



BIBLE RADIO PRODUCTIONS

www.bibleradio.org.au

BIBLE ADVENTURES SCRIPT:

A1713 ~ Seven Deacons Appointed.

Welcome to Bible Adventures. Help for today. Hope for tomorrow. Jesus is Lord of all.

While out on a walk, a man found a moth cocoon and took it home to watch it hatch. One day a small opening appeared and for several hours, the moth struggled to get past a certain point. Deciding something was wrong, the man took scissors and snipped the remaining bit of the cocoon. The moth emerged easily; its body large and swollen, its wings small and shrunk.

The man expected that in a few hours the wings would spread out in their natural beauty but they didn't. Instead of developing into a creature free to fly, the moth spend its life dragging around a swollen body and tiny wings.

The necessary struggle the moth has to pass through a small opening in its cocoon is God's way of forcing fluid from the body into its wings. As a result, the snip was harmful to the moth's development and it never properly matured. Sometimes a struggle is exactly what people need to experience too.

When we face adversities in life, the most important thing is how we respond to them. Some people blame all their problems on God or others rather than working out how best the Holy Spirit's leading them to respond in a godly manner. God may be teaching us something that we need to know for future ministry even though at the time, we may be wondering why this adversity is happening to us. When we pray and we ask for the details, God doesn't usually tell us straight away. But if we respond in obedience to His leading, later on we often come to understand why.

In today's *Bible Adventure*, the young but growing church community in the Bible book of Acts was facing a problem. There were so many people to be cared for that some people were missing out on getting enough food to eat.

DRAMA - [The Bible In Living Sound](#).

In Jesus' time, there were some Greek-speaking Jews living in Jerusalem and when Jesus was resurrected, some of them believed in Him. They soon became part of the new church community. But the majority of believers in Jesus were the Aramaic or Hebrew-speaking Jews. Many of these believers had sold their possessions and given the money over to the apostles to distribute to those in need.

A dispute arose between those two groups because the Greek-speaking widows weren't getting their fair share of the food that the apostles were distributing each day to the needy. How quickly complaining and division arose in that first Christian church! The basic problem was a money matter and how the money was being spent and distributed. Even though thousands had been added to the church, Satan was there trying to sow the seeds of discord.

In the church different Christians have different tasks. The apostles had been appointed to preach and teach God's Word and to pray. And so they appointed seven godly men who were full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom to distribute the food. In time, those who performed such works of service in the church became known as deacons.

All the seven men appointed to distributing food had Greek names. The church members chose them after prayer and discussion, and then the apostles laid hands on them, commissioning them to do their work. To commission people by the laying of hands was a Jewish custom that started when, at God's command, Moses installed Joshua as the new leader as listed in Numbers, Chapter 27.

Of the seven deacons appointed, one of them was Stephen, who later became the first Christian martyr while another, Philip, later evangelised to the region of Samaria. But nothing more is known of the other five men.

The apostles gave all future churches a good example to follow. If any leader becomes so busy that he can't fulfil all his obligations and duties satisfactorily, he should delegate some of his duties to another worthy person in the church.

However, there are many leaders in the church who prefer to keep all the authority and responsibility for themselves and not share it with others. This is not good long-term. It's best if pastors and preachers don't take full responsibility for the financial affairs of the church. Instead, they should devote their time to prayer and to the ministry of the Word.

In 1 Timothy, Chapter 3, the Apostle Paul wrote the duties of deacons as well as the character qualities necessary for a person to be a deacon. Some people mistakenly think that a deacon's work is not so important and that anyone can be a deacon. But Paul indicates otherwise. Before anyone is appointed to be a deacon, he should be carefully examined by the church in conduct and nature. He should have good character, a clear conscience and not be interested in dishonest gain regarding money matters. Only if he is found blameless, should the person be appointed. He also needs a wife of good character, who is worthy of respect and trustworthy in everything.

The appointment of seven deacons for the church community pleased the whole group and it's recorded in Acts, Chapter 6. Every church community has to be careful about favouritism and the treatment of minorities within the congregation. James, the brother of Jesus, wrote in his letter to the churches about believers living a practical ethical life. He insisted that genuine faith in the Lord Jesus must produce results in good works.

In Chapter 2 of the letter of James, he spoke against showing favouritism on the basis of outward appearance. In some of the churches, a well-dressed person would receive a more polite greeting and respect while being sat in a better place; whereas poor people were spoken to roughly and told to sit on the floor.

In Galatians, Chapter 3, the Apostle Paul said: "It is through faith that all of you are God's children in union with Christ Jesus. There is no difference between Jews and Gentiles, between slaves and free people, between men and women; you are all one in union with Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are the descendants of Abraham and you will receive what God has promised."

God Himself doesn't show favouritism. In Romans, Chapter 2, it says that God judges everyone by the same standards. In Acts, Chapter 10, following the trip to meet Cornelius, Peter said: "I now realise that it is true that God treats everyone on the same basis. Those who fear Him and do what is right are acceptable to Him, no matter what race they belong to."

In recent years, discrimination against someone else for their race, colour or religion has been written into the laws of many countries. However, what was fair and right in the treatment of different people groups has become so blown out of proportion that it has become a movement known as Political Correctness. Government departments dealing with anti-discrimination complaints and cases tell people all the things they can't say. In some cases, a person cannot tell the truth because it breaks the code of political correctness.

The real goal of political correctness is to convince us that all the ideas and beliefs are equally correct. No idea or belief is greater or truer than any other idea or belief. And that is the danger. If Satan can convince people that all ideas are equal, then he can convince them that anyone who promotes anything that's 'exclusive' or 'better' is evil and a menace to society. In that way, Satan can destroy our willingness to accept that there may be some ideas and beliefs that really are better than others - because they're true, wholesome and beneficial.

Although promoters of political correctness would have us believe that their goal is to have every person viewed as equal, with no one greater than anyone else and each person as valuable as the next, they're not being sincere. That's how God already views us: the least is as important as the greatest. He loves the lowliest as much as the loftiest.

By using the charge of ‘hate speech’, which is the legal term for ‘political correctness’, Satan can inspire the prosecution of Christians as ‘enemies of humanity’, as Nero called them. In doing so, Satan hopes to silence the voices that proclaim that not only is Christianity a better way, it's the ONLY possible way for God to save fellow human beings. Satan's real goal is to convince people that there are many roads to heaven and in doing so, deceive many from finding salvation in Christ.

Jesus said in Matthew, Chapter 7: “Go in through the narrow gate, because the gate to hell is wide and the road that leads to it is easy and there are many who travel it. But the gate to life is narrow and the way that leads to it is hard, and there are few people who find it.”

That’s the heart of the Christian message. Christianity is superior to all others because of who God is. That is why Jesus Himself declared that He is the only way people can come to God. To acknowledge the superiority of Christianity requires the admission that there is one Supreme Being and that His Word, the Bible, is sovereign. It then follows that He demands accountability.

Nevertheless, church people need to be careful about what they say, for political correctness is one path that believers in Christ may be persecuted. Some pastors in Europe have been jailed for simply preaching what the Scriptures say about homosexuality. Political correctness demands that every person, every idea, every desire, and even every perversion, is celebrated equally. Thus the justification for the prosecution of individual Christians will be our refusal to follow the rules of political correctness.

The increase of social wickedness in the last days before the return of the Lord Jesus was predicted by Him in Matthew, Chapter 24. He said that His second coming would be like what happened in the days of Noah, a time that grieved God so much that He intervened with a global judgment against the immoral behaviour and violence raging on the earth.

Jesus said: “Such will be the spread of evil that many people’s love will grow cold. But whoever holds out to the end will be saved.” May we pray for the perseverance to follow Jesus faithfully until the day He calls us home to heaven!

The drama is from The Bible In Living Sound.

< END OF SCRIPT >
