

Small or Big?

- Think of a small organization and a big organization
 - For example: school, business, club, ...
 - What are some advantages of being small?
 - What are some advantages of being big?
- Why might a church want to add more people?
- Why might a church not want to add more people?
- What are we to do??

Unleashed for Life

Acts 6:1-7

Brown/English: Page 1096

White/Spanish: Page 1392

Red/Chinese: Page 1773



A Series on the Church

- God has given His same grace to each and every believer in different forms and roles to be used for the good of the whole and for the glory of God when used together as one
Romans 12:3-8
- God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the absolutely necessary foundation and power of the church which is filled with people who have ignored, forgotten, belittled, judged, and disobeyed Jesus Christ and are welcomed freely by His grace through faith by the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit
Acts 2
- Jesus Christ is God the Son and God's appointed Savior for us and the final authority (owner, architect, builder, defender, and director) over His Church
Matthew 16

The book of Acts

- The growth of the early church
 - “They all joined together constantly in **prayer** ... a group numbering about a **hundred and twenty**” *1:14-15*
 - The Spirit came and “about **three thousand were added** to their number that day” *2:41*
 - “the Lord **added to their number daily**” *2:47*
 - “But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about **five thousand**” *4:4*
 - “more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were **added to their number**” *5:14*
 - “Day after day, in the temple courts and from house to house, they never stopped **teaching and proclaiming the good news** that Jesus is the Messiah.” *5:42*
- Introduced growing pains...

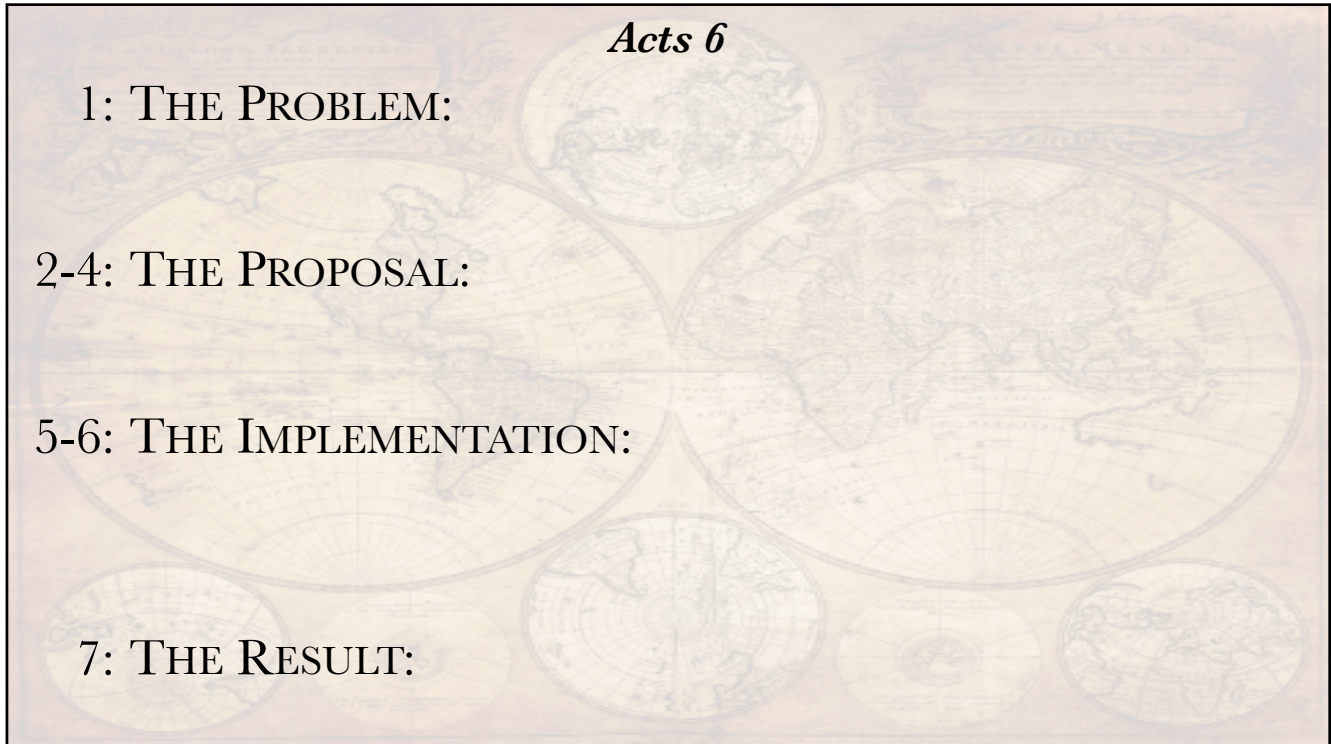
Acts 6

1: THE PROBLEM:

2-4: THE PROPOSAL:

5-6: THE IMPLEMENTATION:

7: THE RESULT:



Acts 6

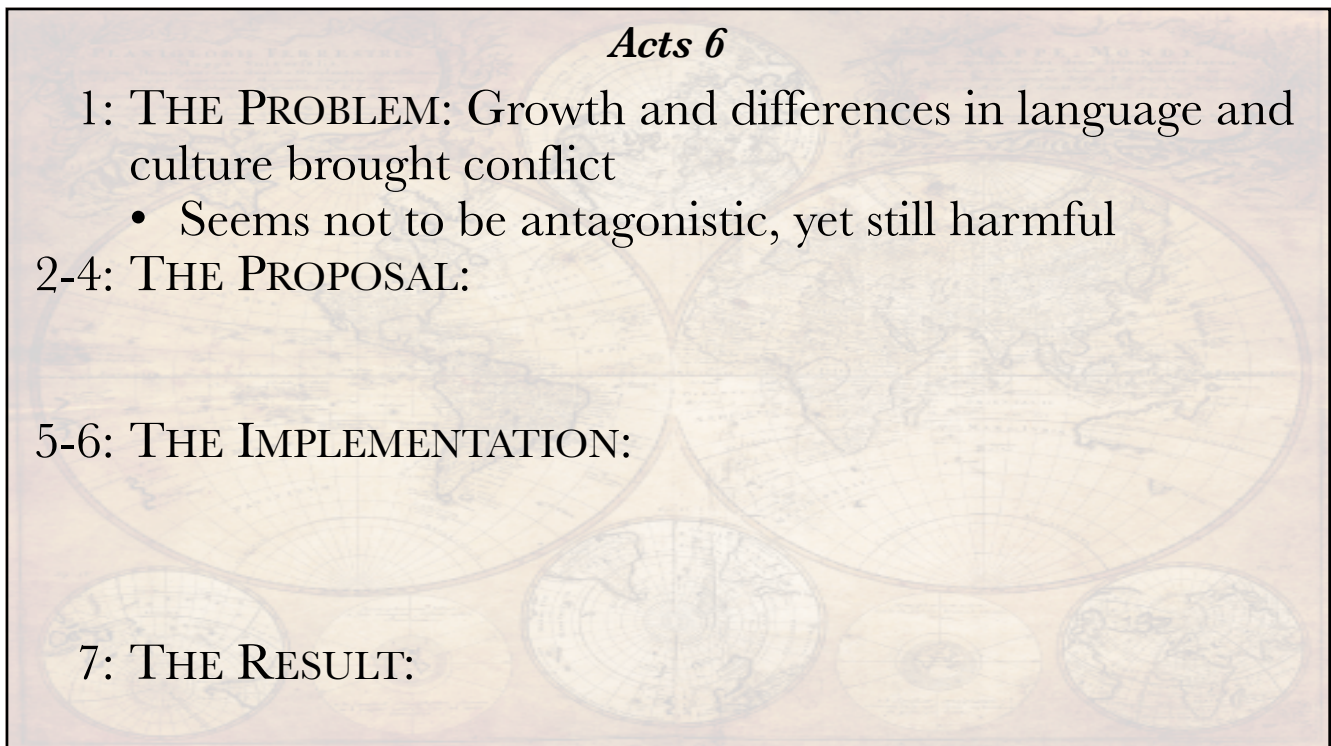
1: THE PROBLEM: Growth and differences in language and culture brought conflict

- Seems not to be antagonistic, yet still harmful

2-4: THE PROPOSAL:

5-6: THE IMPLEMENTATION:

7: THE RESULT:



“Christians in every age and social context need to be aware of the threat that cultural and language differences can pose to their unity in Christ.”

- Our **Intercultural Resource Team** is one key way in which we try to be aware and respond well
 - Are we (am I) missing something?
 - Please help us learn!
 - *Contact me, Saweda Liverpool-Tasie, or other team members*

Acts 6

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2-4: THE PROPOSAL:

5-6: THE IMPLEMENTATION:

7: THE RESULT:

Acts 6

1: THE PROBLEM: Growth and differences in language and culture brought conflict

2-4: THE PROPOSAL: Select respected, Spirit-filled, wisdom-filled workers, and authorize them to resolve the conflict

- Not unimportant. It was **also** important.

5-6: THE IMPLEMENTATION:

7: THE RESULT:

Acts 6

1: THE PROBLEM: Growth and differences in language and culture brought conflict

2-4: THE PROPOSAL: Select respected, Spirit-filled, wisdom-filled workers, and authorize them to resolve the conflict

5-6: THE IMPLEMENTATION: The people agreed. So 7 were chosen, and the apostles authorized them to lead and serve

7: THE RESULT:

Acts 6

- 1: **THE PROBLEM:** Growth and differences in language and culture brought conflict
- 2-4: **THE PROPOSAL:** Select respected, Spirit-filled, wisdom-filled workers, and authorize them to resolve the conflict
- 5-6: **THE IMPLEMENTATION:** The people agreed. So 7 were chosen, and the apostles authorized them to lead and serve
- 7: **THE RESULT:** God's Word grew: many more disciples, including priests, in good community

The Word Increased

“And the word of God continued to increase”

Acts 6:7

“But the word of God increased and multiplied.”

Acts 12:24

“So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.”

Acts 19:20

The Big Idea

The church grows stronger
when more trusted, spirit-filled people
are called and empowered
to lead and to serve
in ways that fit who they are

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Application

- For them, the focus was on meeting the needs of widows.
- For us...

Application

- Empower respected, Spirit-filled people to lead and serve in ways that fit who they are
 - Pay attention to power, culture, and language
 - Be ready to innovate and adjust
 - Equip and empower people: not anarchy

Implications

- Empower respected, Spirit-filled people to lead and serve in ways that fit who they are
- Actively serve in the Spirit, even in “natural” matters
 - All work has a Spirit-dimension, so...
 - Pray for God’s wisdom, empowerment, blessing, protection, ...
 - Act with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control
 - Do it in love for God and love for people

Implications

- Empower respected, Spirit-filled people to lead and serve in ways that fit who they are
- Actively serve in the Spirit, even in “natural” matters
- Prioritize prayer and ministry of the Word (Bible)
 - **First priority**, yet not the only priority
 - **Sunday morning**: kids and adults; songs, sharing, sermon, prayer times, ...
 - **Other than Sunday morning**: spiritual oversight, Life Groups, meals, bed time, prayer gatherings, ...

We long for and we pray for the growth of God’s Word

- More people are more deeply transformed by the knowledge of God through the grace of Jesus Christ
- Especially people with more limited exposure and access to the Gospel
- So we long and we pray for more people who are filled with the Holy Spirit to be unleashed and empowered to lead and to serve as God has made them
- A key goal of our governance model: unleashing all of God’s people to show and proclaim His glory

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Magician's Nephew

- C.S. Lewis and the Chronicles of Narnia:
fantasy story that includes imagined view of creation
 - Darkness with no life yet.
 - Jesus Christ: a great, powerful, and good lion

“In the darkness something was happening at last. A voice had begun to sing. It was very far away and Digory found it hard to decide from what direction it was coming. Sometimes it seemed to come from all directions at once. Sometimes he almost thought it was coming out of the earth beneath them. Its lower notes were deep enough to be the voice of the earth herself. There were no words. There was hardly even a tune. But it was, beyond comparison, the most beautiful noise he had ever heard. It was so beautiful he could hardly bear it.



Then two wonders happened at the same moment. One was that the voice was suddenly joined by other voices, more voices than you could possibly count. They were in harmony with it, but far higher up the scale: cold, tingling, silvery voices. The second wonder was that the blackness overhead, all at once, was blazing with stars. They didn't come out gently one by one, as they do on a summer evening. One moment there had been nothing but darkness; next moment, a thousand, thousand points of light leaped out—single stars, constellations, and planets, bright and bigger than any in our world.”



“Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.” *Daniel 12:3*

“In the last days, God says,
I will pour out my Spirit on all people.
Your sons and daughters will prophesy,
your young men will see visions,
your old men will dream dreams.
Even on my servants, both men and women,
I will pour out my Spirit in those days,
and they will prophesy.” *Acts 2:17-18*



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