Satan's Triple Threat To The Early Church
Acts 6:1-8

Introduction:
A. Jerusalem church grew (cf. 2:47; 4:4; 6:1,7)
   1. In spite of external opposition/persecution (5:40)
   2. Because of daily evangelism (5:42)
B. Jerusalem church’s greatest threat was not persecution.
   1. Persecution strengthened their resolve (4:20; 5:41)
   2. Persecution caused wider growth (8:1,4)
C. Jerusalem church’s greatest threat was internal.
   1. If not overcome church could have been splintered.
   2. If not overcome could have destroyed church’s effectiveness.
   3. If not overcome energy wasted on internal problem.
D. Our text describes Satan’s triple threat to the early church:

Discussion:
I. Discrimination. (Verse 1).
A. We must avoid various kinds of discrimination.
   1. Ethnic. (v. 1; Gal. 2:11-16).
   2. Economic. (Jas. 2:1-13).
      a. Large contributors often have more power.
      b. Prosperous sometimes use money in subtle way to get own way.
B. We must practice some kinds of discrimination.
   1. Moral and spiritual. (1 Cor. 5) — cf. “Gay” rights.
   2. Doctrinal. (Rom. 16:17; 2 John 9-11).

II. Discord. (Verse 1)
A. Discord often caused by Real grievances.
   1. This seemed to be the case at Jerusalem.
   2. This is solved by wise correction. (vv. 3-6). — Note: all had Grecian names.
B. Discord often caused by Weak Leadership.
   1. Jerusalem’s problem handled wisely and swiftly by strong leadership.
   2. At many places problems fester because of weak or non-existent leadership.
C. Discord often caused by Honest differences in judgement.
   1. Paul and Barnabas had such differences. (Acts 15:26-41).
   2. Brethren often need to agree to disagree on matters of judgment.
D. Discord often caused by personality flaws
   1. Overly critical personalities are not very forbearing. (cf. Eph. 4:1-4)
   2. Chronically complaining personalities disturb congregational peace.
   3. Explosive personalities often cause problems — often hold church hostage.
   4. Egotistical personalities disturb churches. (Rom. 12:3, 16).
   6. Super-sensitive personalities often generate strife with evil-suspicions. (cf. 1 Tim. 6:4)
E. Discord often caused by Doctrinal error (Rom. 16:17).

III. Diversion. (Verse 2).
A. Preachers must avoid being diverted from main work to other things.
   1. Preachers often, either forced or voluntarily, diverted to “table-serving”.
   2. Preachers often leave study & teaching for things other could do better.
B. Churches must avoid being diverted from main work to other things.
   1. Do not expect hospitals to do everything needing done in world.
   2. Why expect church to do every thing needing done in the world?

Conclusion:
1. Let us not fall into any of these satanic traps.
2. Let us look at the results of successfully handling such threats. (v. 7)