

EXPLORER'S BIBLE STUDY
The Acts of the Apostles
Session 9: Stephen's Speech and Death – Student Notes
ACTS 7: 1-60
Heritage Church, Van Buren, Arkansas
November 4th, 2009

Memory verses:

He must increase, but I must decrease!

John 3:30

In Him we live and move and have our being

Acts 17:28

Attribute of God: November 4: **God is** _____

Aim: To teach that the most important choice anyone will ever make is the choice about Jesus.

Ice Breaker Discussion: What is one very traumatic event that has happened to you? Can you see now how God has used it for good? If so, in what ways? (Romans 8:28)

REVIEW: Stephen is accused of two different things (Acts 6)

1. Speaking against _____ and God
2. Speaking against the _____ and Law (actually customs/traditions)
Read Mark 7: 6-13. What can nullify the Word of God?

I. Stephen's Speech to the Sanhedrin: The Tragic History of Israel 7: 1-53

1. Stephen on trial (Acts 7: 1-2a)

A. Stephen wants to emphasize some things revealed in Jewish history that the religious leaders may not have considered:

- 1) God did not ever confine Himself to one place (the temple)
- 2) The Jewish people have a habit of rejecting those God sends to them.

B. Stephen addresses them with _____ and as _____.

2. The Birth of Israel: The Promise to Abraham—An Inheritance and a Possession (Acts 7: vs. 2b-8)

POINT: Abraham did not need the _____ to be close to God or the _____ to follow and obey God!

3. The First Rejection and Deliverance: The fore-bears rejected God's chosen servant: JOSEPH! Acts 7: 9-16

4. The Second Rejection and Deliverance: The People Rejected God's Second Chosen Servant, MOSES! (vss 17-29)

5. The Third Rejection and Deliverance: Planned by God through Moses (Acts 7: 30-41)

APPLICATION: How are you rejecting Jesus? Have you received Him as your deliverer, as the one who can save you?

6. The Charges Against Israel in the Past – No excuse ... (Acts & 42-50)

A. They Turned from God to Worship the _____ of Heaven (vs. 42-43)

B. They Built the Tabernacle and Temple but God is not confined to them!

Read Isaiah 66:1-2 Where does God dwell? What are the criteria? How well do you meet the criteria? What do you need to do?

7. The Charges Against the People/Leaders --Present Acts 7: 51-53

Application: In what ways could the charges that Stephen makes against the leaders be made against you? How might you be "stiff-necked"? How will you begin to bow to the Lord in that area?

You've rejected God's messengers and deliverers?

You've made an idol out of a church building?

You've been more concerned with rules and rituals than relationship with God?

You've worshipped idols [you've let other things in your life become more important than God. You have served them (career, wealth, possessions, people, pleasure, etc. ...) more or instead of God.]

You haven't received Jesus as Your Lord and Savior, Healer and Deliverer.

II. A Study of Martyrdom: Acts 7: 54-60

1. The Cause of Martyrdom: REACTION against _____!

2. The Lord's _____: (vs. 55-56)

a. The Holy Spirit

b. A Vision of Heaven: Jesus _____...

c. A glorious Testimony

“Stephen has been confessing Christ before men, and now he sees Christ confessing his servant before God.” (F.F. Bruce)

3. The Murder of the Believer (vs 57-58) see Acts 26:10

4. The Believer's Supreme Confidence (vs. 59) Your spirit goes to _____.
Luke 23:46

5. Stephen displayed a _____ Spirit (vs 60) (Luke 23:34).

6. Stephen experienced a _____ Departure. (vs. 60)

7. The Result of Stephen's Death (Acts 8:1-3) Phase Two (Judea and Samaria)

CLOSE: Peter's speeches led to mass conversion (chapters 2, 3, 4) while Stephen's led to his death. What does that teach about success in one's service to God?

Are you willing to walk in the spirit of Apostolic Martyrdom? (Galatians 2:20)
What would this mean for you?

How can the group pray for you?