

## **Sermon Handout**

### Discord in the Church

#### Acts 6:1-7

### **I. Conflict Arises in the Young Church**

- a. Previously of “one mind” 1:14; 2:1; 2:46; 4:24; 4:32
- b. Now, as numbers grow, there is dissension
  - i. Arises in the context of mercy ministry (daily service) to widows
  - ii. A split along ethnic lines “Hebrews” & “Hellenists”
- c. We are not told who was distributing before this time
  - i. “Hebrews” may have contributed more *cf.* 1:44-45; 4:34-37
  - ii. “Hellenists” are being shorted (or ignored)
  - iii. The 12 cannot address the matter directly *cf.* Numb 11:12-14

### **II. The Twelve Propose a Solution**

- a. They call the congregation together v. 2a
- b. Explain the dilemma v. 2b
  - i. Not proper (in God’s eyes) to neglect worship & preaching
  - ii. Care for the poor must be done well (*cf.* ministry of tables & Word)
- c. Empower the congregation to choose 7 men v. 3a (*cf.* Numb 11:16-18)  
Are to be men full of the “Holy Ghost & wisdom”
- d. The 12 will appoint them to the task v. 3b *cf.* v. 6; Numb 27:16-23; Dt 34:9
- e. The 12 will continue with their primary responsibilities v. 4

### **III. The Seven are Selected**

- a. The list is revealing – all have Hellenic names
  - i. Stephen – “full of faith and of the Holy Ghost”
  - ii. Philip
  - iii. Prochorus
  - iv. Nicanor
  - v. Timon
  - vi. Parmenas
  - vii. Nicolaus – a proselyte from Syrian Antioch
- b. Bookended with specific comments
- c. Only two are prominent in the following narrative
  - i. Stephen 6:9-7:60 disputing with Hellenists
  - ii. Philip 8:4-40 preaching in Samaria, the desert & the coasts