

Stirred Up

- Opening Announcements
- Opening Prayer

Q: How are things going between you and your child(ren)?

Q: What are some of the "internal challenges" you are facing (development, attitude, specific stages, etc)?

Q: What are some of the "external challenges" you and your family are facing? (Bullying, hyper busyness, job, school, social demands, etc.)

READ: Acts 6:8-15 "And Stephen, full of grace and power, was doing great wonders and signs among the people. ⁹ Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and of the Cyrenians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and disputed with Stephen. ¹⁰ But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking. ¹¹ Then they secretly instigated men who said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and God." ¹² And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the council, ¹³ and they set up false witnesses who said, "This man never ceases to speak words against this holy place and the law, ¹⁴ for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and will change the customs that Moses delivered to us." ¹⁵ And gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel."

Q: Why did those of the synagogue of the Freedmen "rise up" against Stephen?

Q: How is this situation similar to Jesus' betrayal, arrest, trial and conviction and finally execution?

Q: What's interesting about Stephen's ability? How was Stephen able to withstand their accusations?

APPLY THIS:

Q: How are WE as followers of Jesus ALSO persecuted today?

Q: Often we think of persecution as similar to Jesus', Stephen's and the apostles (and it IS), but how are we experiencing persecution in our culture in these days?

Q: How do you see the evil one, the world and the flesh working against your children's faith?

Q: What are some ways we can shield, strengthen and encourage them to be more like Stephen?

Q: (Spoiler Alert) In this encounter with persecution, what happens?

Q: How might we support, pray for, remember and prepare for persecution?

Additional Resources To Stay Informed and Be Aware Persecution Around the World:

www.persecution.com "Voice of the Martyrs" - founded by Lutheran Pastor Richard Wurmbbrand and his wife Sabina. Pastor Wurmbbrand was imprisoned and tortured for his faith under the Communist Regime. He escaped to the US and began VOM. They focus heavily on bible distribution, practical aid, prayer, encouragement and support of persecuted believers around the world.

www.persecution.org "International Christian Concerns" - they focus on information, news, advocacy, action for Christians facing persecution around the world.

www.salvomag.com "Salvo" is THE journal that covers social changes, technological issues, culture issues and how it is impacting the church and the world. This is written from a Biblical Worldview perspective. Subscription is relatively cheap and their online resources substantial. This is ESPECIALLY good if you have High School/College age children! This is a GREAT resource to inform about what's happening in the US, education, higher ed, technology, and culture. Highly recommend!

POINT: If you want to know what's happening in the persecuted church around the world, these organizations are dedicated and committed to that.

TAKE IT HOME DAILY READING PLAN QUESTIONS:

Sunday, May 2, 2021 Acts 6:8-15 #29 "Stirred Up"

Q: How does Stephen stand strong against false accusations?

Q: How can WE stand up for truth when the world is against us?

Q: What are some of the obvious and not so obvious ways we face persecution today?

Monday, May 3, 2021 Acts 7:1-8 "Sojourners"

Q: What is a "sojourner"? How are WE like this?

Q: Why is important to know where you're going?

Q: How do we "follow" Jesus through this life?

Tuesday, May 4, 2021 Acts 7:9-53 "Know Your History"

Q: Stephen knows his history! Why is it important for US to know our history?

Q: How can we NOT repeat our past mistakes?

Q: How can the past mistakes be used for a better future?

Wednesday, May 5, 2021 Acts 7:54-60 "The First Witness"

Q: Stephen was killed for his "witness" to Jesus. What stands out to you about his witness?

Q: What was his prayer? Who does this remind you of?

Q: Why is it important that OUR attitude be like Stephen's (and Jesus') when facing persecution?

Thursday, May 6, 2021 Acts 8:1-3 "Ravaging"

Q: What was Saul's attitude towards believers?

Q: What was he actively doing to stop the spread of Christianity?

Q: How do we see some of these same things today?

Friday, May 7, 2021 Acts 8:4-8 "Much Joy"

Q: As persecution arose, what happened to believers?

Q: How did this help spread the message of Jesus?

Q: Discuss how God takes bad things and uses them for good (Romans 8:28)

Saturday, May 8, 2021 Acts 8:9-25 "Give me power!"

Q: What was wrong with Simon's request?

Q: What was Simon's request in response to Peter's rebuke?

Q: How does this teach us about humility, trust and faith and obedience?