

Stephen Forgives His Accusers as They Stone Him

Acts 6:8-7:60

Bold text is spoken aloud.

LESSON	WHAT CHILDREN DO	SUPPLIES	EASY PREP
1 Bible Exploration	Stephen Stands Up for Jesus Participate in an interactive exercise about Stephen.	Bibles	
2 Weaving Faith Into Life	In Training Run obstacle courses and learn the Key Verse.	Bibles	

► Bible Point

We stand up for
Jesus.

Key Verse

“But in your hearts
set apart Christ as
Lord. Always be
prepared to give an
answer to
everyone who asks
you to give the
reason for the
hope that you
have. But do this
with gentleness
and respect”

(1 Peter 3:15).

Weaving Faith Into Life

Kids will learn that
they can share what
they believe about
Jesus with courage.

1 BIBLE EXPLORATION

Stephen Stands Up for Jesus

What You'll Do

This Bible story is found in Acts 6:8–7:60. Say: **Today's Bible passage comes from the book of Acts. Acts is about the amazing actions of the first Christians. This passage is about a man named Stephen who told some important people about Jesus. But these people didn't like what Stephen had to say.**

Acts 6:8 says Stephen was “a man full of God's grace and power” who “did great wonders and miraculous signs among the people.”

I'm going to tell you what happened to Stephen in today's Bible passage, but I'm going to need your help. Please do two things while I tell you the passage. Whenever you hear Stephen's name, stand up and shout, “Jesus is Lord!” and then sit back down.

Whenever you hear me mention the religious leaders, stand up, put your hands on your hips, frown, and shake your index finger like you're accusing someone of doing something wrong. And then sit back down.

Have everyone practice the responses. Then read the following, pausing where indicated for kids to perform their actions.

Say: **Stephen (pause) was a godly man, and God gave Stephen (pause) the power to do great wonders and miraculous signs. But there were some religious leaders (pause) who didn't like the things Stephen (pause) was doing and saying. These religious leaders (pause) stirred up the people against Stephen (pause), saying that Stephen (pause) said things against Moses and against God.**

So these religious leaders (pause) brought Stephen (pause) in front of a meeting of other religious leaders (pause) and asked Stephen (pause) about these things. Stephen's (pause) answer to them did not make them happy. In fact, it made them really, really angry!

Stephen (pause) told the religious leaders (pause) that they were just like their ancestors who wouldn't listen to the Holy Spirit. Their ancestors tried to kill prophets, and the religious leaders (pause) tried to kill prophets. Their ancestors *did* kill the prophets who told of Jesus' coming, and now these men had killed Jesus! Stephen (pause) then told them that they had received the law of Moses but they didn't obey it.

Boy, the religious leaders (pause) were angry! But Stephen (pause) was full of the Holy Spirit, and he looked up to heaven and saw Jesus there with God!

The religious leaders (pause) became even angrier, and they threw Stephen (pause) out of the city and stoned him. That means they threw stones at him until he was dead.

Even though the crowd kept throwing stone after stone at him, Stephen (pause) stood up for Jesus and didn't get angry at the crowd. In fact, he prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Then the last thing Stephen (pause) said was, “Lord, do not hold this sin against them.”

Take a moment to pray for Stephen and all the others killed throughout history because they stood up for Jesus. Thank everyone for their participation in telling the Bible passage.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What was it like to stand up for Stephen even when he was in trouble?**
- **What thoughts did you have about Stephen, the religious leaders, and the crowd as we acted out our Bible passage?**
- **What makes others angry about those who follow Jesus?**
- **What does it mean to stand up for our faith in Jesus when others don't like it?**

Say: **Stephen was willing to stand up and share his faith in Jesus, no matter what it cost him!**

► **WE STAND UP FOR JESUS, too, when we share our faith with others. And it's important to remember that we share our faith in Jesus with both words *and* actions.**

2 WEAVING FAITH INTO LIFE

In Training

What You'll Do

Read 1 Peter 3:15.

Ask:

- What does it mean to “be prepared” for something?

Say: **When people on a sports team or in the military are preparing for a game or operation, they go through training. They get in good physical shape, they practice shooting at targets, they practice doing all the things they'll have to do later. The more we practice, the better we'll get; the more we practice, the less nervous we'll feel.**

Our Key Verse says that we need to be prepared to share our faith with others. In order to be prepared, we have to train ourselves in different ways. You're going to put together a physical-training course. Work together, and use anything in the room to create a course.

Everyone will work together to set up a simple obstacle course and discuss how to run the course. Then everyone can try the obstacle course.

Say: **Part of training to stand up for Jesus means that we have courage in our hearts to do so. We don't have to be scared or ashamed of our faith in Jesus.**

Come up with three ways you can train to strengthen your faith. Think about what you can do now, while you're at home, and later when you're back at school and church to grow closer to Jesus. If needed, offer suggestions such as praying, reading their Bibles every day, and writing in a journal about their thoughts and questions.

Talk With Kids

Ask:

- **What helped you succeed in the obstacle course? If you wanted to improve your time, how would you go about that?**
- **What ideas did you come up with to train to strengthen your faith?**
- **How was training on our obstacle courses like training to be prepared to share your faith?**

Say: **We can always be ready to share our faith in Jesus, just as Stephen was. Like Stephen, ► WE STAND UP FOR JESUS. That means we share our faith in Jesus with words *and* actions. We don't have to be rude or mean, but we also need confidence to stand up for Jesus.**