



## **ACTS CHAPTERS 5-7 (FACILITATOR)**

### **Discussion Starter**

- If you wanted someone to know only one thing about you, what would it be?

### **Opening Prayer**

- Ask if someone wants to volunteer before leading the prayer.

### **Tell the Story**

### **Read the Story (Acts 5:1-42, Acts 6:1-15, & Acts 7:1-60)**

Read out loud as a group, 5 verses per person. Let everyone know they can opt out if they would like.

### **Breaking it Down**

- All questions should be utilized as appropriate based upon group dynamics to facilitate both understanding and discussion. Don't feel tied to the questions and don't feel like you have to get through every question. Follow the Spirit's lead! All questions are a matter of perspective in some way BUT there are specific questions that this is truer of and these questions have been indicated to be perspective/opinion questions.

### **Acts 5:1-16**

- Have you ever seen someone pretend to be something/someone they are not? How did they look? What did you think about them?
  - This is an opinion and perspective question so please listen as the facilitator.
- How were Ananias and Sapphira attempting to look like they were farther along than they really were?
  - Both Ananias and Sapphira wanted the credit and glory of being sacrificial without actually sacrificing. More importantly and more sadly, they actually believed that being sacrificial was about pointing to them rather than pointing to Jesus.
    - How do you and I sometimes pretend in the church that we are farther along than we really are?



- This is an opinion and perspective question so please listen as the facilitator.
- Do you agree or disagree with the following quote? Why?
  - “Doubts and weaknesses are part of a Christian’s journey. Doubt isn’t weakness.” Matt Chandler
    - This is an opinion and perspective question so please listen as the facilitator.

### **Acts 5:17-42**

- Reread Acts 5:29-32 when Peter and the other apostles were brought before the council. How would you characterize Peter’s response to the council? Was it more about him defending himself and his beliefs or more about pointing to the Father? Why is this significant for us to understand?
  - Peter’s response wasn’t about defending himself or his beliefs. His response was about pointing people to Jesus Christ. This is important for us to understand because we can easily get caught up in defending our beliefs, doctrine, and even ourselves and totally miss pointing people to Jesus.

### **Acts 6:1-15**

- What significance does the church’s handling of the widows being neglected have for us today in how we approach church growth and navigating change?
  - Although the Gospel should never be changed, there are going to be times when change is going to have to occur as the church grows to more holistically make disciples, which is a huge part of the mission of the church. Those who aren’t comfortable with change to more holistically make disciples need to move themselves and their pride out of the way and those who are comfortable with change to more holistically make disciples also need to move themselves and their pride out of the way. The community of faith is called to work collaboratively with each other, and this isn’t always easy or comfortable but absolutely necessary.



## Acts 7:1-60

- According to Acts 6:5, what was the source of Stephen's incredible boldness that we see articulated in Acts 7? What does this have to do with you and me today?
  - Stephen was a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit. There is no greater compliment. Stephen wasn't bold or courageous on His own. For you and me today, we frequently try and muster up our own courage and boldness to do the things that God has called us to do. The reality is that we (in and of ourselves) simply do not have enough courage or boldness to be and do all that God has designed us to be and do. However, when we move out of the way and allow God's Spirit to take control, that Spirit more than makes up for the deficits that will always be left if we only seek to do things according to our own power.
- Notice that Stephen did a great deal of storytelling in Acts 7:1-50 and those stories were about the nation of Israel but more importantly about God's constant deliverance and redemption. However, the "tone" of the story telling shifts in verse 51. Why is this significant?
  - The stories of God and His movements aren't just stories. They are intended to lead people (you and me) to repentance and transformation. Many times, we are comfortable just hearing stories about God rather than allowing God's story to intersect our own because when we do this, God's story turns our story upside down and inside out. This is frequently messy and uncomfortable.
- How are we similar to the people that rush Stephen and stone him at the end of Acts 7?
  - While our actions may not be the same as the people that rushed and stoned Stephen, our attitudes at times are. Consider the following questions.
    - When you don't like or are uncomfortable with something that God's word says, how do you respond?



- When someone is telling you the truth and it is rooted in Scripture, how do you treat the other person?
- How do you handle being held accountable when you have done something wrong?
- How do you allow your brothers and sisters in Christ to speak life over and into you?
  - These are opinion and perspective questions so please listen as the facilitator.
- What is the significance of the reference to Jesus “standing” at the right hand of God?
  - Typically, in Scripture, Jesus is referenced as sitting at the right hand of God. This reference to Him standing is not by accident. Jesus sees what is happening to Stephen and not only is He angry and grieved, He wants Stephen to know that He is not alone in any way, even in the midst of a horrific death. In similar ways, God constantly sees us and our circumstances and His heart is for us in good, bad, and even dark and ugly times.

### **Final Application**

- What does this passage teach us about God?
- What does this passage teach us about mankind?
- What is a command to obey in this passage?
- What has God revealed in your life that needs changing?
- What truth can be applied to your life about the gospel?

### **Closing & Prayer Requests**



- Have a designated person to capture and share (as appropriate) within the life group.
- What happens in life group, stays in life group.
- Don't forget get to confirm the next meeting date and time
- Also recruit someone to do the story for the following week (Acts 8-9)



## **ACTS CHAPTERS 5-7 (STUDENT)**

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