

ACTS

Group Guide:
Week 8

CONNECT BREAK THE ICE AND GET PEOPLE TALKING

- Have you ever been persecuted or been treated harshly because of your faith?
- Do you think you have the faith to share the gospel even if it meant you might die because of it?
- Discipleship check-in (at the bottom of this guide!)

INTRODUCTION

The book of Acts takes place after Jesus has conquered death and risen from the grave. It begins with Jesus giving his disciples the power they need to live out his mission in the world. Acts is the story of how Jesus, the Spirit, and the disciples start the church. Today, we will be learning about Stephen and how his bold proclamation of the gospel leads to him becoming the first martyr.

READ & DISCUSS

READ: Acts 6:8-8:1

DISCUSS:

- Why does Stephen retell a large part of Israel's story? What is he trying to communicate about Jesus and the Israelite leaders response to him?
- Why do you think Stephen is stoned?
- What role does the Holy Spirit play in this passage?
- In verses 55 to 60, Stephens death parallels Jesus'. What are some of the parallels that you see?

REFLECT & APPLY

DISCUSS:

- The Holy Spirit empowered Stephen to face a situation that was not safe. The Spirit fills him up and make his face radiant. He also gives him the wisdom and intelligence to win a debate against the Israelite leaders. As you preach the gospel, how can you let the Spirit empower you to say things that maybe aren't safe, but are true?
- Stephen is an image of Christ and his suffering. Stephen is able to embrace the suffering of his Savior. How does knowing that Christ suffered for your sake increase your delight in the Lord and give you confidence to embrace suffering when sharing your faith?

PRAY

Praise Jesus who suffered on our own behalf even when we didn't deserve it. Pray that we would be empowered by the Spirit and embrace the suffering of Christ. Take time to pray for our brothers and sisters in Christ around the world whose life is at risk for their faith in Christ.

Discipleship Check-In

- Have you prayed and read your Bible consistently the past week?
- Who is someone you're praying to share Jesus with this week, and what's one way you can love them well?