



Adult Life Groups & Care Groups

Shively Baptist Church | Louisville, KY

Life Group Leaders Handout For Sunday July 6th, 2014

Planned Schedule:

- 0900-0910 – Meet & Greet in Life Groups
- 0910-0915 – Focus (TBD)
- 0915-0930 – Teaching Time (Life Group Leaders)
- 0930-1015 – Care Group Time (Care Group Leaders)



God's Church on the Move

"Keeping Her Moving"

Acts 6:1-7

Background: Many people refer to this passage as the calling of the first deacons (or proto-deacons).

Focus: The focus here, as in the first five chapters of Acts thus far, is COMMUNITY: its priority & protection.

A couple things to recognize:

1. (v1) A source of division came into the Church, threatening the unity (community).
 - a. Just as with Ananias & Sapphira – this threat is from within.
 - b. Whereas Ananias and Sapphira were confined and localized, this was broad based factionalism.
 - c. Many believe the threat is based on perception, not fact. (v2 reads more like an accusation than a statement of fact.)
 - d. The division was along long-held ethnic lines by both factions.
 - e. In this context of this Jerusalem church, the Hellenists (the offended) were in the vast numerical minority.
2. (v2-4) The Apostles responded by:
 - a. Calling all the disciples (Christians, the Church) together
 - b. Acknowledging that they had time limitations
 - c. Reiterating the priority of their teaching ministry and prayer
 - d. Authorized the Church (delegated to the congregation the authority) to choose seven delegates:
 - i. Who were character qualified
 - ii. Who were Spirit verified
 - iii. Who were wise – not just "smart", but skilled in the application of knowledge. (Another way to think of it – "Not just knowing it, but knowing how to effectively use what is known.")



- e. The Apostles were to appoint the delegates to their ministry
- f. The Apostles established a distinction of ministries
 - i. Apostles – Prayer and Ministry of the Word
 - ii. Appointees – to serve tables (v1&2)
 - a) v1 – “daily distribution” – literally, “daily in the service” (διακονία - diakonia)
 - b) v2 – “to serve tables” (διακονεῖν – diakonein)
- g. Long before “Deaconing” was considered by some to be a church office – it was a ministry of service (servanthood) – here applied with a focus of maintaining God honoring unity. (Servant leadership)

Note** - This is why the deaconate (deacons) of SBC have adopted the following purpose statement as their primary responsibility, “To maintain the unity of the Body through works of service.”

- 3. Comments about delegated authority – The Apostles didn’t delegate the serving of tables because it was not important, they delegated because it was vitally important.
 - a. Disunity threatened the community
 - b. To fail to address the issue successfully would perpetuate the fracturing
 - c. To make the serving of tables THE priority would make teaching a lesser priority – which was inappropriate and unacceptable. God honoring community (orthopraxy) takes place in the context of God honoring teaching (orthodoxy).
 - d. Delegating and empowering ensured that the issue was being addressed by someone with legitimate delegated authority. (The deacons acted with the authority of the Apostles within the arena of their ministry as appointed by the Apostles.)
 - e. The deacons understood that they were not separate from the ministry of the Apostles, but were an extension OF the ministry of the Apostles. (There was no “separation of powers”, no one would have viewed this ministry as “outside the oversight” of the Apostles.)
 - f. (v5) – The Church liked the plan – and designated (7) men to present to the Apostles. (Interestingly, all seven men are identified in the text with “Gentile” names.)
- 4. (v6) –
 - a. The Church set their (7) delegates before the Apostles
 - b. The Apostles
 - i. Prayed over them
 - ii. Laid hands on them (Commissioned them to act as Apostolic representatives in this matter)
- 5. (v7) – The pattern of growth continues with the added significance that a large number of Jewish priests also became believers (disciples, members of the Church, people of “this life”, people of “the Way”, etc.)