across all ministries: tech, worship, youth, kids, visitation, women's ministry, white cross, benevolence, etc.

Challenge: We all need to figure out how we will serve during the season of life that we are in.

That is constantly changing as God teaches us, equips us, and leads us.

- **You need to be praying and asking God for his leading on where he has equipped you to serve the brothers and sisters.**
- **God may be leading you through a season of rest, so keep being faithful to that. For the rest of us we aren't called to be consumers and spectators.**
- **Discover how God has gifted you and step into action.**

WE:

- **We all miss out when people don't use their giftings.**
- **We want to wait to be invited – but a lot of time, we just need to take initiative and find ways to use our spiritual gifts.**
- We may also have no idea what ways God may be gifting us.
- Pray – hear from others – consider what you enjoy – consider what you see as problems – and earnestly desire spiritual gifts (greater ones more so than lesser ones).
- There are these tests you can take called spiritual gift inventories or assessments. We have one we have used for years here. But this week I decided I wanted to make an online version that you could use.
- All new questions too – I needed out.
- Serving in church isn't just about filling a spot – it's fulfilling a calling, leveraging your strengths, and empowering each other.
- You thrive when you are in the right lane
- The body is incomplete without you.
- So I would encourage you to pray about how God has gifted you – do the assessment – and pray and ask God for new gifts to meet the needs around you in the church.
- **YOU WILL THRIVE** when you serve. The church needs followers of Jesus, not spectators. I need people who are ready to roll up their sleeves.
- And the church grows when every person serves, and every need is met, and every gift is unleashed.

Gospel Call:

- Gospel – This kind of serving doesn't happen by magic. It happens because of our love for Jesus. It happens because of what Jesus did for us. He served us by taking up his cross.

- Jesus submitted his life. He paid the price for you and I. Because you know this to be true: we love others. We want to be good. we want to be known as the next mother Teresa in our context. But there's a problem – sin
- Sin keeps us from living out the desires that God put on our Heart.
- Bible says God's law is written on our heart – Not the minutiae of all the law, but the internal desire to love God, and to love others as we love ourselves.
- The only way we can actually reconcile is by trusting in Jesus.
- That can be you – living out your calling, experiencing the fullness of life – as you express the joy of your salvation.
- Come talk with me after service

Let's pray.

Lord Jesus, thank You for showing us what true greatness looks like — not being served, but serving.

Thank You for building a church that isn't powered by platforms or programs, but by people filled with Your Spirit.

Help us see the needs around us; not as problems to avoid, but as opportunities to serve. Give us eyes that notice, hands that help, and hearts that say yes to You.

For those who feel unseen, remind them that every act of service matters to You. For those who feel tired, remind them that they're not serving alone.

Fill us again with Your Spirit, that we might serve with joy, humility, and love — just like You did for us.

And may our church be known as a people who serve faithfully, love deeply, and lift up Your name in everything we do.

Benediction

Galatians 6:9-10 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. ¹⁰ Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

As you go this week, may you step up where God calls you.

Serve with the strength He provides.

Let others help you when you need it,

because this mission was never meant to be carried alone.

Together, may we be God's secret weapon to spread His love and His Word in our city and in our world.