

Growing Pains

(Acts 6:1-7)

Introduction

During childhood the human body goes through an amazing series of changes. When babies are born, their heads, hands, and feet are proportionally much larger in relation to their bodies than at any other time in life. It's one of the things that make babies distinct and adorable. Throughout the growing-up process, the human body changes proportions many times. Sometimes long, gangly arms and legs seem to shoot out overnight! During these spurts of growth, children often complain of nighttime leg pain, hence the common label "growing pains."

These pains typically occur at night with no resultant daytime disability. The actual source of the pain has never been proven, but long experience has taught us that it's benign and self-limited.

In children with growing pains, the muscles or tendons are still a little too tight for the growing long bones. Muscle spasms lasting from one to 15 minutes cause the pain. Gentle massage and moist heat over the painful spot can also help.

In most cases the pain can be prevented with simple, daily stretching exercises. These exercises must be continued even after the pain subsides in order to keep the muscles and tendons relaxed and able to accommodate the next growth spurt.

Contextualize Acts 6:1-7. As we learned last week, First Church in Jerusalem was not without problems. God was doing amazing things in Jerusalem. Over and over again we see waves of people coming to Christ. The first problem that they faced was a lack of authenticity in some of the lay leadership at the church. The second problem

resulted from the escalating numbers – people were being overlooked.

Contextualize this sermon in the Acts Sermon Series

I. Ministry Problems

Principle: Because ministry is about people, problems will always emerge. Sometimes because we do things wrong and sometime because we do things right.

A) Increasing Disciples (v. 1)

B) Inconsistent Ministry (v. 1)

C) Inappropriate Responsibility (v. 2)

II. Decisive Action

A) The Examination (v. 2)

B) The Solution (v. 3-4)

C) The Acceptance (v. 5)

III. Qualified People

A) Their Qualifications (v. 3)

B) Their identity (v. 5-6)

IV. Positive Results

A) Harmonious Church (v. 7)

B) Increasing Message (v. 7)

C) Escalated Growth (v. 7)

Celebration is bumping against the second critical ceiling of growth, the 100-125 mark

(What factors hinder growth in a congregation?

1) facilities, 2) leadership failures, 3) ministry ownership failures, 4) satisfaction, and 5) etc.)

D) Salvation of Souls (v. 7)

Conclusion