

Hey ClubE!

I MISS you! Even though we are not gathering together in our room, we are still a community. Let's accomplish our 3 goals together this morning.

1. Watch my [short video](#) & introduction to the lesson today!
2. Sharing time! Our question today: What do you do when you're scared?
3. Read the story together as a family (or listen to me read it [here](#) :) & go through the discussion questions to talk about what you've learned.
4. Pray together as a family.
5. Play a game or watch a cool video!

If you have questions or just want to share your learning, you can email me [cas66852@gmail.com](mailto:cas66852@gmail.com) or text/call at 612-310-2363

## Storytime!

We've been making our way through God's Big Story together—all the way from the very beginning. This month we've been checking out what happened after Jesus went to heaven and the early church began to grow. On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came and filled a room full of believers. They were able to speak in languages they didn't know and share the good news of Jesus. Three thousand people came to know Jesus that day! Later, Peter and John told other people about Jesus, and by that point, there were more than 5,000 believers. That's a lot of people! Some of the people needed special care. They weren't able to provide food for themselves, and they needed help. What do you think the other believers did about that?

The believers took care of them. The apostles—those who had been with Jesus while He was on earth—made a plan. They chose seven wise men who listened to and followed God's Holy Spirit. Their job was to make sure everyone had what they needed. One of those seven men was named Stephen. What do you think—do you think Stephen was a good guy or a bad guy?

Stephen was a REALLY good guy. He was full of faith and full of the Holy Spirit. When someone needed help, everyone thought of Stephen. More and more people believed in Jesus as the apostles continued to teach. Meanwhile, Stephen and the other six men made sure that all the believers were cared for. Stephen was doing what was right, but some of the religious leaders started to argue with him. The Holy Spirit gave him the wisdom to be able to answer them. The religious leaders didn't like this one bit, so they wanted to hurt Stephen. In secret, they made some men lie about Stephen. The men started telling people they heard Stephen speak evil things against Moses, which was a big deal. The men even said Stephen said evil things against God! When the people heard these lies, they weren't sure what to think. How

could this man of God say such things? When the religious leaders heard how the people were stirred up, what do you think they did to Stephen?

The religious leaders had Stephen arrested—even though they knew the rumors were a lie. They brought Stephen before their gathering, known as the Sanhedrin, and Stephen was put on trial. The religious leaders interviewed men who lied about Stephen. They said that they had heard Stephen speak against the law of Moses and the holy temple. How do you think Stephen responded to these lies?

Stephen could have gotten angry and yelled at the people who were lying about him. Instead, he was calm and at peace. The high priest asked Stephen if these things others said were true. Stephen wanted the leaders to understand the truth about Jesus. He knew that God was with him, and he was filled with courage. Even though he knew that the religious leaders could kill him, Stephen spoke with boldness and told them how Jesus was the most important part of a plan God had set in motion with Abraham so long ago. Stephen reminded them how God called Abraham to move away from his homeland to a place God would give him. Through Abraham's descendants, God kept His promise. Abraham's son Jacob had 12 sons, and one was sold into slavery and then became second in command to Pharaoh. Through Joseph, God saved His people. Eventually, God's people became slaves in Egypt, and again, God saved His people. This time, it was through Moses. Finally, the people arrived in the land God had promised. Stephen went on to tell the religious leaders about King David, who loved God so much and wanted to build Him a beautiful temple. Who do you think Stephen told the religious leaders about next?

He told them about Jesus. He said (Acts 7:51-52) "You stubborn people! You won't obey! You won't listen! You are just like your people of long ago! You always oppose the Holy Spirit! Was there ever a prophet your people didn't try to hurt? They even killed those who told about the coming of the Blameless One. And now you have handed him over to his enemies. You have murdered him. How do you think the religious leaders responded when Stephen said this?

Even though Stephen spoke the truth about Jesus, the religious leaders were very angry. God knew what was in their hearts, so He gave Stephen a vision of heaven. God allowed Stephen to see something that no one else there could see. Stephen looked up and saw Jesus standing with God. Can you imagine seeing what heaven looks like? But the religious leaders didn't want to hear another word from Stephen. They covered their ears and yelled. I'll tell you what happened next. It was very sad.

The religious leaders dragged Stephen out of the city. They left their coats with a man named Saul. They all started throwing stones at Stephen, trying to kill him. While they did this, Stephen prayed to God. He asked God not to hold this horrible act against the people. He asked God to forgive them for their sin. What faith! Even though Stephen had only done what was right, he died that day. Jesus had told His followers to live out His love everywhere—no matter what. Through God's power, Stephen had continued to share God's love all the way until his very last breath. What happened to Stephen was terrible and very sad. Maybe it wasn't how you expected the story to go. But the good news is this wasn't the end of the story. Remember, God showed Stephen a vision. Stephen knew that when he died, he would be with Jesus in heaven.

Stephen was able to keep going because he knew that God was with him. You and I need to remember that, too.

We know for sure how God's One Big Story ends. In the end, those who follow Jesus will be with God forever in heaven.

## Let's talk about it!

- What does it mean to tell a lie?
- Has someone ever made up a lie about you or what you did? How did that feel?
- Why do you think Stephen told the truth?
- Last week, I challenged you to share that GREAT NEWS with other people. How did that go? Did you get to do that?
- The gift that Jesus has given us is too important to keep quiet! How can you share that GREAT NEWS with other people this week?

## Pray

God, thank You for giving Stephen wisdom and strength in the middle of such an awful situation. Please give US Your wisdom and strength, too, so we can keep going even when we don't know what will happen. We know that we can trust You no matter what, because You know the end of the story. Please help us to remember that when we face difficult situations in life. Thank You for sending Jesus so we can have the promise of eternal life with You. We love You, and we pray these things in Jesus' name, amen.

## Game time!

### ROUNABOUT STORY

Today we are going to make a silly and roundabout story! We have no idea where it would go or how it was going to end. In fact, it may not end! We don't know the end of the story. Today we heard about someone who knows the end of EVERY story

WHAT YOU NEED: No supplies needed

WHAT YOU DO: Get into a circle

- Start telling a story by saying two or three sentences and then clap once.
- Examples of story starters: "One day, a boy named Carlos woke up and his fingers had turned into carrots! He didn't know what to do! Or... It was a normal day. Evangeline woke up, got ready for school, and hopped into the backseat of the car. BUT THEN . . ."
- Direct the person to your left to add a few more sentences to the story until they hear you clap.
- Continue around the circle in this way
- Keep going until time runs out or the story devolves into absolute silliness.
- If you have time, start a new story.

OR

### FULL PICTURE

You might not have had any idea what you were seeing until we were able to zoom out, did you? But I did! I knew the full picture, end of the story. GOD knows the end of each of our stories and the end of the story of the entire world! Isn't that amazing? When things get tough or life gets frustrating because we just don't know what's going to happen, we can trust that God knows. We can keep going because God knows the end of the story!"

WHAT YOU NEED: A piece of paper, screen

WHAT YOU DO:

Do you think you can know about the whole picture?

- Watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHsVmidFUC4> and see how many objects you can guess before seeing the whole picture!
- How many did you get right?
- Challenge a family member!