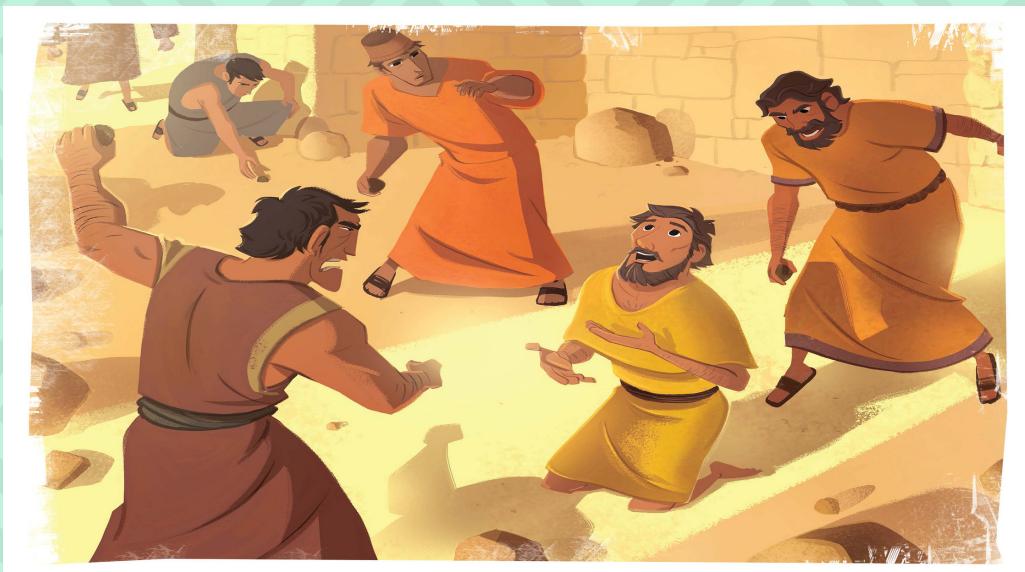


Family Sunday School Guide



JANUARY 17, 2020



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
GADSDEN
Est. 1855



Stephen's Sermon

1. Ask kids to tell you about a time they have had to speak in front of a group.
 - a. Speaking in front of a group can be a little scary to some. Today we will learn about a man whom God used to preach a message to religious leaders who hated the message of Jesus. How do you think they reacted?
2. Open your Bibles. Read Acts 6-7 or read the story on page 3.
 - a. Review Questions:
 - i. What was Stephen accused of? (blasphemy, saying things that were not true and dishonoring about God)
 - ii. What did Stephen preach about? (Stephen used Israel's history to prove Jesus is the Messiah)
 - iii. What did the religious leaders do to Stephen as a result of his preaching about Jesus? (killed him)
3. Pray together and thank God for Jesus the promised Messiah.

Stephen's Sermon

Stephen was one of Jesus' followers. God blessed Stephen and gave him power to do great wonders and signs. One day, some Jews began to argue with Stephen. The Holy Spirit helped Stephen speak with wisdom, so no matter how hard the Jews tried, they could not win the argument.

The Jews lied about Stephen; they said he had spoken against God. The people dragged Stephen to the Sanhedrin, the Jewish court, and told more lies. "We heard Stephen say that Jesus will destroy the temple and change the laws that Moses gave us," they said.

"Is this true?" the high priest asked Stephen.

Stephen began to preach about Jesus. He reminded the court about Abraham. God had made promises to Abraham and his son Isaac. He reminded them about Joseph and Moses. God kept Joseph safe when his brothers tried to hurt him, and God used Joseph to help all His people during a famine. When God's people lived in Egypt, God called Moses to rescue His people from Pharaoh. Moses led God's people away from Egypt, but they turned, but they turned against Moses and against God. God did not give up on His people, though. He was working out a plan. God worked through Joshua and David and Solomon.

The religious leaders knew these stories from the Old Testament. Stephen told them these stories to explain that Jesus was the Messiah God had promised! But just like their ancestors rejected and killed the prophets in the Old Testament, these Jewish leaders rejected Jesus and murdered Him!

Stephen's words made the Jewish leaders so angry! Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit. He looked up to heaven and saw Jesus standing there.

"Look!" he said. "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

The Jewish leaders screamed at the top of their lungs. They covered their ears and rushed at Stephen. They threw him out of the city and began throwing rocks at him. Stephen called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" Then he said, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" After this, Stephen died.

Christ Connection:

Stephen was killed because he was a Christian. Jesus told His followers that they would be persecuted-- hated, hurt, or even killed-- for loving Him. Jesus also said that those who suffer for Him would be blessed. We can face suffering in this life because Jesus suffered first. He died and then rose again, and He is waiting for us in heaven.

Activities

- 1. The Great Debate.** Give two opposing options to family members (such as whether tacos or pizza are better). Form two groups based on each persons opinion. Then, challenge the two groups to make a case why they think their option is better. See if they can convince others to change teams.
 - a. Something like a favorite food or favorite game to play isn't particularly important. We can all have a different opinion, and no one is wrong. However, something like whether or not Jesus is God's son, who died on the cross for sin and rose again on the third day? Whether you agree with that is super important. Today we will learn about a time Stephen preached to convince religious leaders that Jesus is the Messiah.
- 2. Right Hand Man.** Challenge family members to complete a task -- such as drawing a simple picture, writing their name, or tossing and catching a ball using only their non-dominant hand. Then, ask them to do it again using the other hand. Compare the results.
 - a. It's tough to complete tasks with your non-dominant hand. The majority of people in the world are right handed. As a result, it is often considered a great honor to be at someone's "Right hand." Someone's "right hand" man or woman is their most trusted helper or advisor. Did you know Jesus is at God's right hand?
- 3. Key Passage Activity.** Say the memory verse together several times. Then, have everyone stand on one foot and say the verse together. If anyone puts their foot down before the whole verse is said, you need to start over. Challenge family members to see how many times they can say the verse while standing on one leg.
- 4. Watch the Story.** Watch the Bible story video provided.

We who are many are
one body in Christ and
individually members
of one another.

Romans 12:5

