

Introduction:

- Acts 5:41-6:7
- The Apostles were flogged for preaching.
- They rejoiced at being disgrace for the name of Christ.
- They continued preaching and teaching the message that Jesus is the Messiah!
 - He is the Christ!
 - The One Israel had been waiting for!
 - The King of the Jews!
 - He was dead but now He lives! Proof He has power over death hell and the grave!
- The result was that the church continued to grow rapidly.
- Last week we saw the Awakening and the Spirit filled life. We saw that the anointing is what is clearly needed. It was the Holy Spirit/Anointing that was given in scripture to decimate yokes of bondage. They prayed, they received, and they believed for the time of former and later rain. This anointing given in Joel.
- I want us to see priorities in the movement of God. These are priorities of God.
 - The Priority of the Message
 - The Priority of the Word and Prayer
 - The Priority of Spirit Filled Leaders
 - The Priority of

I. The Priority of the Message 5:42

- A. The message. *"And every day, in the Temple and from house to house, they continued to teach and preach this message: "Jesus is the Messiah.""* (Acts 5:42, NLT)
1. The message was "Jesus is the Messiah", the Christ.
 - a) He is the Sent One from the Father.
 - b) A King
 - c) The Ruler over all things.
 2. He is the Son of God! Mt 14:33; Mt 27:43; Mark 1:1; Lk 1:35; Jn 1:34*JTB; Gal 2:20
 - a) This was JTB message.
 - b) This was the Apostles message.
 - c) This was Paul's message. Jesus is the Son of God.
 3. He died for our sins! First from the dead, Lord over all kings. Rev 1:5
 4. He rose from the dead! The Lamb that was slain, lives! Rev. 1:18
 5. The Apostle Paul was totally given the message of Jesus the Messiah, the Christ.
- B. Every day
1. Daily - this was happening every day.
 2. There was an urgency in the heart of the apostles to declare the message everyday.
- C. Everywhere
1. House to house
 2. And in the temple
- D. Preaching and teaching

1. Preaching - proclamation - for the purpose of hearing and calling for commitment.
2. Teaching - for the purpose of learning and understanding.

II. The Priority Of The Messengers

A. Context -

1. The church was growing rapidly. Rapid growth calls for rapidly deployed pastoral care.
 - a) *"Without oxen a stable stays clean, but you need a strong ox for a large harvest."* (Proverbs 14:4, NLT)
 - b) Apostles provide for systems that care for people.
2. There were some racial issues going on. The greek speaking widows were being overlooked and the Hebrew speaking widows were getting more food. Rumbblings - means grumbblings and discontent.
3. The apostles were getting caught up in the day to day issues of providing for widows. This action was taking them away from the Word and prayer.

B. The priority of the messengers in this context was the Word of God and prayer.

1. The Apostles - *"Then we apostles can spend our time in prayer and teaching the word."* (Acts 6:4, NLT)
2. To preach and to teach the word you have to have time in prayer and study. Then you have to have time to actually preach and teach.
3. *"The members of the council were amazed when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, for they could see that they were ordinary men with no special training in the Scriptures. They also recognized them as men who had been with Jesus."* (Acts 4:13, NLT)
4. Paul -
 - a) Studied under Pharisee - Gamliel
 - b) Three years in Arabia
 - c) Wrote 2/3 of NT.

C. Because of the priority of the message, the messengers also were moved to a place of priority.

1. The Gospel must never become a social Gospel that just takes care of widows and orphans.
2. The Gospel must never become a justice Gospel that just seeks to do good and bring equality to people.
3. The Gospel must remain the Gospel. Jesus, the Son of God, died and rose again for sinners—of which I am one.
4. Because that message is priority, those who are given that message to take to the people must also receive it as priority for their lives. This fact does not mean that people are not important. It must remain that the Gospel is the best thing that can be given to a person. Therefore it was an important priority that Spirit filled leaders take care of the people.

III. The Priority of Spirit Filled Leaders

A. Filling the gap. Seeing the need for excellent pastor care the Apostle gave this direction:

1. *"And so, brothers, select seven men who are well respected and are full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will give them this responsibility."* (Acts 6:3, NLT)

2. Select - episkopeo -
 - a) "to look upon," "consider," "have regard to" (something or someone), with such references as inspecting, supervising, having a care to, looking down on, or watching over (the gods); The idea of concern is present.
 - b) "to reflect on," "examine," "investigate" (something), e.g., a document, or virtue;
 - c) "to visit," e.g., the sick (friends or the doctor)." Kittel, G., Friedrich, G., & Bromiley, G. W. (1985). [Theological Dictionary of the New Testament](#) (p. 244). Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans.
 - d) The one selected becomes a 'watcher, an overseer' a deacon.
3. The types of men they are to look for:
 - a) They are to be respected - respected- marturion - witness to facts. "*You are witnesses of all these things.*" (Luke 24:48, NLT) The facts of Jesus' death and resurrection. They have a solid testimony of being in Christ and are able to share such.
 - b) They are to be Spirit filled. Not sort of filled. Holy Spirit baptized! Immersed in the Spirit. And this is visible present. Someone looking on can say, "That person is filled with God." Inspection will show it to be true.
 - c) Wise - Gr. sophia - wisdom, this denotes a quality and not an activity. Though a person filled with the quality will have such activity. Mk 6:2, Jesus wisdom astonished people. Solomon was wise. IE. the baby and two mothers.
 - d) Everyone liked the idea and they chose 7 men who fit that description.

IV. The Priority of Stephen

- A. Stephen received a little extra stand out information:
 1. A man full of faith (v5)
 2. A man full of the Holy Spirit
 3. A man full of grace and power (vs. 8) who worked signs and wonders.
 4. A man full of wisdom which no man could stand before. (vs. 10)
- B. Stephen demonstrates the priority.
 1. He preaches the message when given opportunity. Marturion–witness
 2. Full of the Spirit He was Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father.
 3. His impeccable character prayed, "Father forgive them, do not hold this to their account."

Conclusion:

- In the Move of God there are priorities that must be maintained.
- The message must be given priority.
- The messengers must stay in the Word and prayer and oversee the message and church.
- The people must not be forgotten as the Word goes forth.
- Wise men will take their place in the ranks to oversee to the people.