



“When You Need a Promise”

Acts 7:5

Faith Stories: Did anyone seize an opportunity to share their faith with an unbeliever this week? Describe what happened.

Pray: “And now, Lord, consider their threats, and grant that your servants may speak your word with all boldness” (Acts 4:29)

Group Talk: What are some things you want to accomplish before you die?

Getting Started

In the seventh chapter of Acts Stephen, a follower of Christ, was given the opportunity to give witness to his faith. His message was that the Jewish religion is built on the foundation of God’s calling and promises.

Read Acts 6:8-7:5 together with your group and discuss the questions that follow.

- What has happened so far in Acts leading up to chapter 7? Share some of the major events, characters, or themes.
- What do you learn about Stephen in this section? What does the author say about him? To whom is Stephen speaking?
- In Acts 7:2-50 Stephen preaches his first sermon. Essentially his sermon is the history of God’s promises through the Old Testament from Abraham (Genesis 12) to the prophets. His audience would’ve known this history well. However, what was unique about Stephen’s sermon was that he claimed that all of the Old Testament promises culminated with the person and work of Jesus Christ, “the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have become” (Acts 7:51-53).
 - Stephen knew the story of God through the Old Testament well enough to use it to give witness to God’s faithfulness throughout history culminating with Jesus Christ. Do you understand the Bible as one story with Jesus at

the center? Are you able to trace the big picture of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation?

- Why is it important to understand the main storyline of the Bible? (Read 2 Tim 4:2 and 1 Peter 3:15 to help you answer.)
- What are some of the ways you can develop a better understanding of the Bible?
- Stephen's sermon in Acts 7 begins with Abraham. What do we know about Abraham before he met God? What did God ask Abraham to do? What did God promise Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3)?
- Describe a time in your life when you've had to wait. Was it easy or difficult? Why?
- What does it mean that God's promises require an "eternal perspective"?
- What are we promised in Christ?
- What happened to Stephen after he preached his first sermon? (Read Acts 7:54-60)
- How would you describe the faith of Abraham and Stephen?
- What does this passage, and the lives of Abraham and Stephen, teach you about being a disciple of Jesus?

Read Acts 6:8-7:5 out loud together again.

Conclusion

God is faithful to his promises. From the time that mankind rebelled against God in Genesis 3, God promised that he would make things right (Genesis 3:15). In his perfect timing, God is working out his plan for his glory and our good.