

DISCIPLESHIP-BIBLE STUDY | THE BOOK OF ACTS

THE OBEDIENCE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7TH READ ACTS 6:1-7 | WORKING IN THE SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE

DIVINE OBEDIENCE -VS- HUMAN OBEDIENCE | DISCUSSION / REFLECTION / IMPLICATION

➤ **CHECK-IN: MINISTRY PRINCIPLE OF PEACE (STRENGTH & STRUGGLE)**

- FAITH
- HOPE
- LOVE
- COURAGE
- UNITY
- FORGIVENESS
- JUSTICE

READ ACTS 6:1-7 | CHURCH LEADERS ARE CHOSEN

THE THEOLOGIAN MATTHEW HENRY'S EXPLANATION OF ACTS 6, IS A CRITICAL TRANSITION IN THE EARLY CHURCH FROM MANAGING INTERNAL DISPUTES TO EXPANDING MINISTRY AND FACING EXTERNAL PERSECUTION.

- 1) **THE DISTRIBUTION DISPUTE (AKA FOOD PANTRY):** HENRY NOTES THAT AS DISCIPLES MULTIPLIED, HUMAN FRAILTY INTRODUCED MURMURING—SPECIFICALLY THAT GRECIAN (HELLENISTIC) WIDOWS WERE NEGLECTED IN DAILY CHARITY COMPARED TO HEBREW WIDOWS. HE OBSERVES THAT EVEN THE PUREST EARLY CHURCHES EXPERIENCED INTERNAL DISCONTENT.
- 2) **THE APPOINTMENT OF SEVEN SPIRIT FILLED LEADERS:** THE APOSTLES DELEGATED THE TASK OF SERVING TABLES TO SEVEN QUALIFIED MEN (SUCH AS STEPHEN AND PHILIP) FULL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND WISDOM. MATTHEW HENRY HIGHLIGHTS THAT THIS ADMINISTRATIVE SOLUTION FREED THE APOSTLES TO FOCUS ENTIRELY ON PRAYER AND THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD. HE ALSO STRESSES THAT CHURCH SERVANTS SHOULD BE COMMENDED BY THE PRAYERS OF THE CONGREGATION.
- 3) **CHURCH GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT:** WITH ORDER RESTORED AND THE MINISTRY UNHINDERED, THE WORD OF GOD INCREASED AND DISCIPLES MULTIPLIED SIGNIFICANTLY IN JERUSALEM.

QUESTION

WERE THE BELIEVERS DISPLAYING DIVINE OBEDIENCE -VS- HUMAN OBEDIENCE? | WHY?

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CHECK-OUT: MINISTRY TOUCHSTONE

- COME TO WORK WITH 100% OF OURSELVES.
- PRESUME WELCOME AND EXTEND WELCOME.
- BELIEVE THAT IT'S POSSIBLE TO EMERGE REFRESHED, SURPRISED, AND LESS BURDENED THAN WHEN WE CAME.
- THERE IS ALWAYS INVITATION, NEVER INVASION; ALWAYS OPPORTUNITY, NEVER DEMAND.
- NO FIXING, NO SAVING, NO ADVISING, AND NO CORRECTING EACH OTHER.
- WHEN THE GOING GETS ROUGH, TURN TO WONDER.
- SPEAK FOR YOURSELF.
- LISTEN TO THE SILENCE.
- OBSERVE DEEP CONFIDENTIALITY.
- LET THE BEAUTY WE LOVE BE WHAT WE DO.

SOURCE: COURAGE & RENEWAL NORTHEAST WWW.COURAGENE.WORDPRESS.COM

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14TH READ ACTS 6:8-15 | WORKING IN THE SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE

DIVINE OBEDIENCE -VS- HUMAN OBEDIENCE | DISCUSSION / REFLECTION / IMPLICATION

READ ACTS 6:8-15 | STEPHEN IS BROUGHT IN FRONT OF THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS' COURT

THE THEOLOGY OF MATTHEW HENRY

- 1) STEPHEN'S DEFENSE AND TRIAL: MATTHEW HENRY DETAILS HOW STEPHEN PERFORMED MIRACLES AND DEBATED JEWISH SYNAGOGUE OPPONENTS WHO COULD NOT RESIST HIS WISDOM. UNABLE TO WIN THE ARGUMENT, HIS ADVERSARIES RESORTED TO FALSE ACCUSATIONS OF BLASPHEMY AGAINST MOSES AND THE LAW, THOUGH STEPHEN'S FACE APPEARED TO THE COUNCIL LIKE THAT OF AN ANGEL.
- 2) GOD IS NOT CONFINED TO ONE LOCATION: HENRY NOTES THAT BY TRACING GOD'S COVENANT FROM ABRAHAM IN MESOPOTAMIA TO JOSEPH IN EGYPT, STEPHEN PROVES THAT GOD NEVER CONFINED HIS FAVORS TO A SINGLE LAND, TEMPLE, OR RIGID SET OF LAWS. HENRY WRITES THAT THE SLOW REALIZATION OF THE PROMISE MADE TO ABRAHAM SHOWS ITS FULFILLMENT WAS ALWAYS INTENDED TO BE SPIRITUAL AND HEAVENLY.
- 3) MOSES AS A TYPE OF CHRIST: HENRY POINTS OUT HOW STEPHEN FRAMES MOSES AS AN "EMINENT TYPE OF CHRIST" AND A DELIVERER. STEPHEN SUBTLY REMINDS THE COUNCIL THAT JUST AS THEIR ANCESTORS REPEATEDLY REJECTED AND ENVIED MOSES AND JOSEPH, THE CURRENT GENERATION IS REPEATING THE EXACT SAME SIN BY REJECTING JESUS.

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RESOLVING CONFLICT WHILE MANAGING SPIRITUAL GROWTH (MATTHEW HENRY)

- ADDRESSING INEQUALITY: A DISPUTE AROSE WHEN GREEK-SPEAKING (HELLENISTIC) WIDOWS WERE NEGLECTED IN THE DAILY FOOD DISTRIBUTION COMPARED TO HEBREW-SPEAKING WIDOWS.
- THE PRINCIPLE OF DELEGATION: RATHER THAN IGNORING THE ISSUE OR LETTING LEADERS GET OVERWHELMED, THE APOSTLES DIRECTED THE CONGREGATION TO CHOOSE SEVEN QUALIFIED, SPIRIT-FILLED ADMINISTRATORS.
- BALANCED PRIORITIES: THIS DIVISION OF LABOR ALLOWED THE APOSTLES TO STAY DEDICATED TO PRAYER AND MINISTRY OF THE WORD WHILE ENSURING PHYSICAL NEEDS WERE MET.

BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS AND SHARE YOUR RESPONSE TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

1. WHO ARE YOUR LEADERS?
2. WHO ARE YOUR SPIRITUAL LEADERS?
3. WHAT IS YOUR PROCESS FOR ADDRESSING INEQUALITY?
4. IS YOUR PROCESS ALIGNED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND OUR BIBLICAL FOUNDATION?

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21st READ ACTS 7:1-16 | WORKING IN THE SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE

DIVINE OBEDIENCE -VS- HUMAN OBEDIENCE | DISCUSSION / REFLECTION / IMPLICATION

READ ACTS 7:1-16 | STEPHEN SPEAKS ABOUT THE GOD OF ABRAHAM

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM ACTS 7:1-16 | (MATTHEW HENRY)

- KNOW YOUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE: STEPHEN RECOUNTS ISRAEL'S HISTORY FROM ABRAHAM TO MOSES TO SHOW GOD'S CONTINUOUS FAITHFULNESS ACROSS GENERATIONS. UNDERSTANDING OUR ROOTS HELPS US TRUST GOD IN THE PRESENT.

BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS AND SHARE THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

1. PROVIDE SOME EXAMPLES OF DISCIPLE STEPHEN'S RECOUNT OF ISRAEL'S HISTORY WITH OUR A.M.E. HISTORY?
2. HOW DO YOU SHARE GOD'S CONTINUOUS FAITHFULNESS TO YOU IN THE CHURCH, YOUR WORK AND YOUR MINISTRY?

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WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28th READ ACTS 7:17-32 | WORKING IN THE SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE

DIVINE OBEDIENCE -VS- HUMAN OBEDIENCE | DISCUSSION / REFLECTION / IMPLICATION

READ ACTS 7:17-32 | STEPHEN SPEAKS ABOUT THE GOD OF MOSES

KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM ACTS 7:17-32 | (MATTHEW HENRY)

- RECOGNIZE THE PATTERN OF RESISTING GOD: STEPHEN POINTS OUT THAT ISRAEL'S ANCESTORS REPEATEDLY REJECTED GOD'S CHOSEN LEADERS LIKE MOSES, AND THE CURRENT RELIGIOUS LEADERS ARE DOING THE EXACT SAME THING BY REJECTING JESUS.
 - STAND BOLDLY FOR TRUTH: EVEN ON TRIAL FOR HIS LIFE, STEPHEN DID NOT BACK DOWN OR DEFEND HIMSELF OUT OF FEAR. HE USED THE MOMENT TO PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL WITH COURAGE.
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REV'S DISCIPLESHIP BIBLE STUDY