

# Lifting Up The STANDARD

“When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him” (Isaiah 59:19).



Challenging And Encouraging God's Remnant To Remain Faithful

Issue 18

## Are We Guilty of Proof Texting Concerning The Local Church? - Final In The Series



### Acts 6:1 says,

“There arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews.”

The Grecians were Jews who did not return from captivity under Ezra and Nehemiah. They had scattered to different countries, intermarried, had taken the different nations’ languages for their own. They were considered despicable compromisers by the Jews who had returned.

### Were The Seven Men Deacons?

In First Timothy, Paul gave instructions concerning how the local church should be organized. Chapter 3:15 refers to, “how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” The qualifications for deacons are listed in the same chapter.

### Deacon Qualifications For Deacons In The Local Church

The list of qualifications for deacons, given by Paul in First Timothy chapter three includes,

- 1) “the deacons be grave.”
- 2) “not doubletongued.”
- 3) “not given to much wine.”
- 4) “not greedy of filthy lucre.”
- 5) “Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.”
- 6) “let these also first be proved.”
- 7) “being found blameless.”
- 8) “Even so must their wives be grave.”
- 9) “not slanderers.”
- 10) “sober.”
- 11) “faithful in all things.”
- 12) “the husbands of one wife.”
- 13) “ruling their children and their own houses well.”



### Comparing The Two Groups of Men

None of the things listed by Peter for the qualifications of the seven men chosen in Acts are listed in Paul’s directions for deacons and none of the things listed by Paul are listed in Peter’s list.

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by A.W.Tozer

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All would agree that we would do an injustice to Scripture to attempt to force the kingdom into the third chapter of First Timothy. We also do an injustice to Scripture when we attempt to force the local church into Acts chapter six.

There were only three qualifications listed for the men in Acts chapter six.

- “Of honest report.”
- “Full of the Holy Ghost.”
- Full of “wisdom.”

**The Deacons And The “Mystery”**

The list of qualifications for deacons in the local church included, **“Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.”** We will look at this later in another study, however, it was a very important qualification for deacons.

**Stephen The Miracle Worker**

Chapter six concludes with a focus on Stephen. Acts 6:8 says, *“And Stephen, full of faith and power did great wonders and miracles among the people.”*

Notice the focus here unlike in the local church is still on, **“great wonders and miracles.”** Stephen’s preaching, like Peter’s preaching, got him in serious trouble.

**Conclusions From Acts Chapter Six.**

1. The seven men chosen to help in chapter six were not deacons.
2. There is no mention of the local church in chapter six.
3. To use Scriptures from Acts chapter six to prove local church doctrine is to be guilty of proof texting.

**Acts Chapter Seven**

**Chapter six ended with false accusations being brought against Stephen Acts 7:1 continues,**

*“Then said the high priest, Are these things so?”*

**Stephen’s Sermon Is Totally Jewish**

- Verse 2,** *“our father Abraham.”*
- Verse 5,** *“He promised...a possession...to his seed after him.”*
- Verse 6,** *“his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years.”*
- Verse 8,** *“the covenant of circumcision.”*
- Verse 8,** *“begat Isaac, and circumcised him.”*
- Verse 8,** *“begat the twelve patriarchs.”*
- Verses 9,10,** *“the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt.”*
- Verses 11-15,** *“So Jacob...died, he, and our fathers.”*
- Verse 17,** *“which God had sworn to Abraham.”*
- Verses 20-23,** *“the children of Israel.”*
- Verse 32,** *“I am the God of thy fathers.”*
- Verse 32,** *the God of Abraham*
- Verse 32,** *and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”*
- Verse 36,** *“brought them (Israel) out.”*

**Points To Ponder**



It has been my experience that fundamental independent Baptists are not allowed to do their own thinking. Pastors who are afraid to think outside the box might gang up on you and throw you out of their box. They may get out their branding irons and you will be branded.



Recently when in a discussion about Scriptural things I quoted a preacher from yesteryear. The pastor I was talking to quickly said, *“That man was not a Baptist”*

I said, *“does that mean I shouldn’t quote Jesus anymore?”*

**Spurgeon said,**



*“A Bible that’s falling apart usually belongs to someone who isn’t.”*



**Verse 39**, “our fathers would not obey.”

**Verse 44**, “fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness.”

**Verse 44**, “a tabernacle for the God of Jacob.”

**It is very obvious that Stephen’s message had absolutely nothing to do with the local church or local church doctrine.**

**This does not suggest local churches were not meeting, it simply means this portion of Scripture is talking about something else.**

### **The Nation of Israel Crossed The Line of No Return When They Stoned Stephen**

In Acts 7:58 we read they,

*“cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man’s feet, whose name was Saul.”*

The Book of Acts to this point has had a major Jewish focus. Now, at the stoning of Stephen Israel has come to the final point of her rejection of Christ as their King. Although it is obvious that Christians were assembling at this point God introduces Saul (Paul) to the scene. From this point in the Book of Acts the focus changes from Israel’s Kingdom to the local church that was already underway.

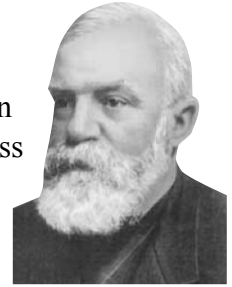
#### **Conclusions From Acts Chapter Seven**

1. Stephen’s sermon was completely Jewish in nature.
2. The local church is not seen in Chapter seven.
3. To use this portion of Scripture to support our position concerning the local church is to be guilty of proof texting.

#### **Notice the changes after Stephen was murdered.**

1. The focus changes from Peter to Paul (Saul).
2. Paul (Saul) appears in the Book of Acts for the first time.
3. The time period is about seven years after Pentecost.
4. Jews are preaching in Samaria which was formerly forbidden.
5. Philip takes the gospel to a Gentile in the wilderness.
6. Although the plan of salvation had been preached extensively for the previous seven years, it now becomes the focus and the kingdom message is preached no more.
7. After Paul is saved he meets with Christ for instructions concerning the local church structure.
  - a. **Galatians 1:12**, “For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.”
8. It is revealed to Peter that he should preach the plan of salvation to Gentiles.
9. The apostles at the church at Jerusalem accept Peter’s explanation that it was according to the will of god to preach the gospel of salvation to the Gentiles.
10. This happened about twelve years after Pentecost.
11. Although there is MUCH evidence that local churches were meeting prior to Pentecost they are now becoming the focus in the Book of Acts.

**D.L. Moody** was attending a convention in Indianapolis on mass evangelism, he asked his song leader Ira Sankey to meet him at six o’clock one evening at a certain street corner. When Sankey arrived, Mr. Moody asked him to stand on a box and sing.



**D.L. Moody**

Once a crowd had gathered, Moody spoke briefly and then invited the people to follow him to the nearby convention hall. Soon the auditorium was filled with spiritually hungry people, and the great evangelist preached the gospel to them.

Then the convention delegates began to arrive. Moody stopped preaching and said, “Now we must close, as the brethren of the convention wish to come and discuss the topic, ‘How to reach the masses.’”

#### **A.W. Tozer Said,**

*“We desperately need seers who can see through the mist— Christian leaders with prophetic vision. Unless they come soon it will be too late for this generation. And if they do come we will no doubt crucify a few of them in the name of our worldly orthodoxy.”*



**We cannot sit on the fence concerning the end time issues we face today and expect our young people to survive!**

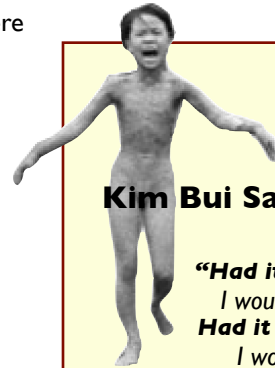




12. We need to be careful not to use Scriptures out of context to support our position concerning when we believe local churches were meeting. To do so makes us guilty of proof texting.

**Local Churches Begin To Be Referred To As Being In Specific Places**

- Acts 11:22, "the church which was in Jerusalem."
- Acts 11:26, "Antioch...they assembled...with the church."
- Acts 13:1, "the church that was at Antioch."
- Acts 15:4, "Jerusalem, they were received of the church."
- Romans 16:1, "the church which is at Cenchrea."
- Romans 16:5, "the church that is in their house."
- First Corinthians 1:2, "the church of God which is at Corinth."
- Second Corinthians, 1:1, "the church of God which is at Corinth."
- Colossians 4:15, "the church which is in his house."
- Colossians 4:16, "t the church of the Laodiceans."
- Second Thessalonians 1:1, "the church of the Thessalonians."
- Philemon 1:2, "the church in they house."
- Revelation 2:1, "the church of Ephesus."
- Revelation 2:8, "the church in Smyrna."
- Revelation 2:12, "the church in Pergamos."
- Revelation 2:18, "the church in Thyatira."
- Revelation 3:1, "the church in Sardis."
- Revelation 3:7, "the church in Philadelphia."
- Revelation 3:14, "the church of the Laodiceans."



**Kim Bui Said,**

Kim

**"Had it not been for war,**  
I would not value peace.  
**Had it not been for pain,**  
I would not know the  
healing power of love.  
**Had it not been for hatred,**  
I would never have  
learned to forgive.  
**Had it not been for imprisonment,**  
I would not value freedom.  
**Had it not been for living in want,**  
I would not value everything I have.  
**Had it not been for fear,**  
I would not value peace."

**Leadership In The Local Churches Now Comes Into Focus**

- Acts 14:23, "they had ordained them elders in every church."
- Acts 15:2, "to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders."
- Acts 15:4, "received of the church, and of the apostles and elders."
- Acts 15:6, "And the apostles and elders came together."
- Acts 15:22, "the apostles and elders, with the whole church."
- Acts 15:23, "The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting."
- Acts 16:4, "ordained of the apostles and elders...at Jerusalem."
- Acts 20:17, "sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church."
- Acts 21:18, "James; (Pastor/ Jerusalem) and all the elders."
- James 5:14, "call for the elders of the church."

Conclusion of proof texting series



"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine."  
(Titus 2:1)



"For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time,  
and then vanisheth away."  
(James 4:14)

**Where Are You In The Picture?**





## When God “Somes” It Up

Today, as in the days of Noah, the prophetic warnings are as visible as a giant ark parked conspicuously in the desert.

Yet, only a few professed Christians are stopping to see what is going on.

### Like the church represented in First and Second Timothy our churches have been infiltrated with...

- “Some,” Teaching false doctrine (First Timothy 1:3).
- “Some,” Turned aside unto vain jangling (First Timothy. 1:6).
- “Some,” Made shipwreck (First Timothy. 1:19).
- “Some,” Departed from the faith (First Timothy. 4:1).
- “Some,” Turned aside after Satan (First Timothy. 5:15).
- “Some,” Sin openly (First Timothy. 5:24).
- “Some,” Sin secretly (First Timothy. 5:24).
- “Some,” Coveted after money (First Timothy 6:10).
- “Some,” Erred concerning the faith (First Timothy 5:24).
- “Some,” Had their faith overthrown (Second Timothy 2:18).
- “Some,” Vessels to honour (Second Timothy 2:20).
- “Some,” Vessels to dishonour (Second Timothy 2:20).

Notice, only one out of the twelve groups represented in the local church at Ephesus were “vessels to honour.”



## Discernment Must Begin

*“For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God”*  
(First Peter 4:17).

**The Christians Peter was writing to were not being warned about an impending judgment of God. They were Being Challenged To Have Discernment**

Warning about impending judgment would be totally out of context with the preceding chapters.

### Chapter 1:6,

*“Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations.”*

### Chapter 1:7,

*“That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth.”*

### Chapter 1:7,

*“As obedient children.”*

### Chapter 1:8,

*“Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”*

### Chapter 2:5,

*“Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house.”*

### Chapter 2:7,

*“Unto you therefore which believe he is precious.”*

Peter was writing Christians whose faith was on trial and they needed to make some serious judgments concerning their circumstances. They needed to come to proper conclusions and make decisions.

### It was in this context that Peter said,

*“judgment (discernment) must begin at the house of God.”*

Peter was telling these godly Christians that the people who made up their local church needed to correctly judge what was going on at that time.

They needed to,

*“judge righteous judgment”* (John 7:24).

### It is time for us to answer the question that Jesus asked,

*“Why even of yourselves judge ye not **what** (not who) is right?”* (Luke 12:57).

Why is it that we do not judge **what** is right? God does not have a different answer for Paul Chappell concerning the use of CCM music than He does for David Cloud. Jesus didn't ask us to judge who was right, He asked, *“Why even of yourselves judge ye not **what** is right?”* (Luke 12:57).

The question is not who is right, the question is can YOU discern what is right? If not, why not?