

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

BACK TO THE BOOK OF ACTS (BBA)

RLJ-1127

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PART 19: INFIGHTING IN THE CHURCH

THE DEVIL NEVER GIVES UP

There is one thing we must learn and remember: the Devil never gets tired or gives up; if he is blocked in one area, he will go to another area. The only way to defeat the Devil is to crush him with the Word of God just like Jesus did.

Matthew 4:1-11

ANOTHER TACTIC

Since the Devil's attack upon the church had so far not been successful, he now tried another tactic by creating discontent, anger, jealousy and strife within the church. Here is the background:

At this time in Jerusalem, there were Jews who were born and raised that lived in the city. They were called Hebrews. Then there were Jews who were either born in other nations or had emigrated from Judah to live in other nations. Most of these "Diaspora Jews" had become wealthy and came back to Jerusalem on certain feast days to worship in the Temple and visit their relatives. Some settled after retirement in Jerusalem or in the countryside of Judah. Since the Hebrew Jews tended to be poorer, there was tension between the two groups. Luke reported this situation in **Acts 2:5-11**

Because so many Diaspora Jews had been saved and did not want to return to the nations from which they came, the Church started practicing communal living.

Acts 2:44-46

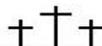
As the numbers of believers increased to more than ten thousand, it became a full time job to house and feed the people. As a result, the Devil was able to pit the Hebrew Jews against the Greek Jews when it comes to distribution of food.

Acts 6:1

God does not condone communal living since He created each family to be independent. This is what the Devil used to stir up strife. **Genesis 2:21-25**

The Apostles were living in a state of euphoria at this time because they believed that it would only be a matter of days or weeks before Jesus returned in power and established His kingdom. Therefore, they were just hanging out in Jerusalem, not thinking about the future since it meant the return of Jesus. The eleven Apostles understood that it was not God's will for them to be working in food lines, feeding thousands of people three times a day. **Acts 6:2**

They proposed a solution to the members of the Church; create the office of deacons, who would be in charge of food distribution. **verses 3-4**



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The deacons were not appointed by the apostles but selected by the church members. **verse 5**

Once the selection was made, the men were presented to the Apostles, who gave their approval and blessing. **verse 6**

The Devil was defeated again and the Church continued to grow and prosper in faith and power. **verse 7**

Satan went back to the time-tested weapon of violence and turned his wrath against one of the seven deacons, the one who was the most anointed and effective in winning new converts for Christ. **verses 8-15**

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THESE EVENTS?

1. God has never designed for mankind to live in communes. Instead, God instituted the family through the marriage of one man and one woman. This is the basic cell upon which nations are built.
 - a. Communes and monasteries are not concepts from God but the kingdom of Satan since it does not promote a healthy life style.
 - b. God eventually used persecution to break up the commune living in Jerusalem and scatter the believers into many different nations. **Acts 8:1**
 - c. Some 20 years later the apostle Paul wrote some solid doctrine for a man and his wife. **Ephesians 5:21-33**
2. In order for us to understand the Book of Acts, we must know the mindset of the Apostles and their early followers. They fully believed that Jesus was the Messiah and they were looking for His return within a short time to set up his kingdom with Jewish believers running it. **Matthew 24:1-3; Acts 1:6-7**
 - a. The church still held to the belief common of the Jews then and now that Gentiles do not have a soul, would not have eternal life and were counted as “beasts” (animals) created to be slaves to the Jewish people.
 - b. It is not until chapter ten in the Book of Acts that God is educating the apostles, that Gentiles are also people and part of the redemption plan by God.
3. It is important that each Christian develop in his calling from God. Each believer in Christ is unique and has been designed for a specific task in the kingdom of God. If a Christian drifts away from his calling, he is hurting himself and others. **1 Corinthians 12:12-31**
4. With the sweetness of the anointing from the Holy Spirit there will always be the presence of the Devil and his henchmen, inflicting pain and suffering on the Christians. This will hold true until the day Jesus returns to this earth – **Revelation 12:7-12**

UNBELIEF MUST BE CONFESSED AS A SIN – James 1:5-8