
MESSAGE SUMMARY

As the early church grew, its growth created new challenges that required healthy change. The apostles recognized that they could not carry every responsibility themselves, so they empowered other believers to serve and lead. This allowed the church to care for people while the apostles served by remaining devoted to prayer and the ministry of the Word. Like Moses in Exodus 18, the church learned that healthy growth requires recognizing limits, sharing responsibility, and developing leaders. God used these changes not simply to build a better structure, but to help more people experience Jesus and advance the Gospel.

MAIN POINTS

- 1. Growth creates new challenges (Acts 6:1; Exodus 18:13–18).** As God grows His people, existing systems and responsibilities can become strained. Strain is not necessarily a sign that something is wrong; sometimes it is evidence that God is growing something. You must be willing to recognize when old ways can no longer support new growth.
- 2. Healthy growth requires shared leadership (Acts 6:2–6; Exodus 18:19–23).** The apostles served by remaining devoted to prayer and the ministry of the Word while others were appointed to serve in other areas. Every person has a place and a ministry. The seven men were chosen because of their reputation, spiritual maturity, and wisdom. God grows His church by equipping ordinary believers to serve, lead, and carry the ministry together.
- 3. Healthy change supports spiritual multiplication (Acts 6:7; Ephesians 4:11–16).** The result was not merely better organization; the Word of God increased and disciples multiplied! The “trellis” exists to support the “vine”: systems serve people, not the other way around. At Mission Grove, the goal of leadership, stewardship, and capacity is to help more people experience Jesus.

Big Idea: Healthy growth requires healthy change.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. Why was it important for the apostles to remain devoted to prayer and the ministry of the Word while others served the in other areas of the church in Acts 6?** *Possible answer:* Acts 6 shows that every believer has a place and a ministry within the church. The apostles recognized their primary calling while helping identify and appoint other believers who could serve in other areas of ministry. Healthy church leadership is not about doing everything yourself; it is about equipping people, helping them discover where God has gifted and called them, and creating opportunities for them to serve. As each person finds their place and faithfully serves, the whole body is strengthened and the Gospel advances (Acts 6:2–6; Ephesians 4:11–12; 1 Peter 4:10).
- 2. Where might God be growing you in a way that requires you to change?** *Possible answer:* You may need to change a habit, take greater responsibility, develop a spiritual discipline (i.e., prayer, reading your Bible, fasting, etc.), or step into a new opportunity to serve (Romans 12:2; Philippians 1:6).
- 3. Where are you carrying something that God may be asking you to share with someone else?** *Possible answer:* You may be trying to serve, lead, solve problems, or care for others by yourself when God wants you to invite others into the work (Exodus 18:17–23; Galatians 6:2).
- 4. Which response is God calling you to take right now...Lean In, Step Up, or Reach Out...and what is one specific step you can take this week?** *Possible answer:* You may need to commit more deeply to your church, begin serving or leading, or intentionally reach someone who needs the Gospel (Acts 6:3; Matthew 28:19–20; 1 Peter 4:10).

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Healthy growth begins with a transformed life. You cannot build a healthy life, church, or ministry apart from Jesus. If you have never trusted Christ, repent of your sin and believe in Jesus Christ; His death and resurrection are your only hope of salvation. (Mark 1:15; Romans 10:9–10; Ephesians 2:8–9). If you already belong to Christ, continue to repent and believe by turning from self-reliance and trusting Jesus in every area of your life. Then lean into His church, step up to serve others, and reach out with the Gospel. (Romans 12:1–2; Galatians 2:20)

DAILY DEVOTIONS

MONDAY — WHEN GROWTH CREATES STRAIN

Key Verse: “Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected.” (Acts 6:1)

Reflection: When God grows something, new challenges often come with that growth. The early church was experiencing tremendous numerical growth, but that growth exposed a weakness that needed to be addressed. Strain does not always mean something is wrong; sometimes it means God is growing you beyond what your current capacity can handle.

Application Question: What is one area of your life where you need to recognize a healthy change? *Possible Answer:* “I need to stop trying to handle everything the way I always have and ask God what needs to change so I can continue growing faithfully.”

Prayer Response: Lord, help me recognize where You are growing me, trust You through the changes, and faithfully follow wherever You lead me, in Jesus’ Name, Amen. (Acts 6:1; Exodus 18:13–23; Romans 12:2)

TUESDAY — YOU HAVE A PLACE

Key Verse: “...pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.” (Acts 6:3)

Reflection: The apostles could not do everything themselves, so they helped identify people to serve. This reminds you that ministry is not reserved for pastors or a select group of leaders; you have a place and a ministry within the body of Christ! God has given you gifts, abilities, experiences, and opportunities that He can use to serve others.

Application Question: Where might God be calling you to take a step toward serving or becoming more involved in the church? *Possible Answer:* “I can talk with a pastor or ministry leader, learn more about opportunities to serve, and be willing to try something where I believe God may have gifted me.”

Prayer Response: Father, help me discover how You have gifted me and give me courage to use those gifts to serve Your church and advance the Gospel, in Jesus’ Name, Amen. (Acts 6:3–6; Romans 12:4–8; 1 Peter 4:10–11; Ephesians 4:11–12)

WEDNESDAY — YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE

Key Verse: “You and the people with you will certainly wear yourselves out, for the thing is too heavy for you. You are not able to do it alone.” (Exodus 18:18)

Reflection: Moses was trying to carry a responsibility that was too great for one person, and Jethro challenged him to share the load. The same principle appears in Acts 6: Healthy leaders recognize their limits and equip others to serve. God never designed His church so that one person would do everything; He designed the body of Christ to work together.

Application Question: Is there something you are carrying alone that you need to share with another believer? *Possible Answer:* “I need to ask for help instead of trying to handle everything myself, and I need to be willing to let others serve and carry part of the responsibility.”

Prayer Response: Lord, give me humility to recognize my limitations, receive help from others, and willingly help carry the burdens of those around me, in Jesus’ Name, Amen. (Exodus 18:17–23; Acts 6:2–6; Galatians 6:2; 1 Corinthians 12:12–27)

THURSDAY — STRENGTHEN THE TRELLIS

Key Verse: “And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly...” (Acts 6:7)

Reflection: The changes made in Acts 6 were not about creating a bigger organization; they were about creating healthy structures that supported the spiritual growth of people. Think of a vineyard: the vine represents people and discipleship, while the trellis represents the structures and systems that support growth. The trellis does not produce the fruit; it exists to support the vine so that the fruit can flourish.

Application Question: What is one practical change you could make that would better support your spiritual growth or your ability to help someone else grow? *Possible Answer:* “I could become more intentional about prayer, Scripture, community, or serving so that my spiritual life has the support and consistency needed for continued growth.”

Prayer Response: Jesus, help me build healthy habits and structures that support my spiritual growth and enable me to help others grow in You, in Your Name, Amen. (Acts 6:7; John 15:1–8; Ephesians 4:15–16; Colossians 1:28–29).

FRIDAY — LEAN IN, STEP UP, REACH OUT

Key Verse: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” (Matthew 28:19)

Reflection: God’s work in your life is not meant to stop with you. As you grow in Christ, He calls you to lean into His church, step up to serve others, and reach out with the Gospel. The goal is not simply a healthier church or a stronger ministry; the goal is that more people would know Jesus, become His disciples, and experience the transforming power of the Gospel.

Application Question: Which of these three responses “Lean In, Step Up, or Reach Out” is God asking you to take this week, and what specific action will you take? *Possible Answer:* “God is asking me to Step Up by finding a place to serve. I will contact a ministry leader this week and take the first step toward getting involved.”

Prayer Response: Lord Jesus, help me lean into Your church, step up to serve, and reach out to those who need to hear the Gospel, in Your Name, Amen. (Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 6:7; Ephesians 4:11–16; 1 Peter 4:10–11)