“Comfort is often the enemy of obedience”

--Thom Rainer
Main idea: Growth causes pain, but working together the church deals with issues and continues kingdom growth.
Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. 

2 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables. 

3 Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty. 

4 But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word." 

5 And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 

6 These they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them. 

7 And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith. (Act 6:1-7 ESV)
Christ Centered Growth
(the right kind of growth)
Main idea: Growth causes pain, but working together the church deals with issues and continues kingdom growth.

1. Problems will arise (v. 1).
2. Everyone has a role (vv. 2-7).
Growing Pains

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   A. Legitimate issue.
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   A. Legitimate issue.
   
   B. Sinful response.
Growing Pains

1. Problems will arise (v. 1).
   A. Legitimate issue.
   B. Sinful response.
   C. People (problems) haven’t changed.
We’re just like them (3 reasons).

i. Immature (or lost) people.

ii. Clash of cultures.

iii. Limited leaders.
Pastor … Spouse … Job … Money … Fame … School … cannot satisfy your needs.

Only God, through Christ, can satisfy your soul.
Growing Pains

1. Problems will arise (v. 1).

Application:

i) It’s about the Kingdom, not self.

ii) Handle conflict biblically.
Growing Pains

1. Problems will arise (v. 1).

2. Everyone has a role to play in solving problems (vv. 2-7).

(... in a godly, growing church)

1. Protecting unity in the church (v. 1).
2. Keeping up with legitimate needs (vv. 1, 7).
3. Avoiding and handling criticism (v. 3).
4. Maintaining ministerial priorities (v. 4).
5. Sharing ministry duties (vv. 5-6).
6. Furthering the Kingdom of God (v. 7).

The Devil attacks these areas.
Growing Pains

1. Problems will arise (v. 1).

2. Everyone has a role to play in solving problems (vv. 2-7).
   
   A. It’s the church’s duty.

If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together” 1 Cor 12:24
Growing Pains

1. Problems will arise (v. 1).

2. Everyone has a role to play in solving problems (vv. 2-7).
   
   A. It’s the church’s duty.
   
   B. Elders focus on the Word and Prayer.

(Acts 2:42, 5:42 … Eph 4:11-12; 1 & 2 Tim)
Growing Pains

1. Problems will arise (v. 1).
2. Everyone has a role to play in solving problems (vv. 2-7).
   A. It’s the church’s duty.
   B. Elders focus on the Word and Prayer.
   C. Servants organize serving.
What do godly servants look like?

1. Good reputation.
2. Wise.
Spirit-filled implies bold witness.

1. Acts 1:8 – Spirit power for witnessing.

Before we can lead for Christ in the Church we must stand for Christ in the World.
Growing Pains

1. Problems will arise (v. 1).

2. Everyone has a role to play in solving problems (vv. 2-7).
   A. It’s the *church’s* duty.
   B. Elders focus on the Word and Prayer.
   C. Servants organize serving.
   D. The gathering was pleased and the growth continued.
Growing Pains

1. Problems will arise (v. 1).

2. Everyone has a role to play in solving problems (vv. 2-7).

Application:

i) Submit to biblical priorities.

ii) Find your place.
What’s keeping you from serving?