

1. The appointment of the Seven

- a) Acts 6:1, what was the complaint of the Hellenistic believers?
- b) What areas of contention today might distract us from our God-given mission?
- c) Acts 6:2–6, how were the seven chosen? What lessons can we learn for today?
- d) What was the outcome of this Spirit-guided delegation of responsibility? Acts 6:7

2. Stephens’s Ministry

- a) Acts 6:8–15, what impresses you the most about Stephen’s character and ministry?
- b) Where else in Scripture can you find someone’s face reflecting the glory of God? What does this tell us about Stephen’s life?
- c) Why should we expect persecution when we devote ourselves fully to the mission of Jesus? Matthew 10:17–18, John 16:1–3, Matthew 5:11–13

3. Before the Sanhedrin

- a) Acts 7:1–8, 9–16, 17–36, 37–43, 44–50
- b) Why did Stephen spend so much time recounting the history of Israel? How was the Holy Spirit guiding him in this hostile situation?
- c) Acts 7:51–53, what caused the abrupt shift in Stephen’s presentation?

- d) What is the significance of his change of language from “our father Abraham” to “your fathers”?
- e) Acts 7:54, some who are “cut to the heart” repent of their sins and are baptized (Acts 2:37). Here the religious leaders gnash their teeth. Why is there such a different response here?

4. Seeing Jesus in the Heavenly Sanctuary

- a) Acts 7:55–56, Stephen is not only a deacon and an evangelist, he is also a prophet. What is the significance of this revelation given to him?
- b) How do the words in Hebrews 4:14–16 help us to understand Stephen’s vision?
- c) Acts 7:57–59, what is your reaction to the behavior of the members of the Jewish Sanhedrin?
- d) Acts 7:59–60, what is your reaction to the behavior of Stephen as he was being stoned to death by a group of out-of-control Jewish leaders?

5. Working good out of a bad situation

- a) How did God work good (Romans 8:28) through the martyrdom of Stephen and the intense persecution of Christians that followed? Acts 8:1–3, 4–8, 9–25, 26–40
- b) What can we learn from the Holy-Spirit anointed ministry of Philip? Acts 8:26–40; 21:86

