

## “Problem Solving 101!”

### 1. **Intro:**

- 1.1. **Dave LeCompte** – (formerly director of IHF) *Mission International* (Bill Agius)
- 1.2. **Philanthropy!** - I used to look down my nose on those who were “*philanthropic*” ...**then I looked up the word!**
  - 1.2.1. **It is a beautiful word.** Philanthropy comes from 2 Greek words *philos* & *anthropos*. (“Loving” “Human beings”) {or, “man-lovingness”} [*philanthropos*]
  - 1.2.2. Being “*Philanthropic*” means, “showing **kindness, charitable** concern, and **generosity** toward other people”.
  - 1.2.3. **So by adding one word in front of it “Christian Philanthropy” it helps point to where our kindness, love, & generosity is drawn from.**
  - 1.2.4. 1 definition for **Christian** in the dictionary is: “showing qualities such as kindness, helpfulness, and concern for others.”<sup>1</sup>
  - 1.2.5. **Christian Philanthropy** – “*Christians loving their fellow man*”.
- 1.3. **The Mazatec Indians** in Southwestern Mexico have an odd behavior which stems from their concept of “**limited good.**” They believe there is only so much **good**, so much **knowledge**, so much **love** to go around. To **teach** another means you might drain yourself of knowledge. To **love** a second child means you have to love the first child less. To **wish someone well** - “*Have a good day*” - means you have just given away some of your own happiness, which cannot be reacquired.
  - 1.3.1. PTL we have a vast reservoir we can dip into; a well that will never run dry; brimming with **Gods love, His knowledge, & His goodness.**
- 1.4. **PRAY:** Ty there is no limit to *good/knowledge/love*.
  - 1.4.1. **Lord you & your attributes are:** limitless, boundless, immeasurable, infinite, vast, inexhaustible, never ending!
- 1.5. Well, we’ve seen how the church weathered its 1<sup>st</sup> storm of **persecution** from the outside, & then hypocrisy on the inside, now let’s see how well they did on **Problem solving.**
  - 1.5.1. For the 1<sup>st</sup> time a **major division** confronts the church.
  - 1.5.2. This describes how to **face & meet crisis** in the church.

### 2. **PROBLEM SOLVING 101! (1-7)**

- 2.1. **PROPER CARE!** (1)
- 2.2. **Hellenist** – Those who **language & culture** was **Greek**.
  - 2.2.1. **Hellas** = Greek word for their mother land **Greece**.
    - 2.2.1.1. [*Hellen Gk deity, son of Zeus*]

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- 2.2.2. **Hellenist** (Grecian Jews) & **Hebraists** (Aramaic speaking Jews)
- 2.2.3. Hellenist migrated from their homeland to various other nations (aka the *Jewish Dispersion*).
- 2.3. One of the ministries of the **synagogue** & for the **church** is to provide **food** & or **financial assistance** to those **widows** & **children** not supported by relatives.
- 2.4. **SERVING!** (2-4)
- 2.5. **Serve** – In Mark’s gospel the *Key Verse* is Mrk.10:45 “**For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.**”
- 2.5.1. The 2 verbs that identified **Christ** was **Serving** & **Giving**.
- 2.5.2. The 2 verbs that identify **the Christian** is **Serving** & **Giving**.
- 2.5.2.1. **We are not saved by service, but are saved for service.**
- 2.5.2.2. It’s what Peters mother-in-law does immediately when she gets healed, “**she stood up & began to serve**”.
- 2.5.3. One church in China welcomed new believers by saying, “**Jesus now has a new pair of eyes to see with, new ears to listen with, new hands to help with, & a new heart to love others with.**”<sup>2</sup>
- 2.6. (2) The **tables** (*trapezais*) may refer to tables used for **servicing food** or to **money tables**, that is, banks.
- 2.6.1. Probably it was used here to refer to the place where **funds** and **supplies** were administered for the widows.
- 2.7. I love how the **leadership** summoned **the whole church** for help; **not** the church summoning the **leadership** to do it.
- 2.7.1. They showed leadership by coming up with the solution.
- 2.7.2. They also seem to recognize their gift was **spiritual leadership**, & not necessarily **administrative matters**.
- 2.8. (3) **What was most important about those chosen?** Their **spirituality** & **wisdom**.
- 2.8.1. **Spirituality** is important whether you are **doing a bible study** or buying someone **lunch** or giving someone \$5 for **gas**.
- 2.9. **Why full of the Holy Spirit?** So He could **illuminate** their natural wisdom; **help** to control their feelings; **direct** their wills; & **possess** every faculty.
- 2.10. **What is wisdom?** Knowledge rightly applied.
- 2.11. **Why is wisdom necessary?** They had to distinguish between cases; administer charity; use money with impartiality & integrity. They couldn’t be weak, nor prejudiced.
- 2.12. **Q:** Would any of these hold **you** back from serving? How is your reputation? Would your friends consider you full of the H.S.? Do you rightly apply knowledge in your life?

<sup>2</sup> Rick Warren; Purpose Driven Life; pg.230

- 2.13. (4) Were the Apostles **too good** for this work? Were they saying, “We don’t do tables!” **No!**
- 2.14. There is no ministry that is **unimportant** for a *Christlike servant!*
- 2.14.1. For Jesus said, “**I am among you as the One who serves.**” Lk.22:27
- 2.15. In serving tables, the men released the apostles for **their** ministry of **Prayer/Word.**
- 2.15.1. On Wednesday evenings...because many come out to serve at the feeding ministry, I’m released to finish up my notes 4 the eve service.
- 2.15.2. People filled with the Spirit see **no small jobs or big places!!!**
- 2.15.3. They see only **their Master & the opportunity to glorify Jesus.**
- 2.15.4. No ministry is **less** of a ministry than another...just **different!**
- 2.16. **THE SELCTION!** (5)
- 2.17. Though they are not called *deacons* here, they seem to be the **prototype** of this office later revealed by Paul.
- 2.18. Now, you know who blesses me here? The Hebrew Jews! - **Why?** Their beautiful faith move here.
- 2.18.1. Faith move? Yep, all 7 guys have a **Greek name!**
- 2.18.2. To advert further trouble they basically say, “**we fully trust these 7 Greek speaking Jewish believers.**” 😊
- 2.19. **Stephen** is named 1<sup>st</sup>. He becomes the primary character in the following narrative.
- 2.20. **Philip** becomes a major figure in the early church.
- 2.21. **Nicolas** is none other than *St. Nicolas* (just kiddin) 😊
- 2.21.1. He was **not** born an ethnic Jew. He was born a Gentile & later chose to become a Jew. A Jew by adoption, not by birth.
- 2.22. **Prochorus** later becomes a **bishop**, according to history.
- 2.23. **The other 3** – play no further role *in Acts*.
- 2.24. Many groups who work in missions have adopted a **4-stage concept** of missionary work, 1<sup>st</sup> suggested by **Harold Fuller**.
- 2.24.1. **[1] Pioneer** - 1<sup>st</sup> contact w/a people group. He must **lead** & do much of the **work**, as there are no believers yet.
- 2.24.2. **[2] Paternal** – Expatriates (those who have left their native land for a time) **train** national leadership. It is like a **parent/child** relationship. But, the **parent** must avoid **paternalism** (i.e. when the desire to help, advise, & protect neglects their individual choice & personal responsibility)
- 2.24.3. **[3] Partnership** – National leaders work as **equals** w/Expat’s. Now it is an adult/adult relationship. The desire is for the church to become a mature “**adult**”.
- 2.24.4. **[4] Participation** – Expatriates are no longer equal partners, but only **participate by invitation**. The mature church assumes **leadership**.
- 2.25. **Why did I share all of that?** I believe that’s what we see starting to take place here.
- 2.25.1. Right from the beginning they try to help the church towards being **self-governing; self-sufficient; & self-propagating.**

- 2.26. **THE INSTALLATION!** (6)
- 2.27. So the Church identified them & brought them to the Apostles.
- 2.28. The Apostles confirmed the churches decision by praying & laying hands on the 7.
- 2.29. The 7 did not become leaders as a result of an **election**; they had obviously **already emerged** as leaders.
- 2.29.1. **We** don't create leaders in the church by **choosing** them; **God** has already created, chosen, & gifted them...We simply **recognize** what God has done in them!
- 2.30. **THE RESULTS!** (7)
- 2.31. Conflict resolved by **the leadership acting, the church helping, & these 7 men serving.**
- 2.32. The **result** here was an increase in conversions(7).
- 2.33. **Priests** – **not** to be confused with the *high priests* who joined the Sadducees in persecuting the disciples.
- 2.33.1. **Joachim Jeremias** calculates the number of priests in Jerusalem at the time to be approximately **8000**, along w/some 10,000 Levites.<sup>3</sup>
- 2.33.2. **There was a great gulf fixed between the ordinary priests(poor) & the class of ruling & wealthy high priests.** Richard Rackham.
- 2.34. The narrative about Stephen is a major turning point in Acts:
- 2.34.1. **It ends a series of 3 trials before the Sanhedrin.**
- 2.34.2. **And will culminate the witness to the Jews of Jerusalem.**
- 2.35. **Wrap Up!**
- 2.36. **[1] Church problems are inevitable!** [It's not "if" the come but "when"!]
- 2.36.1. Problems in church come in many different shades of "dark", because we are **imperfect** beings.
- 2.37. **[2] Church problems are not invincible!**
- 2.37.1. They should be shown that a **solution is possible, &** should be met **fairly & firmly.**
- 2.38. **[3] Church problems should be handled by love!**
- 2.38.1. By setting aside **differences**; seeking the **good of all**; realizing the **need for each other**; & by honoring **diversities of gifts & division of work.**
- 2.39. **Christian Philanthropy** – "*Christians loving their fellow man*".

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<sup>3</sup> Peter Wagner; pg.152