



**Main Passage: Acts 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 12:12-20**

## Theological Theme

As the early church developed, the role of deacon was born. God made it clear that all believers are gifted to serve in some way or another. We each have the responsibility to identify the ways we have been gifted and use those gifts to serve the church and bring glory to God.

## Introduction

- ? What is one of your favorite gifts you've received? Who is the gift giver you love to open presents from? Why?
- ? How would you feel if someone put away the gift you gave them and never used it?

## 1. The Need for Deacons (Acts 6:1-4)

As the early church grew and more members were added to the body, needs arose that had to be addressed for the ministry of the church to continue. As the body of Christ becomes more diverse, with people from different backgrounds and experiences, the needs of the body will also be more diverse.

- ? Why is change a healthy thing for a growing church? What happens to a church if it grows in number but never changes its methods of ministry to accommodate the larger number of people?
- ? How did the apostles' actions show they believed every area of service in the church was important and not only certain ones?
- ? Application: How have your thoughts about serving in the church been challenged or changed over the years? Why is it important that everyone in the church serve?

## 2. The Selection of Deacons (Acts 6:5-7)

What the apostles proposed was received well by the body and the seven men chosen established the role of deacon. These men were responsible for the practical, daily, activities of the church. They took this burden off the shoulders of the apostles so that they could continue spreading the gospel through preaching the Word.

- ? Why is it valuable and necessary for everyone to use their gifts to serve the church? What happens if we fail to do this?
- ? Why was it important that these seven men be recognized and commissioned by the apostles?
- ? Application: Where is God calling you to use your gifts? Where might He be calling you to serve in a way that may be overlooked by others?

### 3. The Gifts of the Body (1 Corinthians 12:12-20)

In this passage, the apostle Paul wrote about the way believers are gifted and how those gifts all work together. To keep us from being competitive about our gifts or thinking of one type of giftedness as being above the others, he used the image of many parts working in one body. This emphasizes the unity we should strive for as the body of Christ in the local church.

- ❓ How does unity (or disunity) in the body affect the way the church functions as a whole?
- ❓ Why is it important to recognize the value of every part of the body and not seek to elevate certain gifts over others?
- ❓ Application: Do you know your gifts? Ask others what they see in you. Consider a gift study like "Spiritual Gifts" by Thomas Schreiner.

### Questions to Guide Your Group's Discussion

1. What does this passage say?
2. What did this passage mean to its original audience?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about man?
5. What does this passage demand of me?
6. How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (*How can you use this information this week at work or with friends and neighbors?*)
7. How does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

\*Adapted from Seven Arrows by Matt Rogers pastor of The Church at Cherrydale, Greenville, SC

### Here's How to Become a Christ-Follower:

*Read the following verses and ask after each one: "What does this say to me?"*

- **All have sinned:** Romans 3:23 & 1 John 1:8
- **The wages of sin:** Romans 6:23 & John 3:18
- **But while we were sinners, salvation was provided:** Romans 5:8
- **Become a Christ-follower:** Romans 10:9-10 Confess and Believe

### Accepting Christ is Just the Beginning:

Next Steps:

- Publicly profess your faith by being baptized (Matthew 10:32-33; Luke 3:21; Romans 6:4).
- Join a church which follows the Bible, where you can grow in your faith through prayer, Bible study and fellowship with other Christians.
- Get involved in groups for encouragement and accountability.
- Begin a daily personal worship experience with God where you study the Bible and pray.
- Share with others what Jesus has done for you. Tell your story (Romans 10:14; Matthew 28:19-20).
- Begin to live for God (Romans 12:1-2, 9-18; James 1:19-27).