



The First Church Conflict: Wisdom in Action



Explore Acts 6 to see how spiritual and practical wisdom resolved early church tensions, offering lessons for unity and service today.

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Introduction

The early church was a new and vibrant community, bursting with growth and zeal. Yet, growth often brings challenges. In Acts 6, we encounter the first recorded conflict within the church—a tension between the Greek-speaking believers and the Hebrew-speaking widows concerning daily food distribution. This episode is not just a historical note; it offers timeless insights into how the church can use spiritual wisdom and practical solutions to maintain unity and serve effectively.

The conflict arose because some in the community felt overlooked and marginalized, reminding us that even in the most Spirit-filled environments, human needs and concerns can create divisions. How leaders responded—with prayer, wise counsel, and delegation—provides a powerful model for how to address and transform disagreement into an opportunity for growth and ministry.

Over these seven days, we will dive deeply into Acts 6 and related passages to understand the nature of this first church conflict, the qualities God honored in those appointed to serve, and how faithfulness to God's guidance can reconcile and strengthen His people. We will reflect on the importance of teamwork, servant leadership, and prioritizing both spiritual and practical needs within the body of Christ.

May this study inspire you to embrace wisdom, pray fervently, and serve with humility, following the example of the early church so that tensions in your

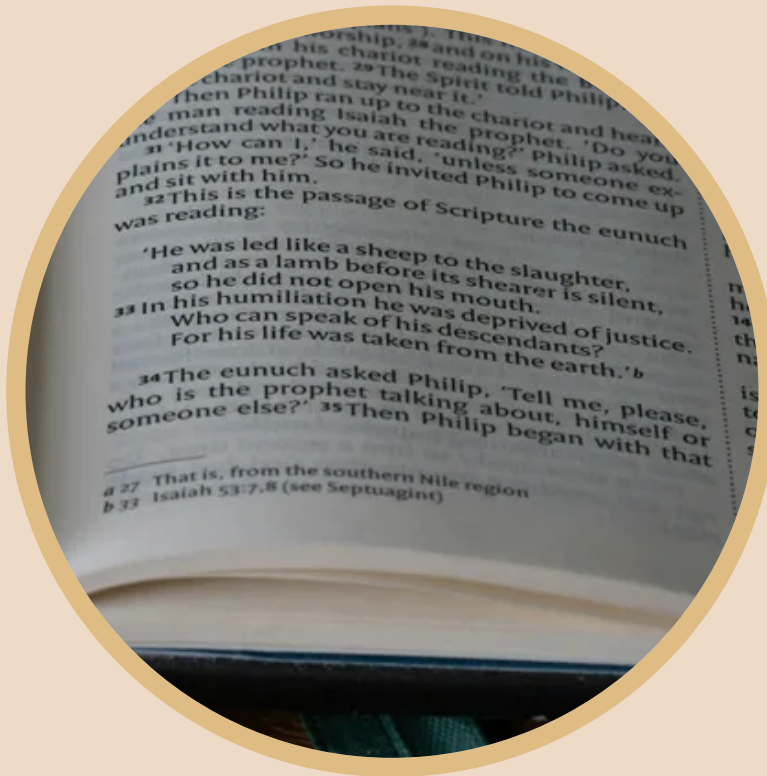


community can be resolved with grace and truth.





Day 1: 🕊️ Recognizing Conflict in the Early Church



Your Verse

Acts 6:1 – "In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Psalm 34:14 – "Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it."*
- *James 1:5 – "If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault."*



Devotional: Identifying Hidden Tensions in Growth

Growth often brings new challenges. The early church was experiencing rapid growth, but this growth revealed underlying tensions. Some widows were being neglected in food distribution—this was not a minor issue but a threat to unity.

We often think of church conflicts as spiritual failings, but here we see a practical problem that required spiritual insight. The believers recognized the issue and brought it to the apostles.

This calls us to be vigilant about inequalities and imbalances in our communities and to approach such situations prayerfully. Conflict isn't inherently sinful, but ignoring it is dangerous. Identifying tensions is the first step toward healing and stronger fellowship.



Reflect and Apply

1. What hidden tensions or needs might exist in your community that require attention?

2. How do you typically respond when you notice conflict emerging?

3. What can you learn from the early church's willingness to confront the problem openly?



Day 1: 🕊️ Recognizing Conflict in the Early Church

Journaling Prompts

1. Describe a time when a growing community you were part of faced a conflict. How was it addressed?

2. Write down any current conflicts or tensions you recognize around you.

3. Reflect on your feelings toward conflicts: are you more avoidant or confrontational?



Day 1: 🕊️ Recognizing Conflict in the Early Church

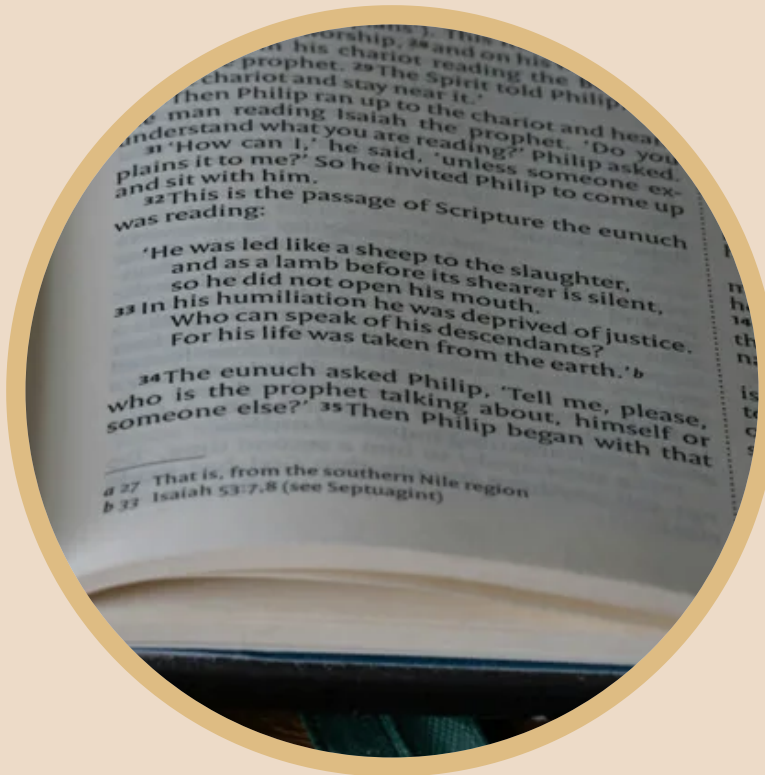
Prayer for Today

Lord, help me to see clearly when problems arise within my community. Give me wisdom to discern hidden tensions and courage to face them with Your love. May I seek peace and pursue it, following Your example in the early church. Help me to be attentive to the needs of others and faithful in addressing them. *Guide my heart to serve in humility and grace.*





Day 2: Apostolic Leadership and Prayer



Your Verse

Acts 6:2-4 - "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Colossians 4:2 - "Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful."*
- *1 Timothy 3:10 - "They must also have a good reputation, be faithful to their wives, and manage their children and households well."*



Devotional: Prioritizing Prayer and Ministry

The apostles modeled prioritization of responsibilities. They refused to be distracted by logistical duties that could prevent them from focusing on prayer and the preaching of God's word. Instead, they called the community to appoint trusted men to oversee the practical tasks.

This moment reminds us that leadership in the church involves delegating responsibilities wisely to maintain spiritual health. The apostles understood that spiritual nourishment and intercession are essential for the church's growth and unity.

We must evaluate how we allocate our time and energy, ensuring that prayer and the word remain central. Delegation is not just a practical matter but a spiritual discipline that enables the body to function effectively.



Reflect and Apply

1. What areas of your life or ministry need better delegation to maintain spiritual focus?

2. How can you cultivate a deeper commitment to prayer in your daily routine?

3. In what ways does focusing on the word and prayer equip you to handle conflicts?



Journaling Prompts

1. List tasks or roles you currently manage that could be shared or delegated.

2. Write about times when prayer has guided you through difficult situations.

3. Reflect on how the word of God has shaped your approach to leadership and service.



Day 2: 📖 Apostolic Leadership and Prayer

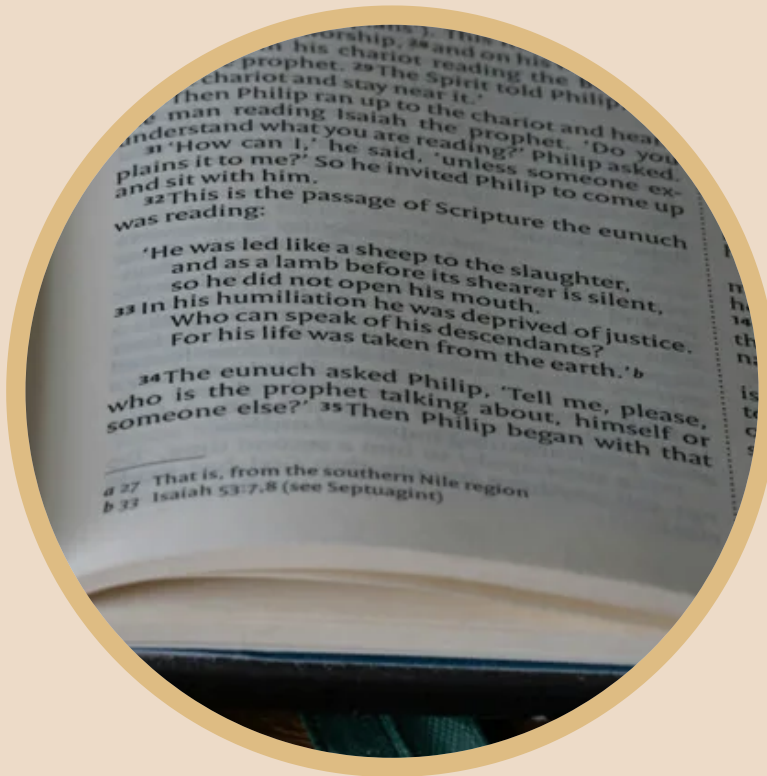
Prayer for Today

Father, teach me to prioritize what truly matters in my walk with You. Help me to stay devoted to prayer and Scripture, and to trust others with responsibilities so the church can thrive. Strengthen my faith and wisdom as I lead or serve in my community. May Your Spirit guide all those appointed to serve and free me to focus on interceding and sharing Your word.





Day 3: 🧑🏻 🤝 🧑🏻 Choosing Servants Full of Wisdom



Day 3: 🧑🏽🧡🧑🏽 Choosing Servants Full of Wisdom

Your Verse

Acts 6:3-5 - "Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom... The proposal pleased the whole group."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Proverbs 2:6 - "For the Lord gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and understanding."*
- *Titus 1:7-8 - "An overseer must be blameless... not overbearing, not quick-tempered... showing integrity, seriousness, and soundness of mind."*



Day 3: 🧐💖🧐 Choosing Servants Full of Wisdom

Devotional: The Power of Spirit-Led Service

Selection based on spiritual attributes is key. The apostles instructed the church to select men who were not only practical but filled with the Spirit and wisdom. This balance ensured that those serving would act fairly, compassionately, and wisely.

This teaches us that effective service in the church is not just about administrative skill but about character. True wisdom comes from God, who equips His servants with understanding beyond human ability.

When we serve, we must seek God's Spirit first and foremost. This empowers us to navigate difficult situations with grace and leads to solutions that honor God and build up the church.



Day 3: 🧑🏽💖🧑🏽 Choosing Servants Full of Wisdom

Reflect and Apply

1. How do you discern whether someone is truly full of the Spirit and wisdom?

2. In what ways can you cultivate spiritual wisdom in your own life and service?

3. How does character impact your effectiveness when resolving conflicts?



Day 3: 🧑🏻💖🧑🏻 Choosing Servants Full of Wisdom

Journaling Prompts

1. Identify people in your community who exemplify spirit-led wisdom.

2. Reflect on moments when God's wisdom helped you make difficult decisions.

3. Write down ways you can grow in character and spiritual discernment.



Day 3: 🧑🏽💛🧑🏽 Choosing Servants Full of Wisdom

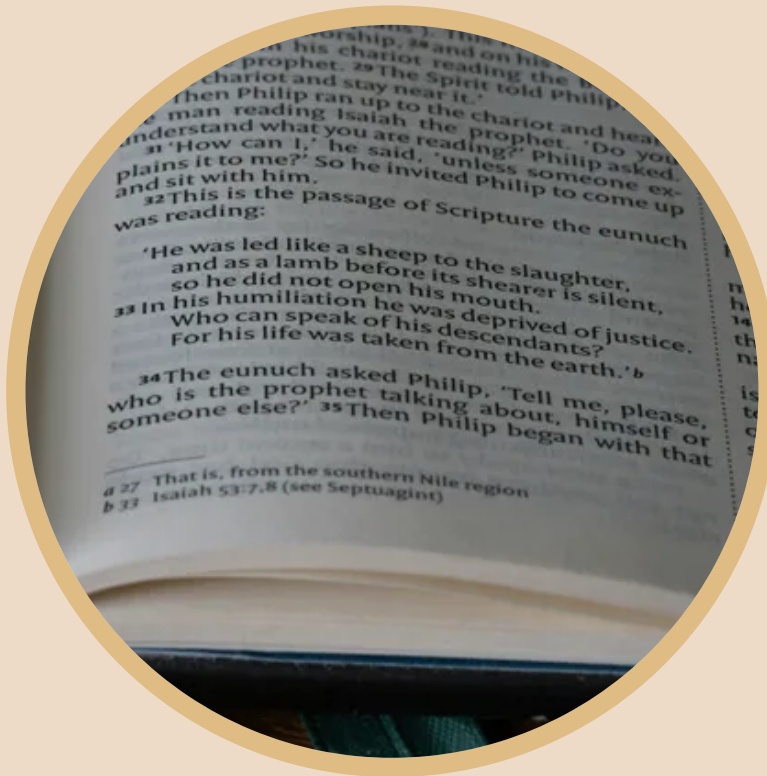
Prayer for Today

Lord, fill me with Your Spirit and grant me wisdom. Help me to serve others with humility, fairness, and love. Guide the leaders You have appointed in my church and community, empowering them to act with integrity and discernment. May I also grow in these qualities as I serve and support others.





Day 4: Unity Through Shared Responsibility



Your Verse

Acts 6:6 - "They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Ecclesiastes 4:9 - "Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work."*
- *Romans 12:4-5 - "Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function... so in Christ we, though many, form one body."*



Devotional: Strengthening Church Unity by Sharing Work

Unity grows when burdens are shared. The apostles' laying on of hands acted as a public affirmation and blessing on those chosen. This unified the community around these leaders and distributed the workload.

When responsibilities are shared, it fosters trust and cooperation. It prevents burnout for some and empowers others to contribute their gifts. The early church demonstrated that delegation, backed by prayer and recognition, enhances unity and effectiveness.

Consider the divisions that arise when tasks are hoarded or ignored. True teamwork requires openness and willingness to bear one another's burdens.



Day 4: 🧡 Unity Through Shared Responsibility

Reflect and Apply

1. Are there areas where you or your community could better share responsibilities?

2. What prevents people from accepting or offering help in your church?

3. How does public affirmation of roles encourage unity and service?



Day 4: 🧡 Unity Through Shared Responsibility

Journaling Prompts

1. Write about a time when shared responsibility strengthened a group you were part of.

2. List tasks you can entrust to others to promote collaboration.

3. Reflect on how recognition affects your motivation to serve.



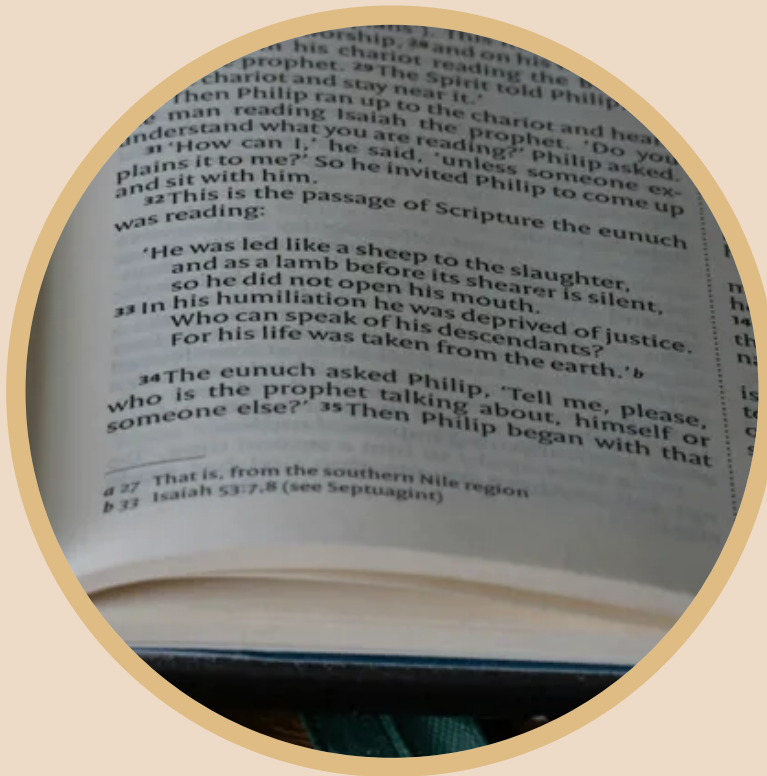
Day 4: 🤝 Unity Through Shared Responsibility

Prayer for Today

Father, teach us to work together in harmony. Help us to share burdens and responsibilities with joy and gratitude. Unite our hearts so we support one another and build up the body of Christ. May we encourage and affirm each other as we serve, reflecting Your love and wisdom.



Day 5: 🔥 The Spirit's Empowerment in Service



Your Verse

Acts 6:8 - "Stephen, full of God's grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Acts 1:8 - "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses..."*
- *Romans 15:13 - "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."*



Devotional: God's Power Enables Effective Service

The Holy Spirit empowers ministry beyond human ability. Stephen's service, marked by signs and wonders, showed that God blessed faithful servanthood with power. Being filled with the Spirit is not only about personal holiness but also about effective action in the community.

We must rely on the Spirit to guide and strengthen us in service, especially when tensions arise. God's grace and power can transform challenging situations into opportunities for testimony and growth.

Do you seek the Spirit's empowerment in your daily service? Without God's enabling, even the best efforts can fall short.



Reflect and Apply

1. How have you experienced the Holy Spirit's power in your service or ministry?

2. What challenges in your community require you to depend more on God's grace?

3. How can you cultivate a deeper openness to the Spirit's leading?



Journaling Prompts

1. Recall moments when God's power was evident in your life or church.

2. Write about ways you can invite more of God's Spirit into your service.

3. Reflect on how trusting God changes your approach to difficult tasks.



Day 5: 🔥 The Spirit's Empowerment in Service

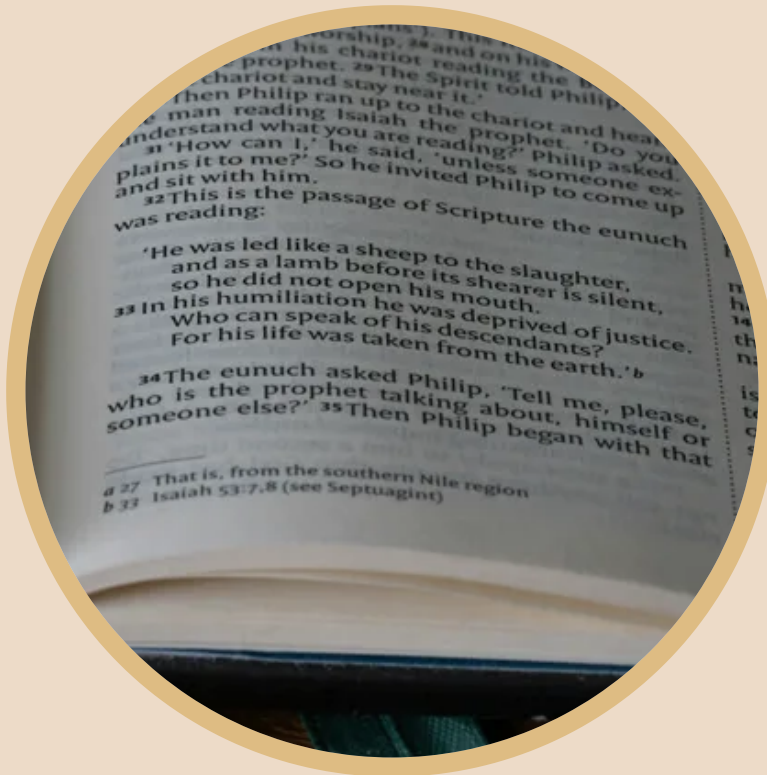
Prayer for Today

Holy Spirit, fill me anew with Your power and grace. Enable me to serve others with boldness and love, relying not on my strength but on Your guidance. Use me to bring peace and healing in my community. May Your presence transform my service and witness to Your glory.





Day 6: ✨ Service that Glorifies God



Day 6: ✨ Service that Glorifies God

Your Verse

Acts 6:7 - "The word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Matthew 5:16 - "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven."*
- *2 Corinthians 9:13 - "Their hearts will be tender because of the grace that is shown to you, and they will overflow with gratitude to God."*



Day 6: ✨ Service that Glorifies God

Devotional: Impact of Faithful Service on the Community

Faithful service advances God's kingdom. The effective resolution of conflict and dedicated service allowed the gospel to flourish. Even priests—religious authorities—were converted by the power of God's work through the church.

Our faithful attention to practical needs, combined with spiritual zeal, glorifies God and draws others into His family. The church's witness is strengthened when believers serve holistically.

How does your service contribute to God's glory in your sphere of influence?
Every act of faithful service has eternal impact.



Day 6: ✨ Service that Glorifies God

Reflect and Apply

1. In what ways does your service reflect God's love to others?

2. How can resolving conflict open doors for gospel growth?

3. What steps can you take to ensure your service honors God above all?



Day 6: ✨ Service that Glorifies God

Journaling Prompts

1. Write about how your talents and gifts can be used to glorify God.

2. Reflect on recent experiences where your service impacted someone positively.

3. Describe ways to improve your witness through your actions and words.



Day 6: ✨ Service that Glorifies God

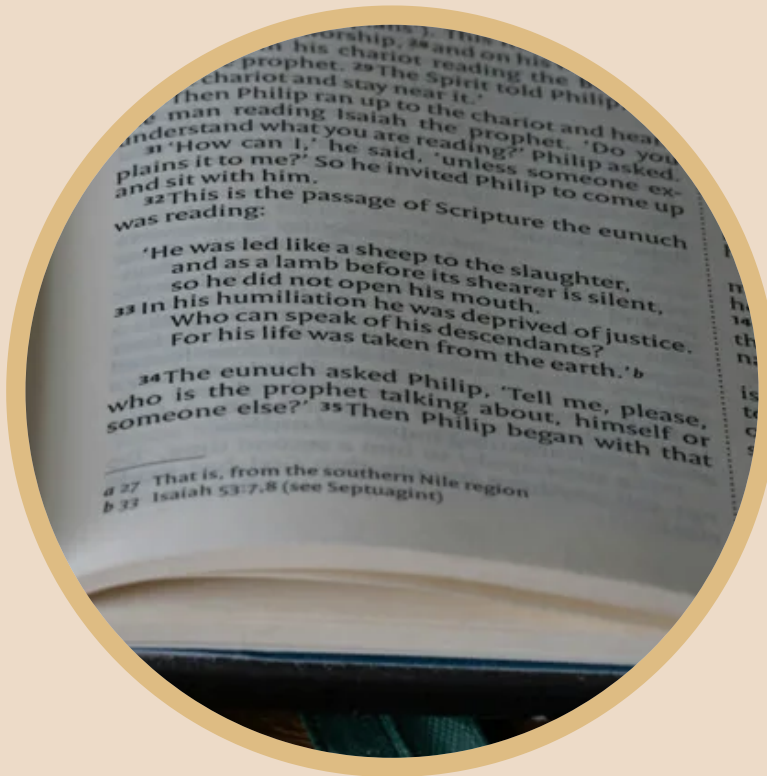
Prayer for Today

Almighty God, may my service bring You glory. Help me to serve with a pure heart and unwavering faith, so that others may see Your light through me. Use my efforts to spread Your word and touch lives. May unity and love mark all I do, reflecting Your kingdom here on earth.





Day 7: 🛡️ Lessons from Acts 6 for Today's Church



Your Verse

Acts 6:1-7 - "So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly."

Supporting Scriptures

- *Ephesians 4:3 - "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."*
- *Philippians 2:3-4 - "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves."*



Devotional: Applying Early Church Wisdom Today

The first church conflict shows us the importance of unity, wisdom, and faithful service. Recognizing problems, praying, choosing Spirit-filled leaders, and sharing responsibilities are timeless strategies for healthy church life.

Today's churches face similar challenges—diversity of cultures, competing needs, and potential divisions. Acts 6 reminds us that God honors communities that prioritize prayer, wisdom, and humility to address conflicts vigorously and lovingly.

As followers of Christ, we are called to emulate this example. By doing so, we maintain unity, promote growth, and bear effective witness to the gospel.



Reflect and Apply

1. What practical wisdom from Acts 6 can you implement in your church or group?

2. How can you help foster unity and humble service among believers?

3. In what ways does prayer shape the resolution of conflicts you encounter?



Journaling Prompts

1. Plan concrete steps to address a tension or conflict in your community.

2. Write a commitment prayer to serve with wisdom and humility.

3. Reflect on how teamwork and delegation can strengthen your ministry.



Day 7: 🛡️ Lessons from Acts 6 for Today's Church

Prayer for Today

Lord, help me to apply the lessons of the early church in my life and community. Teach me to pursue unity, serve humbly, and seek Your wisdom in all things. May Your Spirit guide us through challenges and help us grow together in faith and love. Use us to build Your kingdom and glorify Your name.





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