



DAILY BREAD

FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 29, 2010

This week's assigned reading: Acts 5 and 6.

Comments on the assigned reading:

- The deaths of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11) were not due to their failure to turn over all of their property to the church, which it "held in common" (Acts 4:32) among those first believers. Rather this couple lied to the church about the extent of their property.
- The early church in its first days was composed of Jews who came to believe that Jesus was the promised Messiah. These believers were centered in Jerusalem and led by people who spoke Aramaic (a language related to Hebrew, much like Italian is related to Latin). The Hellenists were those Jews who spoke Greek (Acts 6:1), the prevailing language of the eastern portion of the Roman Empire. The complaint was that the Aramaic-speaking Christians discriminated against the Hellenist widows in the daily distribution of food.

Questions for reflection and discussion:

1. When the apostles were arrested and brought before the religious authorities in Jerusalem, they were ordered not to teach in the name of Jesus (5:28). Peter and the apostles refused to comply, saying: "We must obey God rather than any human authority (5:29). Have you ever felt pulled in two directions by human authorities on one side (e.g. government, church officials, etc.), and your understanding of what Scripture teaches on the other hand?
2. All of the seven men chosen to take responsibility for the daily distribution of food to Hellenist widows had Greek names (Acts 6:5) and were themselves Hellenists. As Galilee reaches out in mission, how well are we doing in calling and preparing "new people" to the congregation in also becoming leaders in mission?

Suggestions for prayer:

- Pray for Galilee, since the congregation is facing financial challenges due to a budget shortfall. Thank God for all the members who generously support the mission of this congregation.
- Pray for Peace Lutheran Church in Lauderdale, MN which sponsors Urban Farming and Triscuit, an urban gardening project on the congregation's land, by which they are able to donate fresh food to Keystone Community Services food shelf.