SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES



DEEP DIVE

Acts

Chapter Six, Verses 1–15

Seven Men and a Face Like an Angel — a quarrel over widows, seven men full of the Spirit, a spreading word, and a deacon on trial

NASB 1995 | VERSE BY VERSE | FOUR VOICES | WITH DIAGRAMS

Greek-speaking widows are overlooked at the daily meal; the apostles keep to prayer and the word and hand the tables to seven Spirit-filled men; the word spreads, priests believe, and Stephen — full of grace and power — is dragged before the Council with a face like an angel. Read through four teachers — **David Guzik**, **R.C. Sproul**, **C.H. Spurgeon** and **Matthew Henry** — with the Greek behind Luke's key words.

THE PASSAGE

Acts 6:1–15

the complaint · the seven · the word · Stephen

THE METHOD

Verse by Verse

Color-coded by teacher

WHAT'S INSIDE

Contents

Four movements from a complaint at the tables to a shining face in the Council

—	**How to Read This Study** · *the four voices & their colors*	3
—	**Before the Passage** · *from daily preaching to the church's first quarrel*	3
I	**The First Quarrel** · *Acts 6:1–4 · the complaint and the priority*	4
II	**Seven Men and a Spreading Word** · *Acts 6:5–7 · the seven and the word*	7
III	**Full of Grace and Power** · *Acts 6:8–10 · Stephen's wisdom*	8
IV	**The Face of an Angel** · *Acts 6:11–15 · the charges and the face*	9
V	**The Passage in the Whole Bible** · *cross-references*	11
†	**At a Glance** · *the four voices side by side*	13
†	**Key Insights & Questions for the Table** · *discussion*	13
†	**Sources** · *where each voice comes from*	15



"The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith." — Acts 6:7

SECTION I · THE PASSAGE

Acts 6:1–15

Seven Men and a Face Like an Angel — The church solves its first internal crisis — and one of the servants it chose becomes its first great witness

† How to Read This Study

This study walks Acts 6 in 4 movements, in Luke's own order. Each movement opens with the full NASB 1995 text of those verses, marked with the Berean colors and shapes; then the Greek behind the key words; then the teachers, each in his own color — **David Guzik**, the pastor who walks the text verse by verse; **R.C. Sproul**, the theologian who presses every word for its doctrine; **C.H. Spurgeon**, the preacher who turns the doctrine into a call to the heart; and **Matthew Henry**, the Puritan commentator who gathers it into plain, practical counsel. The figures draw the passage so you can see where Luke is going. Read the Scripture first; then let each voice add its angle.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word — R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's
C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle — MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions; Command / instruction; Key repeated word; Sin / warning; Promise / blessing; Time / place / contrast

KEY VERSE · ACTS 6:4

"But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

† Before the Passage

Acts 5 ended with the apostles flogged, released and rejoicing, "every day, in the temple and from house to house" preaching Jesus as the Christ (5:42). Satan had tried a lie from inside (5:1–11) and force from outside (5:17–40). Chapter 6 opens with a third kind of danger: not a scandal or a prison, but a quarrel at the dinner table. Guzik: "Satan loves to use an unintentional wrong to begin a conflict."

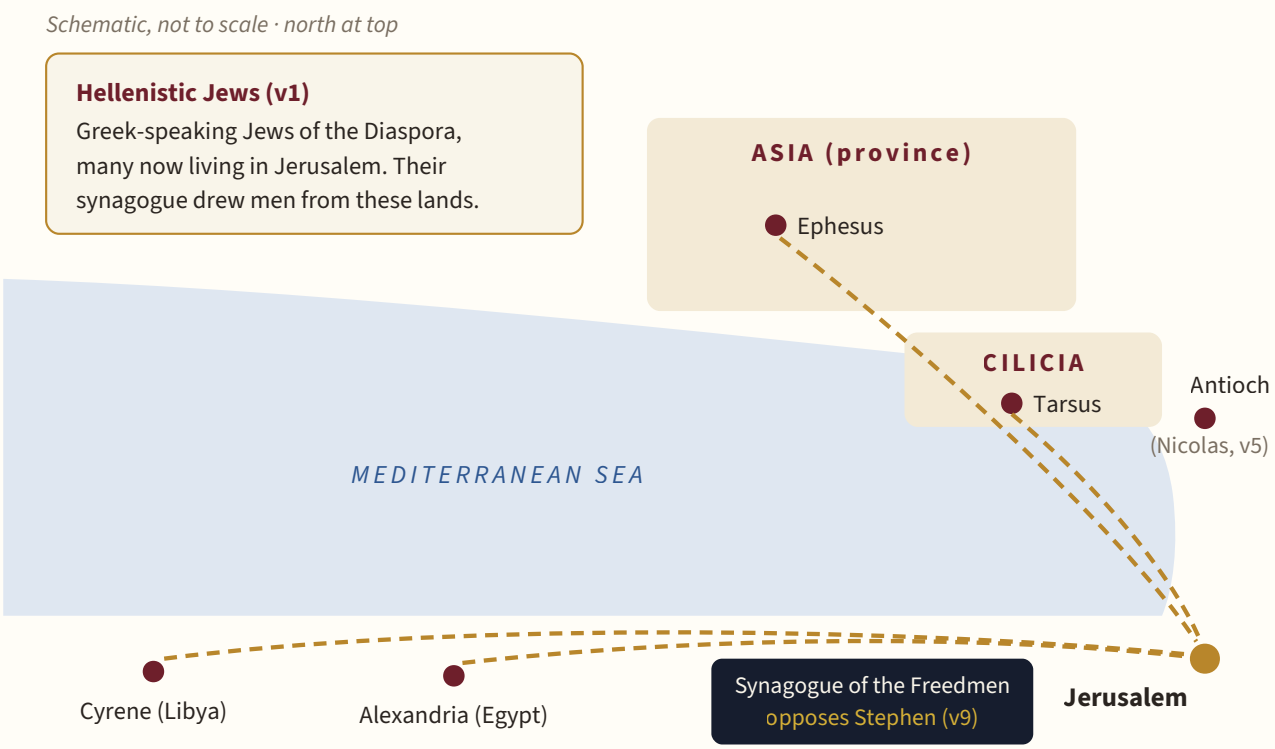
The church in Jerusalem was entirely Jewish, but Jews were not all alike. The "native Hebrews" were mostly from Judea, spoke Aramaic and kept Jewish culture closely; the "Hellenistic Jews" had grown up in the Greek-speaking cities of the Diaspora — Alexandria, Cyrene, Cilicia, Asia — and many had come to live in Jerusalem, some to die near the temple. Widows who had moved to Jerusalem far from their families depended on the church's daily provision. Sproul: "Do you know what happens to widows when their husbands die?" Care for them was written into the Law and repeated by James: "to visit orphans and widows in their distress" (James 1:27).

The apostles' answer is a model of shared work. They keep what only they can do — "prayer and … the ministry of the word" (v4) — and they ask the congregation to choose seven men. The Greek uses the same

word family for both jobs: the "serving" of food (*diakonia*, v1), to "serve" tables (*diakoneō*, v2) and "the ministry" of the word (*diakonia*, v4). From that word comes "deacon," though Luke never uses the title here. All seven have Greek names, and one, Nicolas, was a convert to Judaism from Antioch.

Two of the seven quickly outgrow the tables. Stephen becomes the church's first martyr (chapter 7), and Philip carries the gospel to Samaria and to an Ethiopian official (chapter 8) — Acts 1:8 coming true. Stephen's opponents come from a Diaspora synagogue that included men "from Cilicia" (v9), the province of Tarsus. When Stephen is stoned, "the witnesses laid aside their robes at the feet of a young man named Saul" (7:58).

FIGURE · WHERE THE HELLENISTS CAME FROM



The Greek-speaking Jews of verse 1 and Stephen's opponents in verse 9 came to Jerusalem from these Diaspora lands — including Cilicia, home of Tarsus.

I
MOVEMENT

ACTS 6:1–4

The First Quarrel

Overlooked widows, a growing church, and apostles who keep first things first

> [1] *Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, ⚠ a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because ⚠ their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food.* [2] *So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "◷ It is not desirable for us to neglect*

the word of God in order to serve tables. 3 *"Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.* 4 *"But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."*

ACTS 6:1–4

"Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world."

JAMES 1:27

"Moses said, "This will happen when the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning; for the LORD hears your grumblings which you grumble against Him. And what are we? Your grumblings are not against us but against the LORD.""

EXODUS 16:8

FIGURE · ONE WORD, TWO MINISTRIES



Luke uses the same word for serving food and for the ministry of the word; the apostles divide the work, not its dignity.

γογγυσμός

GONGYSMOS · "COMPLAINT" · G1112

Grumbling, muttering — the word sounds like what it means. Only four New Testament uses: the crowds' "grumbling" about Jesus (John 7:12), here, "Do all things without grumbling or disputing" (Philippians 2:14), and "Be hospitable to one another without complaint" (1 Peter 4:9). The Greek Old Testament uses it for Israel's "grumblings" in the wilderness, also over food (Exodus 16:7–8). Henry: "not an open falling out, but a secret heart-burning." Grumbling is always first a heart problem.

Ἑλληνιστής · Ἑβραῖος

HELLĒNISTĒS · "HELLENIST" · G1675 · HEBRAIOS · "HEBREW" · G1445

Hellēnistēs comes from *hellēnizō*, to speak Greek or live like a Greek. It is a Jew of Greek speech, not a Gentile; Luke uses it again when Saul argues with "the Hellenistic Jews" and they try to kill him (9:29). *Hebraios* here means the Aramaic-speaking Jews of the homeland. Guzik: "The Hebrews were those Jews more inclined to embrace Jewish culture and were mostly from Judea." Both groups were believers.

προσκαρτερήσομεν

PROSKARTERĒSOMEN · "DEVOTE OURSELVES" · G4342

From *proskartereō*, to hold fast to, to persist in, to be busy with constantly. It is Luke's word for the early church's habits: the disciples "were continually devoting themselves to prayer" (1:14) and "to the apostles' teaching" (2:42), and the apostles now resolve to keep at prayer and the word (6:4). The KJV catches it well: "give ourselves continually." Prayer comes first in the verse.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik sees an old enemy behind a small wrong: "Satan loves to use an unintentional wrong to begin a conflict." No one meant to neglect the Greek-speaking widows, but the hurt was real, and the cultural gap made it worse. He defines the two groups carefully and stresses that both were Christians. He admires how fast the apostles moved: "They didn't form a committee and discuss the problem to death." They named the need, kept their own calling, and gave the church a job to do.

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul's "Apostles and Deacons" (7 Mar 2004) calls this "the first crisis that infected the first Christian community." He ties it to James's command to care for widows and asks, "Do you know what happens to widows when their husbands die?" Then he turns to the apostles' priority: "Pastors are to be ministers of the Word because that is our mandate." He laments what happens when churches forget it — "We have raised up generations of pastors who are jacks of all trades and masters of none."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon's "Good Earnests of Great Success" (12 Jan 1868), preached on verse 7, starts with what had just been settled in verses 1–6. A quarrel unhealed is a danger: "A breach once made has a tendency to widen, and a rent, unless speedily repaired, may tear a church to pieces." Unity is not a luxury but a condition of blessing: "Such unanimity, as a rule, I consider essential to church prosperity." His charge to his own congregation fits Jerusalem: "Keep together, brethren, keep close to Christ; close up your ranks."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry notes the irony that growth brought the trouble — the church under pressure was like Israel in Egypt: "the more it was afflicted, the more it multiplied." The murmuring was quiet: "There arose a murmuring, not an open falling out, but a secret heart-burning." And it was over money: "The first contention in the Christian church was about a money-matter." The apostles would not be pulled off their work, for "Preaching the gospel is the best work, and the most proper and needful that a minister can be employed in."

II
MOVEMENT

ACTS 6:5–7

Seven Men and a Spreading Word

The church chooses, the apostles pray and lay on hands, and even priests believe

> 5 *The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen,*
> ☆ *a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a*
> *proselyte from Antioch.* 6 *And these they brought before the apostles; and*
> ◷ *after praying, they laid their hands on them.* 7 △ *The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the*
> *disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and* ☆ *a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to*
> *the faith.*
>
> ACTS 6:5–7

> *"On the next day we left and came to Caesarea, and entering the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, we stayed with him."*
>
> ACTS 21:8

διακονέω

DIAKONEŌ · "TO SERVE" · G1247

To wait on, to serve — first at table, then in any work done for another. Its noun *diakonia* (G1248) appears twice in these verses: the "serving" of food (v1) and the "ministry" of the word (v4). The title "deacon" (*diakonos*) grows from this family. Guzik: "Nowhere in this chapter of Acts are these men called deacons," though "most consider they were the first to fulfill the office of deacon" (1 Timothy 3:8–13). Sproul is more direct: "This was how the diaconate was founded." Jesus had used the same verb of Himself: "I am among you as the one who serves" (Luke 22:27).

ὑπήκουον

HYPĒKOUON · "WERE BECOMING OBEDIENT" · G5219

From *hypakouō*, to listen under, to heed and obey. The tense is continuous: priest after priest was obeying. Faith in the New Testament is something you obey (Romans 1:5, "the obedience of faith"). These were men of the temple establishment that had condemned Jesus, and verse 7 sits right after the word *auxanō* (G837), "kept on spreading" — the word grows like a living thing.

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik notices the wisdom in the choice: "The seven men all had Greek names, indicating that they were probably Hellenists themselves." The offended group was given men from their own side to make it right. The apostles set a high bar — good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom — because "Practical service is spiritual service." He notes that "The word deacon simply means 'servant,'" and that while Acts 6 never uses the title, most see here the first deacons. The result: the word spread and priests believed.

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul draws three qualifications from verses 3–5: the seven needed great faith, great ability and great commitment — men of reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom. They were set apart by prayer and the laying on of hands for a ministry of service, and the church gained both fed widows and freed preachers. "This was how the diaconate was founded."

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon asks how the prosperity of verse 7 is gained, and answers first: "Nothing can avail without the operation of the Holy Spirit and the smile from heaven." Prayer is the lever: "Nothing is impossible to the man who knows how to overcome heaven by wrestling intercession." And every believer has a part — "according to Christ's law, every Christian is to be a minister in his own sphere." He turns the converted priests into an appeal: "They believed in Christ, saw the fold, entered in, and were saved; why should not you be like them?"

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry rejoices that the gospel won ground in the hardest place: "God has his remnant even in the worst of places." Jerusalem had resisted Christ most, and now "a great company of the priests" obeyed, and "Then is the word and grace of God greatly magnified when those are wrought upon by it that were least likely." He credits the growth partly to the apostles' decision — ministers disentangling themselves from secular employments to give themselves to the word and prayer.

III
MOVEMENT

ACTS 6:8–10

Full of Grace and Power

Stephen's signs, the Synagogue of the Freedmen, and a wisdom no one could answer

8 *And Stephen, △ full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people.* 9 *But some men from what was called ◷ the Synagogue of the Freedmen, including both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and argued with Stephen.* 10 *But △ they were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.*

ACTS 6:8–10

"for I will give you utterance and wisdom which none of your opponents will be able to resist or refute."

LUKE 21:15

χάριτος · δυνάμεως

CHARITOS · "GRACE" · G5485 · DYNAMEŌS · "POWER" · G1411

The NASB reads "full of grace and power" (v8) from the Greek *charitos*; the KJV's "full of faith and power" follows later manuscripts that echo verse 5. Our teachers quote it both ways (Guzik and Sproul say "faith and power"). The two readings agree on the man: Stephen is "full" four times — of the Spirit, wisdom, faith, grace and power (vv3, 5, 8). *Dynamis* is the power Jesus promised in 1:8: "you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you."

Λιβερτῖνοι
LIBERTINOI · "FREEDMEN" · G3032

A Latin word (*libertini*) in Greek letters, found only here: freed slaves and their descendants. Many Jews taken to Rome as captives were later freed, and some returned to Jerusalem with their own synagogue. Its members, or allied synagogues, came from Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia and Asia. Guzik: "The mention of Cilicia suggests this may have been Paul's synagogue before he was converted."

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik keeps the focus on the source of Stephen's strength: "God used Stephen because he was full of faith and power." A table-server became a miracle-worker and a debater, because the same Spirit fills both jobs. When the synagogue men argued and lost, "We should attribute his upper hand in the debate to the Spirit by which he spoke." He wonders about one of the men from Cilicia: "The mention of Cilicia suggests this may have been Paul's synagogue before he was converted."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul's "Stephen on Trial" (14 Mar 2004) reads verse 8 from his text as "full of faith and power" and sees the conflict begin honestly: "They entered into a dispute with him." The Greek-speaking synagogue men were no match: "But Luke tells us they could not resist his wisdom or the spirit by which he spoke." Then the turn: "The group started by engaging Stephen in honest debate, but their honesty was short-lived." When men cannot answer the truth, they often attack the messenger.

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry calls Stephen "only a deacon in the church, and a very sharp young man," and yet "Those that are full of faith are full of power, because by faith the power of God is engaged for us." His opponents thought they were arguing with a man, but "they were disputing with the Spirit of God in him, for whom they were an unequal match." Christ's promise of a wisdom adversaries could not resist was being kept.

IV
MOVEMENT

ACTS 6:11–15

The Face of an Angel

Suborned witnesses, charges against Moses and the temple, and a shining face in the Council

11 *Then* ⚠ *they secretly induced men* *to say, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God."* 12 *And they stirred up the people, the elders and the scribes, and they came up to him and dragged him away and brought him before the Council.* 13 ⚠ *They put forward false witnesses* *who said, "This man incessantly speaks against this holy place and the Law;* 14 *for we have heard him say that* ◷ *this Nazarene, Jesus, will destroy this place* *and alter the customs which Moses handed down to us."* 15 *And fixing their gaze on him, all who were sitting in the Council saw* △ *his face like the face of an angel*.

ACTS 6:11–15

> *"Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain false testimony against Jesus, so that they might put Him to death. They did not find any, even though many false witnesses came forward. But later on two came forward, and said, "This man stated, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to rebuild it in three days.'"*"
>
> MATTHEW 26:59–61

> *"But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit."*
>
> 2 CORINTHIANS 3:18

FIGURE · TRIED LIKE HIS MASTER

THE SERVANT TRIED LIKE HIS MASTER

	JESUS · Matthew 26	STEPHEN · Acts 6
court	"the whole Council" (26:59)	"brought him before the Council" (v12)
witnesses	"many false witnesses" (26:60)	"false witnesses" (v13)
charge	"destroy the temple of God" (26:61)	"will destroy this place" (v14)
method	"trying to obtain false testimony"	"secretly induced men" (v11)
his face	"they spat in His face" (26:67)	"like the face of an angel" (v15)

Jesus had said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up" — "of the temple of His body" (John 2:19, 21).
Guzik: "It is a good thing to be accused of the same things Jesus was accused of."

Read across each row: Stephen's trial follows the pattern of Jesus' trial almost point for point.

Ὑπέβαλον
HYPEBALON · "SECRETLY INDUCED" · G5260

From *hypoballō*, to throw under, to put up someone secretly — the KJV's "suborned." Only here in the New Testament. The witnesses were planted and coached. The Law had said, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (Exodus 20:16), and verse 13 calls them exactly that: *pseudeis* (G5571), "false" witnesses. Guzik: "Popular opinion can be easily shaped."

ἀγγέλου

ANGELOU · "OF AN ANGEL" · G32

Angelos, messenger, angel. The Council "saw his face like the face of an angel" (v15). Guzik and Sproul both think of Moses coming down from the mountain with a shining face — the very Moses Stephen was accused of blaspheming (v11). Sproul: "That light on the face of Moses did not come from inside of Moses." Paul says the glory on Moses' face was fading (2 Corinthians 3:7), but the glory Christ gives grows "from glory to glory" (3:18).

DAVID GUZIK · Enduring Word

Guzik traces the strategy: losing the debate, Stephen's enemies coached false witnesses and worked the crowd — "Popular opinion can be easily shaped." The charges twisted Stephen's real teaching that Jesus is greater than Moses, the temple and the Law. And they were the charges made against Jesus: "It is a good thing to be accused of the same things Jesus was accused of." Of the face he writes, "His face had the same reflected glory that Moses had as he beheld God intimately."

R.C. SPROUL · Ligonier · St. Andrew's

Sproul argues that nearly everything the witnesses said was false; the one true thing — that Jesus spoke of destroying the temple — they twisted. Then he turns to the face: "He looked as if he had the face of an angel." He takes us to Exodus 33–34: "That light on the face of Moses did not come from inside of Moses. It was reflected glory, reflected by having been in the presence of God." So with Stephen: "The radiance shining from the face of Stephen was more like Moses than Jesus."

MATTHEW HENRY · Commentary on the Whole Bible

Henry agrees that "Blasphemy is justly reckoned a heinous crime," which is exactly why the false charge was so wicked: they twisted Stephen's words into an attack on Moses, the temple and the Law. God answered with a sign on Stephen's face — "such an unaccountable mixture of mildness and majesty." But Henry is honest about what follows: "Wisdom and holiness make a man's face to shine, and yet these will not secure men from the greatest indignities." The shining face did not save Stephen from the stones.

V

THEME

CROSS-REFERENCES

The Passage in the Whole Bible

Shared labor, faithful men, and glory on a servant's face

"And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;"

EPHESIANS 4:11–12

"The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."

2 TIMOTHY 2:2

> *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”*
>
> GALATIANS 3:28

> *“So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.”*
>
> ISAIAH 55:11

> *“Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.””*
>
> JOHN 2:19

> *“Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.”*
>
> JOHN 15:20

> *“But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was,”*
>
> 2 CORINTHIANS 3:7

C.H. SPURGEON · Metropolitan Tabernacle

Spurgeon closes his sermon on verse 7 by setting before his church a choice — keep the unity, prayer and witness that brought blessing in Jerusalem, or lose them. His headings move from “the means” to “the results” to “the alternative which I think stands before this church and every other church.”

SECTION II · STUDY HELPS

At a Glance

Four voices, one chapter

Four teachers, one chapter. Guzik walks the text and notices the pastoral wisdom (Greek names for a Greek complaint); Sproul presses the pastor's mandate and the reflected glory on Stephen's face; Spurgeon preaches unity and prayer as the means of blessing; Henry draws counsel from every line. They differ in how firmly they call the seven "deacons" — Sproul and Henry do, Guzik notes the title is not used — and agree that Spirit-filled service is real ministry.

THE MOVEMENT	GUZIK · the text	SPROUL · the doctrine	SPURGEON · the heart	HENRY · the counsel
I · The complaint	Satan uses an unintentional wrong; no committee — they acted.	The first crisis; care for widows; pastors are ministers of the Word.	A breach unrepaired may tear a church to pieces; keep together.	A secret heart-burning over a money-matter; preaching is the best work.
II · The seven	Greek names for a Greek complaint; practical service is spiritual service.	Great faith, ability, commitment; the diaconate founded.	The Spirit, prayer, every member a minister; the priests believed.	God has His remnant in the worst places.
III · Stephen's wisdom	Full of faith and power; the Spirit won the debate; Saul's synagogue?	Honest debate, short-lived honesty; none could resist.	— (no Spurgeon sermon on these verses sourced here)	Full of faith, full of power; they fought the Spirit in him.
IV · The face	Opinion easily shaped; accused like Jesus; Moses' reflected glory.	False witnesses twisted Jesus' words; reflected glory, like Moses.	— (no Spurgeon sermon on these verses sourced here)	Mildness and majesty; a shining face does not stop the stones.

ACTS 6:1–15 · A COMPARATIVE READING

† Key Insights to Carry

- **Satan tries the dinner table.** After a lie (5:1–11) and a prison (5:17–40), the third attack is a quarrel. Guzik: "Satan loves to use an unintentional wrong to begin a conflict." GUZIK
- **Grumbling is a wilderness word.** *Gongysmos* (v1) is the word for Israel's "grumblings" over food in Exodus 16. Henry: "a secret heart-burning." THE GREEK
- **Tables and the word are both diakonia.** The same word names the food line (v1) and the pulpit (v4). Guzik: "Practical service is spiritual service." THE GREEK
- **Prayer comes first.** "We will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word" (v4). Sproul: "Pastors are to be ministers of the Word because that is our mandate." SPROUL
- **Greek names for a Greek complaint.** All seven names are Greek (v5). Guzik: "they were probably Hellenists themselves." The church gave the hurt side the keys. GUZIK
- **Unity is a means of blessing.** Spurgeon: "A breach once made has a tendency to widen." Verse 7 follows directly from verses 1–6. SPURGEON
- **Priests obeyed the faith.** The establishment that condemned Jesus began to yield (v7). Henry: "God has his remnant even in the worst of places." HENRY
- **Full, full, full.** Stephen is full of the Spirit, wisdom, faith, grace and power (vv3, 5, 8). The table-server is the same man as the debater. THE TEXT

- **Tried like his Master.** False witnesses, the Council, a temple charge (vv11–14; Matt 26:59–61). Guzik: "It is a good thing to be accused of the same things Jesus was accused of." THE TEXT
- **Reflected glory.** Sproul: "It was reflected glory, reflected by having been in the presence of God." Henry: shining faces do not secure men from indignities. SPROUL

† Questions for the Table

1 **The complaint was real but quiet — a "secret heart-burning" (Henry). What grumbling am I carrying that I have never brought into the open in a healthy way?**

Satan loves to use an unintentional wrong (Guzik).

6:1; Phil 2:14

2 **Who are the "overlooked widows" around me — the people easy to miss in my church, unit or neighborhood — and what is one way I can see them this week?**

Pure religion visits widows in their distress.

6:1; James 1:27

3 **The apostles knew what only they could do and protected it. What is the main thing God has given me to do, and what am I letting crowd it out?**

Prayer and the ministry of the word (v4).

6:2–4

4 **The seven had to be "full of the Spirit and of wisdom" to serve food. Do I think of my ordinary service — cooking, cleaning, driving, fixing — as spiritual work?**

Practical service is spiritual service (Guzik).

6:3–6; Eph 4:11–12

5 **Stephen's enemies could not answer him, so they lied about him. How do I respond when I am misrepresented for following Jesus?**

It is a good thing to be accused of what Jesus was accused of (Guzik).

6:10–14; John 15:20

6 **Stephen's face reflected glory because he had been with God. What would it take for people to see Christ on my face, not just hear Him in my words?**

Reflected glory, from being in the presence of God (Sproul).

6:15; 2 Cor 3:18

Acts 6 shows a church that solves a real problem without losing its main thing. The apostles keep to prayer and the word, Spirit-filled men take the tables, and the word spreads even into the priesthood. Then one of those table-servers stands before the Council with the glory of God on his face. No service is too small for the Spirit, and no servant is too small to shine.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

† Sources

Each teacher's section summarizes the pages below in our own words; short quotations are verbatim from them. Matthew Henry (1662–1714) completed his *Commentary* himself through the Gospels and Acts. Henry's Commentary and C.H. Spurgeon (1834–1892) are in the public domain; Guzik and Sproul are summarized — consult each author's own work.

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