

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, March 25, 2007

Passage: Acts 6:8-7:60

Memory Passage: 2 Corinthians 5:8-9

TODAY: *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Acts 6:8-15.** What do we learn about the ministry of Stephen? What does he do in addition to serving tables?
- (b) What four accusations are raised against Stephen? How are his words described in Acts 6:11 and 13?
- (c) What might have been the basis of the things that Stephen was teaching (Mark 14:57-58; John 2:18-22)? What had Jesus additionally prophesied about the temple in Matthew 24:2?
- (d) What did the council see when they looked at Stephen? What does this tell us about how he responded to false accusations (1 Peter 2:19-25; 1 Peter 4:14; Matthew 5:44-45)?
- (e) Read 2 Corinthians 3:1-6. How did Paul describe the ministry of the Spirit in the lives of people? Where are the “epistles” being written?
- (f) *Family:* Read Acts 6:8-15 and Matthew 5:44-45. Discuss the way believers ought to respond to criticism and even lies about them. Why was Stephen being criticized? How did he respond to this criticism? What was the result of his response? Pray that God will give you strength so that your attitude will be a testimony to Him.

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Acts 7:1-16.** How did Stephen describe God in verse 1? Who is described in this way in Psalm 24:7-10; 2 Corinthians 2:8; James 2:1 and 2 Peter 3:18?
- (b) *Where* was Abraham when God first called him? Did Abraham ever receive the promise of the land?
- (c) *Where* was Joseph sent to? Was God with him there? How is Joseph’s rejection by his brothers similar to the rejection of Jesus by the Jewish leaders?
- (d) *Where* did all the patriarchs die? Why is all this important in answering Stephen’s accusers? What had they accused him of?
- (e) Read 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 1 Corinthians 6:19. How might this part of Stephen’s teaching upset the Council? How is this essential for believers today?
- (f) *Family:* Read Acts 7:1-16 and 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19. Talk about the presence of the Lord. Where did the Jewish leaders think that God’s presence was? What would Stephen and the early church be teaching? Why would this upset the Jews? What argument does Stephen use? Spend some time thanking God for His presence in believers and in the Church.

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Acts 7:17-41.** Who does Stephen focus on in these verses? What had he been accused of teaching (Acts 6:11)?
- (b) What did Jesus say about the teachings of Moses (John 5:45-47; Luke 16:22-29)?
- (c) How did Moses’ kinsmen respond to his attempt to deliver them (Exodus 2:13-15)? How did Israel respond even to the law that Stephen supposedly blasphemed (Acts 7:38-41)?
- (d) *Where* was Moses when he encountered God (Acts 7:29-34)? How did God describe the place (Acts 7:33)? Why would this be part of Stephen’s argument?
- (e) How did they respond to Moses (Acts 7:35)? What did Moses promise the people of Israel (Acts 7:37)? Who is this prophet that Moses referred to (John 1:14-18)?
- (f) *Family:* Read Acts 7:17-34 and John 5:45-47. Why is Moses important to the nation of Israel? What did he say about himself and the One who would come after him? What should someone who really believes Moses and the law believe? Pray for someone that does not know Jesus as the promised redeemer.

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Acts 7:38-50.** How did Israel respond in their first opportunity to worship God in the tabernacle?
- (b) What does God think of all their sacrifices (Psalm 50:7-15)? What does God desire (Psalm 40:6-10; 1 Samuel 15:22; Jeremiah 7:21-23; Hosea 6:6; Matthew 9:13)?
- (c) How did Stephen say that God responded to their sacrifices (Acts 7:42)?
- (d) Compare this to Romans 1:17-25. What did the religious leaders in Acts 7 think about themselves? How did their confidence in the temple and the sacrifices cause them to misunderstand justification by faith?
- (e) Even after the temple was built for Israel, what mistake did they make (Acts 7:49-50; Isaiah 66:1-2)? Who is it that God will honor?
- (f) *Family:* Read Acts 7:38-50 and Isaiah 66:1-2. Talk about what God desires in worship. Why are sacrifices not enough? What more does God want from us? Pray that your worship might be acceptable to the Lord.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

- (a) **Read Acts 7:51-60.** What did Stephen accuse the Jews of being? What did he mean by being “uncircumcised in hearts and ears” (Romans 2:28-29; Colossians 2:11)?
- (b) How had they responded to the law and the Righteous One that God sent as their savior? How did they respond to Stephen as God’s witness?
- (c) What is significant about Stephen’s vision? How does the Lord respond when one of his children are persecuted for his name’s sake?
- (d) How did Stephen respond to his persecutors? What does this tell us about his heart? Compare this with Paul’s concern for his kinsmen in Romans 9:1-3 and 10:1.
- (e) Why would Stephen say that it was worth it to testify for Christ even though it cost his life (Matthew 5:11-12; Romans 8:17-18; Philippians 1:29)? Is this unique to Stephen (Acts 5:41)?
- (f) *Family:* Read Acts 7:51-60 and Matthew 5:11-12. Who are the true Jews? How was Stephen’s testimony pointing his hearers to what true faith was all about? What is true faith? Pray that we too might be willing to share the gospel, no matter what the cost.

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT**READ THE PASSAGE**

Think back through what you have learned each day this week. Read Acts 6:8-7:60. What seems to be the main reason that Stephen is being accused? How does Stephen respond to their charges? What is his attitude? How does our attitude affect our witness (2 Timothy 2:23-24)? Pray for your worship services tomorrow that we might worship with a true heart before God.

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The Testimony of the Church

“...therefore we make it our aim ...to be well pleasing to Him.”