

November 6, 2011
Willow Park South
Small Group Questions
Acts 6:8-7:60

- Please read Acts 6:8-7:60 together at the beginning of your small group meeting.

The Apostles had just chosen seven men from among the disciples to serve the people. Amongst the seven was Stephen, a man full of grace, power, perseverance and wisdom. Those in the synagogue rose up against him and started to dispute with him. They brought him before the council with false witnesses. (6:8-15)

What caused some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen, Cyrenians, Alexandrians, etc. to accuse Stephen?

How did Stephen respond? How do we respond in times of accusation?

Can those who accuse us see the glory of God on our face in those times?

Stephen responds by debunking everything that they believe in. He outlines three things where the change is not found:

1. (vs. 2-36) Stephen talks about Abraham and the land. The Jews looked at Jerusalem and everything that they possessed as their inheritance; in these things they found their deliverance.

Why did Stephen use the Abrahamic Covenant (ie God's promise of land and descendants to Abraham) as a basis for his challenge?

Do we strive after possessions and identify ourselves in them like those who Stephen was addressing? Why?

Do we look for internal change in things we possess?

2. (vs.37-40) Stephen then moves on to talk about Moses and the Law. Moses predicted that there would be a messiah in Jesus Christ. But then the Israelites rejected Moses, his ideas, the Law and they rejected Jesus. He was saying that their salvation was not based on the Law; it was based on nothing at all. They were trying to earn salvation.

Why do you think Stephen would dismantle the idea that they could not earn salvation by their performance?

Do you sometimes find yourself trying to fix your own issues? Why do we do this?

3. (vs. 44-50) Stephen dismantles the idea of the temple. Salvation will not be found by going to the temple. “the Most High does not dwell in houses made by hands” (ESV)

Do Christians look for salvation by going to church and Bible study? Why does doing these things not suffice?

Stephen’s change was found in “the Righteous One,” Jesus Christ. It wasn’t found in any of the previous things he had talked about, but in the one who they betrayed and murdered.

- **Acts 7:51 (ESV) “You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you.”**

Why is it so hard to fully surrender to Jesus? What keeps us from surrendering to Him?

We search for salvation in all the wrong places, it’s not in the things we have, the things we do or even the religious routines but the belief and continual surrender to Jesus Christ who died for our sins.