

# Empowering Others



Series: "Real Christianity: How It Flourished", Part 5 of 11

Sunday, February 1, 2026

Text: Acts 6:1-7, 7:51-60

*Big Idea: God looks to us to empower and release others into ministry.*

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

Exodus 22:22, "Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan."

Deuteronomy 10:18a, "He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow."

James 1:27a, "Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress."

Acts 6:2-4, "So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. 3 Brothers, 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 4 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."

## **I. They Stopped Trying To Do Everything.**

Acts 6:2b, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables."

## **II. They Identified And Raised Up Gifted And Godly Leaders.**

Ephesians 4:11, "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers."

Ephesians 4:12a, "To prepare God's people for works of service."

Ephesians 4:12b, "So that the body of Christ may be built up."

Acts 6:3, "Brothers, 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."

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

## **III. They Released People To Become All God Designed Them To Be.**

Acts 6:3a, "Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom."

Acts 6:5a, "This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 6:8, "Now Stephen, a man full of God's grace and power, did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people."

Acts 6:9b-10, "These men began to argue with Stephen, 10 but they could not stand up against his wisdom or the Spirit by whom he spoke."

Acts 7:51-52a, "You stiff-necked people, with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are just like your fathers: You always resist the Holy Spirit! 52 Was there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute?"

Acts 7:54-60, "When they heard this, they were furious and gnashed their teeth at him. 55 But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. 56 "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God. 57 At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, 58 dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. 59 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep."

Acts 7:55a, c, "But Stephen, ... looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God."