

WEEK 1

APRIL 16, 2023

Life Group Curriculum

Words of a Dying Man: Stephen's Sermon

1

INTRODUCTION ACTIVITY

God Encounters:
Share some way
you saw God
interact in your
life this week.

2

MEMORY VERSE

Acts 6:15

"And gazing at him,
all who sat in the
council saw that his
face was like the
face of an angel."

3

SCRIPTURE READING

Acts 7:1-53

*"May I enjoy the wild
beasts that are prepared
for me. I pray that they
would be found eager to
rush at me, and I will
also entice them to
devour me speedily and
not deal with me as
some, whom out of fear
they have not touched. If
they are unwilling to
assail me, I will compel
them to do so. Pardon
me; I know what is to my
benefit. Now I begin to
be a disciple. Let no one,
of things visible or
invisible, prevent me
from attaining to Jesus
Christ. Let fire and the
cross; let wild beasts; let
tearings, breakings, and
dislocation of bones; let
cutting off of limbs; let
shatterings of the whole
body; and let all the evil
torments of the devil
come upon me; only let
me attain to Jesus Christ.*

-Ignatius of Antioch

AD 110

Discussion Questions

1. Read the text in its entirety and look at it from the 30,000' view. Work your way through the questions on the reverse of this sheet.
2. When looking at the overarching message of Stephen's sermon, what is the main point Stephen is trying to articulate?
3. Looking at how Stephen looked at the Hebrew Scriptures (the Old Testament), what does he teach us about how we should read them?
4. Jesus said that He didn't come to abolish the Law (He was referring to the entire OT) but to "fulfill it" (Matthew 5:17). What does that mean? (Hint: Look at the rest of Jesus' teaching!)
5. In light of Stephen's example of how to read the Scriptures, how should we read the New Testament Scriptures? Is it the same as the Old Testament? Why or why not?

WORDS
of a dying man

Questions to ask when reading the Bible

Sometimes when we read a passage in the Bible it can be confusing or we may not know how to best figure out what it is saying. Below are some good questions to ask when reading the Bible to help make the Bible make sense.

1. What stands out to me?

Note that this does not say "What does this passage mean?" Consider what stood out to you? What did you notice? What did the Holy Spirit highlight for you as you read it?

2. What does the text say about the character/nature of God?

The Scriptures are primarily about God so ask first what the text says about Him before moving to what it says about us, about His plan, or about anything else.

3. What does the text say?

Look at what the text literally says first (this may not be the intent of the text but it is important to look at it as read... at least initially).

4. How is it saying it?

What is the genre of the text and how should we read text in that genre?

5. Why does it say it that way?

Speculate about why the author chose this method of saying what they've said.

6. What is it trying to say?

Getting behind the Scripture, looking at its context, its original audience, its author, etc., what is the text trying to get across to the reader (both the original audience and us today?)

7. How does this fit into the whole of the book and the whole of Scripture?

Looking at the whole book, does what is being said jive with the whole book, with the whole of Scripture?

8. What questions do I have?

Do you have questions about the text? If they aren't answered in the text, are they good questions or are we asking questions that the text isn't meant to answer?

9. How do I feel about this teaching/text? Why do I feel that way?

What does your gut say? Are you frustrated with it? Are you trying to make it say something else than what it says? Does it make you uncomfortable? Where are these feelings coming from? Is there sin in my life I need to repent of?

10. What is the universal application of this text/teaching?

What are we to do with this text? Consider the original audience as well as us today.

11. What is my personal application?

What is God calling you to apply with what you've learned with this text?

12. How will I apply what it calls me to?

Make a plan to apply what God has taught you. Seek to be faithful and obedient to His leading, wherever it may go.