Crises in the Church at Jerusalem
Acts 8:1

Introduction:
A. The church at Jerusalem was the first and only church for a year or so.
   1. How pleasant it must have been to be a part of it!
      a. To have enjoyed that closeness! (Acts 2:44, 46)
      b. To have enjoyed that growth! (Acts 2:41, 47; 4:4; 6:6,7).
      c. To have enjoyed that popularity! (Acts 2:47).
   2. How trying it must have been to face the crises that soon came!
B. Studying the six crises in the church at Jerusalem should help us to deal with modern problems:

Discussion:


II. The Crisis of Material Need.
   A. Met it by liberality and sacrifice on part of members. (Acts 2:44,45; 4:34-35).
   B. Met it with own possessions and resources - did not beg the world.

III. The Crisis of Internal Sin. (5:1-13)
   A. Problem solved by discipline
      1. In this case, it was direct divine discipline.
      2. In later cases, by divinely instructed discipline. (Cf. Rom. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5; 2 Thess. 3; Tit. 2:10).
   B. Discipline produced four good effects:
      1. Fear came upon the church (v. 11).
      2. Church was united (v. 12).
      3. The rest dared not join them (v. 13)
         a. Who were the rest? Likely rest of rich and great like Ananias (Barnes)
         b. At any rate, the idea seems to be that the uncommitted were deterred.
      4. The believers were increasingly added (v. 14).

   A. Problem produced another problem - complaining.
   B. Problem solved by appointed seven men - all with Grecian or Hellenists names.
   C. Problem not solved by taking apostles away from their work of teaching & preaching.
   D. Problem solved within frame work of the church.

V. The Crisis of Persecution (8:1).
   A. Endured by putting God’s will first. (4:19,20).
   B. Borne by “looking steadfastly into heaven” (7:55 KJV).
   C. Overruled by God’s providence. (8:4).

VI. The Crisis of Doctrinal Controversy. (15:1-5).
   A. Was not settled by compromise. (Cf. Gal. 2:1-5).
   B. Was not settled by brotherhood consensus.
   C. Settled with open discussion (vs. 6,7).
   D. Settled by words of the Holy Spirit (v. 28).

Conclusion:
A. We cannot expect the church to be problem free (cf. 1 Cor. 11:19).
B. We can meet and solve our problems with a steadfast faith in Christ and His word.