

Seven Special Servants

Acts 6:1-7; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 87-96

What would you think if you came home today and there was no food for dinner? How would you feel if you saw your food being given to someone else? This sometimes happened in the early church. Some people had no food while others had plenty to eat.

The young church kept growing and growing. The apostles kept busy! All day, every day, they taught the Word of God to people who were hungering to hear it. But one day an ugly problem arose.

The Greek-speaking believers began to complain. They thought that the Hebrew-speaking believers were not sharing the daily food equally. They believed the Greek widows were not getting their fair share.

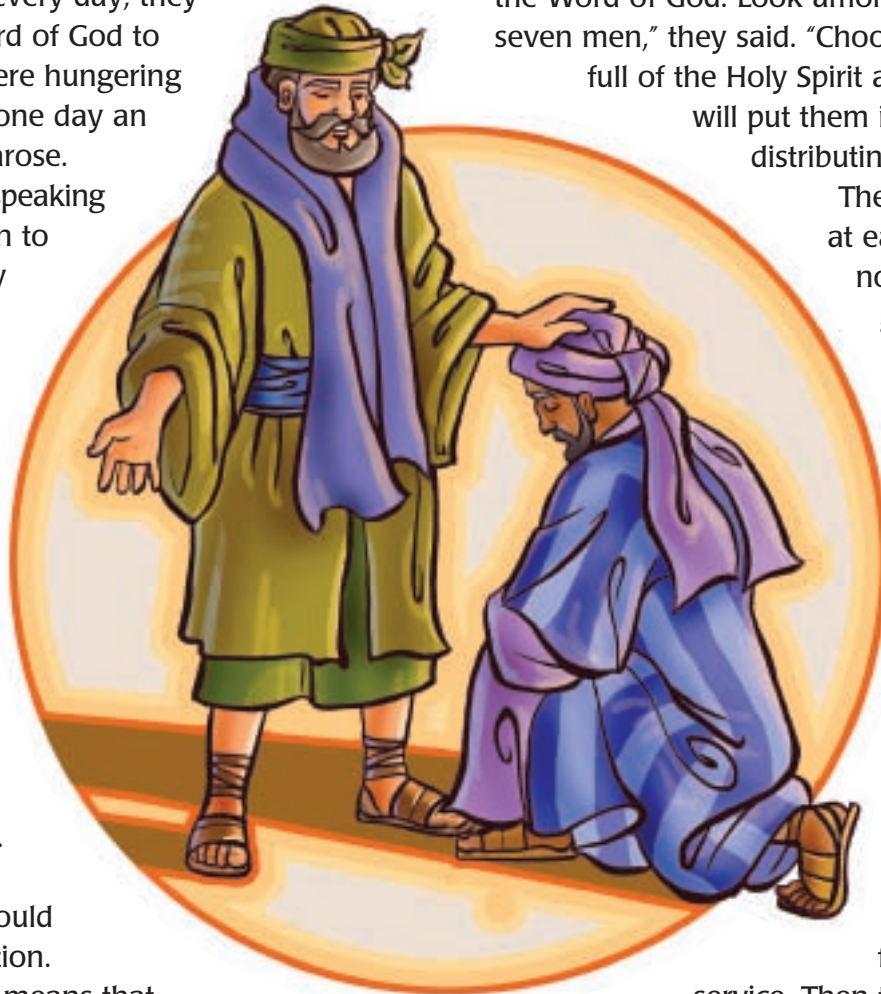
This was a problem we would call discrimination. Discrimination means that we treat others poorly because they are different from us in some way. They may

look different, or speak a different language. They may dress differently, or eat different foods. It seemed as if the Hebrew Jews were discriminating against the Greek believers.

The apostles knew they could not handle every problem in the new church. And they were wise enough to know they shouldn't even try. So they called the people together to talk about it. "Our work is to pray and teach the Word of God. Look among yourselves for seven men," they said. "Choose men who are full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. We will put them in charge of distributing food."

The people looked at each other and nodded. "That's a good idea!" they agreed. So they chose seven good men. Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus became the first deacons. The apostles prayed and laid their hands on them to set them apart for this special

service. Then the apostles were free to continue the work God had for them to do.



The Message

When we organize our gifts,
we serve God better.

Memory Verse

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord”
(1 Corinthians 12:4, 5, NIV).

God has given each one of His children a special gift to use in serving Him. Some have the gift of teaching God’s Word. These are the teachers we enjoy listening to and learning from. Some have the gift of caring for others. These are the people who are always glad to help out. They wash the dishes after church dinners. They help their neighbors with car problems. They furnish food and clothing to people in need.

Another of God’s special gifts is the ability to figure out how to do things the best way. Do you know anyone who has this gift of organization? Another of God’s special gifts is the ability to understand

and help people who are in trouble. All of us can show others the love of Jesus and love them the same way He does.

The apostles kept doing their special work of teaching God’s Word. And the young church grew and grew. When

believers use their gifts to serve God today, the church keeps growing! Every believer, including you and me, has a special gift and a special work to do for the Lord.



S A B B A T H

DO If possible, go for a walk with your family. Look for evidence that God is a God of order. Talk about what that means. Look at the variety of plants. Think how the same seeds always produce the same kind of plants. What other evidence of God's organization can you see?

PRAY Thank God for being a "God of order."

S U N D A Y

READ Read and discuss Acts 6:1-7 with your family. What were the names of the seven deacons? Who are the deacons in your church?

DO Cut up small squares of gift paper. Write one word of your memory verse on each square. Mix up the papers. Then try to organize them into the right order. Use this to teach the verse to your family.

PRAY Thank God for the deacons in your church.

M O N D A Y

READ With your family, read and discuss 1 Timothy 3:8-11. Make a list of the things that Paul says a deacon should be.

MAKE Create a logo for the deacons in your church. It should represent the work they do.

PRAY Thank God for the deacons in your church.

T U E S D A Y

READ Read and discuss 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 for worship today. Make a chart to show the different gifts of the Spirit. List the gifts of the Spirit down one side. Write the names of everyone in your family on the other side. Name each person and the gifts you think they have. Discuss how each can best use their gifts.

PRAY Ask God to give you all opportunities to use your gifts today.

W E D N E S D A Y

READ During worship read and discuss 1 Corinthians 12:12-30. How does Paul describe the value of the different gifts?

DO Try to do something for two minutes with one hand behind your back. Now try to move around for two minutes by hopping on one foot. Are you using all the ability God gave you? What happens in the church if people do not use their gifts?

PRAY Pray that God will help your family to use their gifts in His service.

T H U R S D A Y

READ Something wonderful happened to one of the deacons. With your family, read about it in Acts 8:26-40. Find a way to use your gifts to help someone today.

MAKE Create a gift box. Wrap a box in gift wrap. Place a gift voucher inside for some service you can do. Give it to someone in your family.

PRAY Ask God to help your family use their gifts for Him.



The disciples ordained the new deacons in a ceremony to show the deacons had been chosen to do a special work for God and the church.



F R I D A Y

READ For worship today, read Acts 6:1-7 again. Act out the story with the help of your family.

DO Say your memory verse together. Then ask God to help you use the gifts He gave you.

DO Help your family get organized for Sabbath.

Seven Special Servants

PUZZLE

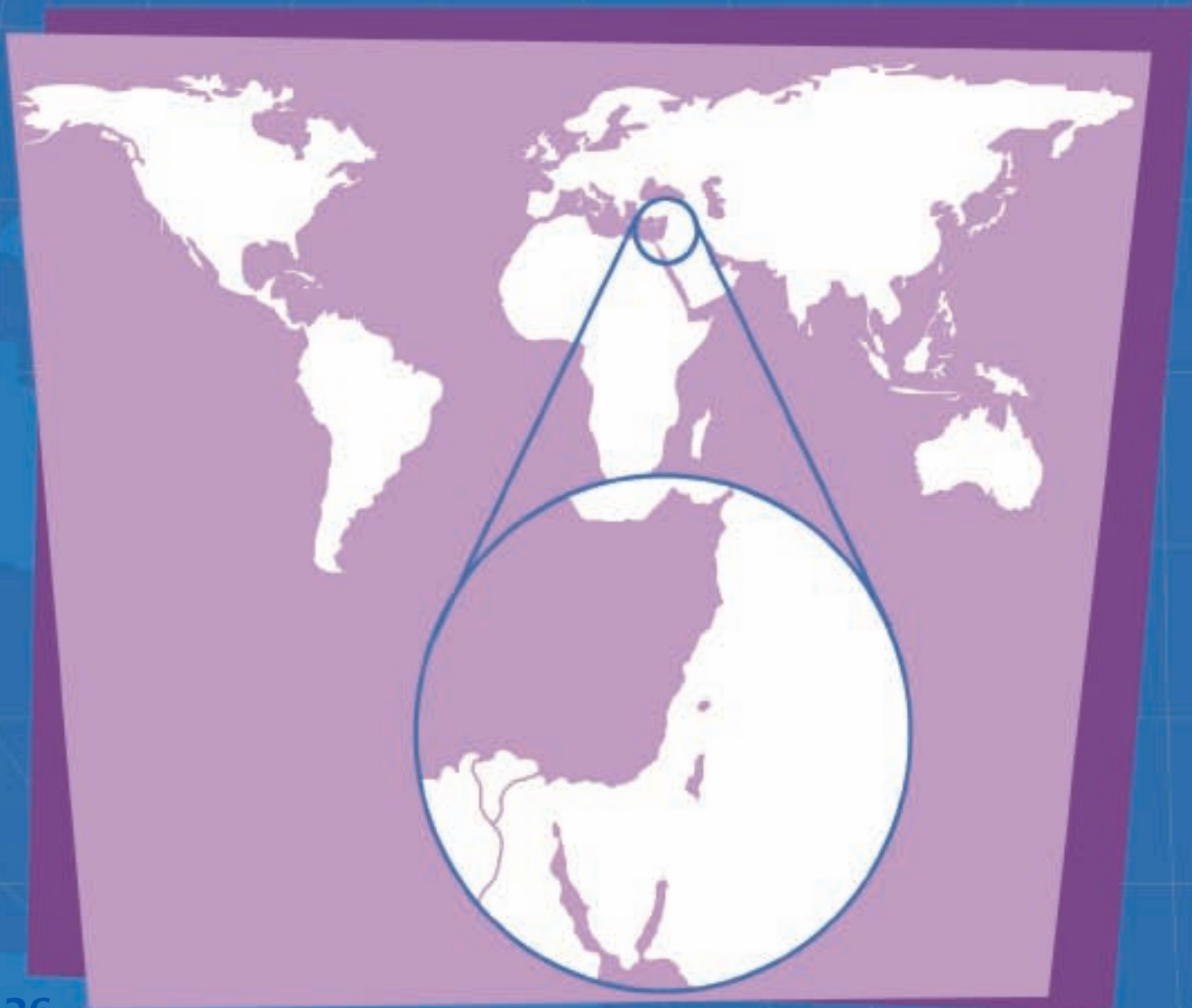
Directions: Unscramble the letters to find the names of the seven special servants named in this lesson.

- penehts _____
- iplpih _____
- orpohcsur _____
- cinrona _____
- nomit _____
- mensarap _____
- suanloci _____

SERVICE

1

In Acts 1:8, Jesus' disciples are asked to witness to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. Using an atlas and a map of the Bible lands, find Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria. Hint: look for the modern state of Israel and the territory it occupies on the West Bank. On the map of the world provided below, outline the area of Judea in green and Samaria in blue. Place a red dot near Jerusalem. Now locate the country in which you live and outline it in your favorite color.



2

In the scroll, trace an outline of the country in which you live and place a star on the area or town where you live.



3

Look up the Bible verses and unscramble key words that help us understand how to witness in our communities. On the extra lines provided, write ways that you can serve others in Jesus' name.

1. Acts 1:14; yrpa lytsnocant _____

2. Acts 2:17; ym tirips _____

3. Ephesians 6:7; resev lydetreahehloh _____

4. 1 Corinthians 12: 4; igstf nda tnefidref sdnik fo esceirv
