

Feb 9, 2014

# Teaching Notes

Series: Being the Church  
Week Six

**Acts 6:1-7 (NLT)** <sup>1</sup> But as the believers rapidly multiplied, there were rumblings of discontent. The Greek-speaking believers complained about the Hebrew-speaking believers, saying that their widows were being discriminated against in the daily distribution of food.<sup>2</sup> So the Twelve called a meeting of all the believers. They said, "We apostles should spend our time teaching the word of God, not running a food program."<sup>3</sup> And so, brothers, select seven men who are well respected and are full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will give them this responsibility.<sup>4</sup> Then we apostles can spend our time in prayer and teaching the word."<sup>5</sup> Everyone liked this idea, and they chose the following: Stephen (a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit), Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas of Antioch (an earlier convert to the Jewish faith).<sup>6</sup> These seven were presented to the apostles, who prayed for them as they laid their hands on them.<sup>7</sup> So God's message continued to spread. The number of believers greatly increased in Jerusalem, and many of the Jewish priests were converted, too.

**A healthy, growing church requires that responsibilities are \_\_\_\_\_ among believers.**

**Acts 8:1-8 (NLT)** <sup>1</sup> Saul was one of the witnesses, and he agreed completely with the killing of Stephen. A great wave of persecution began that day, sweeping over the church in Jerusalem; and all the believers except the apostles were scattered through the regions of Judea and Samaria. <sup>2</sup> (Some devout men came and buried Stephen with great mourning.)<sup>3</sup> But Saul was going everywhere to destroy the church. He went from house to house, dragging out both men and women to throw them into prison. <sup>4</sup> But the believers who were scattered preached the Good News about Jesus wherever they went.<sup>5</sup> Philip, for example, went to the city of Samaria and told the people there about the Messiah.<sup>6</sup> Crowds listened intently to Philip because they were eager to hear his message and see the miraculous signs he did.<sup>7</sup> Many evil spirits were cast out, screaming as they left their victims. And many who had been paralyzed or lame were healed.<sup>8</sup> So there was great joy in that city.

**Not everything that starts out \_\_\_\_\_ ends up \_\_\_\_\_!**

**Acts 9:1-23 (NLT)** <sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, Saul was uttering threats with every breath and was eager to kill the Lord's followers. So he went to the high priest.<sup>2</sup> He requested letters

addressed to the synagogues in Damascus, asking for their cooperation in the arrest of any followers of the Way he found there. He wanted to bring them—both men and women—back to Jerusalem in chains.<sup>3</sup> As he was approaching Damascus on this mission, a light from heaven suddenly shone down around him.<sup>4</sup> He fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul! Saul! Why are you persecuting me?"<sup>5</sup> "Who are you, lord?" Saul asked. And the voice replied, "I am Jesus, the one you are persecuting!"<sup>6</sup> Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."<sup>7</sup> The men with Saul stood speechless, for they heard the sound of someone's voice but saw no one!<sup>8</sup> Saul picked himself up off the ground, but when he opened his eyes he was blind. So his companions led him by the hand to Damascus.<sup>9</sup> He remained there blind for three days and did not eat or drink.<sup>10</sup> Now there was a believer in Damascus named Ananias. The Lord spoke to him in a vision, calling, "Ananias!" "Yes, Lord!" he replied.<sup>11</sup> The Lord said, "Go over to Straight Street, to the house of Judas. When you get there, ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying to me right now.<sup>12</sup> I have shown him a vision of a man named Ananias coming in and laying hands on him so he can see again."<sup>13</sup> "But Lord," exclaimed Ananias, "I've heard many people talk about the terrible things this man has done to the believers in Jerusalem!"<sup>14</sup> And he is authorized by the leading priests to arrest everyone who calls upon your name."<sup>15</sup> But the Lord said, "Go, for Saul is my chosen instrument to take my message to the Gentiles and to kings, as well as to the people of Israel.<sup>16</sup> And I will show him how much he must suffer for my name's sake."<sup>17</sup> So Ananias went and found Saul. He laid his hands on him and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road, has sent me so that you might regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit."<sup>18</sup> Instantly something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he got up and was baptized.<sup>19</sup> Afterward he ate some food and regained his strength. Saul stayed with the believers in Damascus for a few days. <sup>20</sup> And immediately he began preaching about Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is indeed the Son of God!"<sup>21</sup> All who heard him were amazed. "Isn't this the same man who caused such devastation among Jesus' followers in Jerusalem?" they asked. "And didn't he come here to arrest them and take them in chains to the leading priests?"<sup>22</sup> Saul's preaching became more and more powerful, and the Jews in Damascus couldn't refute his proofs that Jesus was indeed the Messiah.<sup>23</sup> After a while some of the Jews plotted together to kill him.

**Even a \_\_\_\_\_ can become a \_\_\_\_\_ heart!**

**Who have you \_\_\_\_\_ praying for because all you see is \_\_\_\_\_?**