

Acts 7 Circle Questions

Icebreaker: What is the most impactful speech or sermon to which you have listened? Why?

Fun Fact: This chapter records the longest single speech in the Book of Acts.

I. Stephen (1 of 7) men known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. (Acts 6:3-6)
Work of Stephen: *"...great wonders and miraculous signs among the people."*
(Acts 6:8)

1. Describe what you think makes an individual one who is considered full of the Spirit and wisdom.
2. Stephen's original accusers in Acts 6:9-10 could not refute his wisdom. Have you ever noticed that the opposition to the works of God can often come from individuals within the religious community? Why do you think this happens?
3. Who were the people opposing Stephen? (Acts 6:9-13) Hint: there are 5 groups.

II. Opposition Subject Matters:

4. What were the charges the high priest referred to in 7:1? (Act 6:11-14)

The Jewish leaders were upset because these new believers were attacking their law and their temple.

5. Why do you think they thought these two subjects were so important, special, and worthy to quarrel and fight over?
6. Describe what you think were the real issues of the heart related to these subjects.
7. Can you think of instances when your heart keeps you from seeing what God is doing?

III. High Priest question: *"Are these charges true?"* (Acts 7:1)

IV. Message:

Stephen does not dispute the "false witnesses, their testimony", and/or the accusations they leveled against him (Acts 7:1-53).

Note: Historical Sketch of God's Activities toward Israel, and Israel's conduct in return to His workings. Additional information regarding these events can be

found in the Old Testament and will require additional readings and studies.

Stephen's Sermon:

The call of Abraham to the settlement of Jacob in Egypt (Acts 7:1-16)

The Settlement in Egypt to the Exodus (Acts 7:17-36)

From the Exodus to the Building of Solomon's Temple (Acts 7:37-50)

**Brief and Pungent Statement of the Nation's Treatment of the Lord's
Designs and Messengers (Acts 7:51-53)**

8. Why do think Stephen did not directly attack his accusers? (character, stories, inconsistencies with their evidence, etc.)
9. If the command is to be a witness for Christ, how should we respond to false accusations?
10. Stephen used the "Word of God" which in other passages has been described as a "sword" (Ephesians 6:17); which is living and active, and judges the attitudes of the heart. (Hebrews 4:12) Discuss why you think it is important to use the Bible when talking to others regarding their personal salvation. (Romans 1:16, John 3:16-18)
11. Describe how important it is for us to know Biblical history and stories? (1 Corinthians 10:11, 1 Peter 3:15-16)

V. Indictment:

12. Provide a description of your understanding as to the core issues which caused the anger described in Acts 7:54. (See Acts 7:51-53)

VI. Results:

13. Stephen was granted a view into heaven where he saw the "Glory of God" and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. (Acts 7:55-56)
14. During the process of Stephen dying by stoning, he expressed his love toward his accusers and killers by asking the Lord not to hold this sin against them. (Acts 7:59) Who else in the Bible made a similar request? (Luke 27:34)
15. Describe some activities you could engage in to express your love to those who choose not to love you.

Acts 8:1-2 1....on that day a great persecution broke out against the church at Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. 2 Godly men buried Stephen and mourned deeply for him.

From Pastor Dave's message:

"Throughout history mortal people have chosen to disobey, disbelieve and ignore God. Unfortunately, the results are always the same. People cannot live forever, they fail in their self-righteousness and God will always prevail."