

## Acts 6 Study Guide

As we **continue in the book of Acts**, we will see as the church increases in number so does the level of persecution. Followers of Jesus must know why they believe what they believe. We all will stumble and at times, struggle with faith assurance as we walk this life (even after our profession of Christ). The level of that stumbling and struggle will be directly related in our time in God's Word and prayer with Him. We cannot have one without the other. We will note, in the book of Acts, how God moved through these common people in order to build His church.

**Acts 6** will not only show us how the church begins to divide up into varied supportive roles, but will also lead into the first martyr for Christ (**Acts 7**). It is a short chapter, but a crucial one. If you have any questions, write them down and we can talk about them in Sunday School. Thanks for hanging in there. :)

### **Scriptures in Study Guide:**

Scriptures this week are in the CSB (Christian Standard Bible). To make things easier, the actual verses will be included in your daily lessons to help you with the missing words.

### **Day 1 (Acts 6:1-3)**

**Pray** God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.  
Read **Acts 6** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

**6** **1** In those days, as the disciples were increasing in number, there arose a complaint by the Hellenistic Jews against the Hebraic Jews that their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution. **2** The Twelve summoned the whole company of the disciples and said, "It would not be right for us to give up preaching the word of God to wait on tables. **3** Brothers and sisters, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom, whom we can appoint to this duty.

#### **Verse 1:**

- In \_\_\_\_\_ days, as the disciples were increasing in \_\_\_\_\_ there arose a complaint \_\_\_\_\_ the Hellenistic Jews \_\_\_\_\_ the Hebraic Jews that \_\_\_\_\_ widows were \_\_\_\_\_ overlooked \_\_\_\_\_ the daily distribution.
- **Question** - Who were increasing in number? \_\_\_\_\_
- What complained against the Hebraic Jews? \_\_\_\_\_
- What was the complaint? \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Background:**

After the Babylonian captivity, there were 2 other empires that effected the Jewish people before Rome. Those empires were the Medo-Persia and Greece. Through history, we learn that Greece influenced much of the Jewish culture. The **Hellenistic Jews** were descendants of the Jewish faith who integrated Greek culture into their lives. The **Hebraic Jews** were the traditional Jews who adhered to the Jewish laws and customs.

Write out **Deuteronomy 24:19-21**: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- Deuteronomy lists God’s commands for His people. Looking back over **what you have written above (Deuteronomy 24:19-21)** , who are these areas left for besides the foreigner, and fatherless? \_\_\_\_\_
- Looking at **Acts 6:1**, what group of people did the Hellenistic Jews say were being overlooked? \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** As we have noted before, **God uses physical areas to fulfill His spiritual purposes**. There is a physical need that arises as more people are being converted and sharing the gospel. Those widows who were being taken care of are now being daily overlooked. Basically, those who took care of them before are now busy evangelizing.

**Verse 2:**

- The Twelve \_\_\_\_\_ the whole company of \_\_\_\_\_ disciples and said, “It would \_\_\_\_ be right \_\_\_\_\_ us to give up preaching the word \_\_\_\_\_ God to \_\_\_\_\_ on tables.

**Questions:**

- Who do the Twelve (apostles) summon? \_\_\_\_\_
- What do they say to this whole company of the disciples (this would be the “church” at this point)? \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** the apostles are the ones tasked by the Lord Jesus to build His church. They know that they can’t be the ones that do this. God moves through this need.

**Verse 3:**

- Brothers \_\_\_\_\_ sisters, select \_\_\_\_\_ among you seven \_\_\_\_\_ of good reputation, \_\_\_\_\_ of the Spirit and \_\_\_\_\_, whom we can \_\_\_\_\_ to this duty.

**Questions:**

- Who do they address? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- Note: the church is made up of both men and women
- How many men among the church should they select from? \_\_\_\_\_
- Note: these 7 are specifically specified as men
- What are the requirements of these men? \_\_\_\_\_
- What are they selecting these 7 men to do? (**See verse 1**) \_\_\_\_\_

These are the **first “deacons” of the church**.

Write out **1 Timothy 3:8-13**: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Day 2 (Acts 6:4-6)**

**Pray** God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.  
Read **Acts 6** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

**4** But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” **5** This proposal pleased the whole company. So they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a convert from Antioch. **6** They had them stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.

**Verse 4:**

- But we will \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves to \_\_\_\_\_ and to the ministry of \_\_\_\_\_ word.”.
- **Question** - What did the apostles say that they would devote themselves to (while the deacons, in Acts 6:3) took care of the widows? \_\_\_\_\_

This is the foundation of what the pastor does at the church.

**Verse 5:**

- This \_\_\_\_\_ pleased the \_\_\_\_\_ company.
- So they chose \_\_\_\_\_, a man full of \_\_\_\_\_ and the Holy Spirit, and \_\_\_\_\_, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a \_\_\_\_\_ from Antioch.

**Questions:**

- What did this proposal do to the whole company (the church)? \_\_\_\_\_
- What was the proposal? (**Look back at Acts 6:3-4 to summarize**) \_\_\_\_\_
- List the names of the 7 men that they chose: \_\_\_\_\_
- How is Stephen, out of all of the 7 “deacons” described? ‘a man \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_”

**Verse 6:**

- They \_\_\_\_\_ them stand \_\_\_\_\_ the apostles, who \_\_\_\_\_ and laid their hands \_\_\_\_\_ them.

**Questions:**

- Who did these 7 men (deacons) stand before? \_\_\_\_\_
- What did they apostles do? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ on them.

**Note:** When a person prays over someone, sometimes they will place their hands on them (you will see this sometimes in group prays over a person). For this purpose, it meant a “commissioning for ministry”. It was an outward sign that the apostles were giving their approval of the positions that these 7 men would be doing within the early church.

### Day 3 (Acts 6:7-10)

**Pray** God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.  
Read **Acts 6** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

**7** So the word of God spread, the disciples in Jerusalem increased greatly in number, and a large group of priests became obedient to the faith. **8** Now Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people. **9** Opposition arose, however, from some members of the Freedmen's Synagogue, composed of both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia, and they began to argue with Stephen. **10** But they were unable to stand up against his wisdom and the Spirit by whom he was speaking.

#### Verse 7:

- So the \_\_\_\_\_ of God spread, the \_\_\_\_\_ in Jerusalem increased \_\_\_\_\_ in number, and a \_\_\_\_\_ group of priests became \_\_\_\_\_ to the faith..
- **Questions:**
- What spread? \_\_\_\_\_
- What happened with the disciples in Jerusalem? \_\_\_\_\_
- What happened to a large group of priests? \_\_\_\_\_

\*Notice that the "disciples in Jerusalem" and the "priests" are separated from each other. This is most likely to indicate that Jewish priests, those who served in the temple and descended from the Levite tribe, were converted. These priests would've lost everything since their way of life and livelihood would've been tied up in their temple priesthood. Now those who serve in the temple are being effected. This will only increase the Jewish leader's jealousy, anger and persecution of Jesus' followers.

#### Verse 8:

- Now Stephen, \_\_\_\_\_ of grace and power, was performing \_\_\_\_\_ wonders and signs \_\_\_\_\_ the people.
- **Questions:**
- What was Stephen full of? \_\_\_\_\_
- What was Stephen doing among the people? \_\_\_\_\_

#### Verse 9:

- Opposition \_\_\_\_\_, however, from some \_\_\_\_\_ of the Freedmen's Synagogue, composed of both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and \_\_\_\_\_ from Cilicia and Asia, and \_\_\_\_\_ began to argue with Stephen..
- **Questions:**
- What arose? \_\_\_\_\_  
**Note:** Commentaries site that these opposing areas seem to be 3 synagogues. Synagogues were Jewish meeting places for community worship for those who did not have access to the temple.
- Who were those who arose in opposition?
  - Some members of \_\_\_\_\_
  - and some from \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- Who composed the Freedmen's Synagogue? \_\_\_\_\_  
**Note:** The "Freedman" were descendants from Jewish slaves that were captured by Pompeii (63 BC) and taken to Rome. They were later "freed" and formed a Jewish community there.
- What did the Freedmen's Synagogue members, and some from Cilicia and Asia begin to do?  
\_\_\_\_\_.

#### Verse 10:

- But they \_\_\_\_\_ unable to stand up \_\_\_\_\_ his wisdom and \_\_\_\_\_ Spirit by \_\_\_\_\_ he was speaking.
- **Questions:**
- What were they unable to stand up against? Stephen's \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ he was \_\_\_\_\_.

**Day 4 (Acts 6:11-12)**

**Pray** God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.  
Read **Acts 6** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

**11** Then they secretly persuaded some men to say, “We heard him speaking blasphemous words against Moses and God.” **12** They stirred up the people, the elders, and the scribes; so they came, seized him, and took him to the Sanhedrin.

**Verse 11:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ they secretly persuaded \_\_\_\_\_ men to say, “We heard him \_\_\_\_\_ blasphemous words \_\_\_\_\_ Moses and God.”
- **Questions:**
- What did they secretly do to some men? \_\_\_\_\_.
- What did they persuade these men to say? \_\_\_\_\_

Write out **Matthew 26:59:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Verse 12:**

They \_\_\_\_\_ up the people, the \_\_\_\_\_, and the scribes; so \_\_\_\_\_ came, seized him, \_\_\_\_\_ took him to \_\_\_\_\_ Sanhedrin.

- **Questions:**
- Who do they stir up? \_\_\_\_\_, the elders, and \_\_\_\_\_
- What do the people, the elders and the scribes do to Stephen? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ him to the \_\_\_\_\_.

Review question from previous chapters: What was the Sanhedrin?

\_\_\_\_\_

Write out **John 15:18:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Write out **John 15:20:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Based upon the truths that you have written out from John 15, should we be surprised when we are persecuted, mocked, and/or criticized by the world for our faith? \_\_\_\_\_.

### Day 5 (Acts 6:13-15)

**Pray** God open your heart and understanding to what He would have you learn today from His Word.  
Read **Acts 6** out loud and complete the following verses and questions.

**13** They also presented false witnesses who said, “This man never stops speaking against this holy place and the law. **14** For we heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the customs that Moses handed down to us.” **15** And all who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at him and saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

#### Verse 13:

- They \_\_\_\_\_ presented false witnesses who \_\_\_\_\_, “This man \_\_\_\_\_ stops speaking \_\_\_\_\_ this holy place \_\_\_\_\_ the law.
- **Questions:**
  - What type of witness did they also present? \_\_\_\_\_.
  - What did this false witness say about Stephen? \_\_\_\_\_

#### Verse 14:

- For \_\_\_\_\_ heard him say \_\_\_\_\_ this Jesus of \_\_\_\_\_ will destroy this place and \_\_\_\_\_ the customs \_\_\_\_\_ Moses handed down \_\_\_\_\_ us.”
- **Questions:**
  - What did these false witnesses say that they heard Stephen say about Jesus of Nazareth?
    - \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

#### Background:

##### Moses:

- was a man of God, who was a patriarch to the Jews (and to us as Christians; we see him in the Transfiguration passage; **Matthew 17:1-3**).
- God used Moses to physically deliver the Israelites from their Egyptian bondage to bring them to the land that God had promised Abraham. Unfortunately, the Israelites chose to trust their eyes rather than their God and disobeyed. As a result, they stayed in the wilderness for 40 years until the next generation could go into the promised land (that land is Jerusalem and surrounding areas).
- God had Moses write down the Law within the Pentateuch (1st 5 books of the Bible) while in the wilderness.

##### The Law:

- Outlined God’s standards and care of His people.
- Jesus fulfilled all the Law and made it complete.
- Even though the law has a purpose (to make a person aware of sin), the Law, on its own, does not save. To a Jewish person, adherence to the Law is equal to salvation.

#### Verse 15:

- And \_\_\_\_\_ who were sitting \_\_\_\_\_ the Sanhedrin \_\_\_\_\_ intently at him \_\_\_\_\_ saw that \_\_\_\_\_ face was \_\_\_\_\_ the face of an angel
- **Questions:**
  - Who did all who were sitting in the Sanhedrin look intently at? \_\_\_\_\_
  - How did they see Stephen’s face? \_\_\_\_\_