

# Week 7

## Acts 6:1-8:3

### Pray

#### Read: Acts 6:1-7

1. In verse 1-7, Luke shows us that not everything works smoothly in the church.

- What is the problem facing the Apostles?
- What are the Apostles seeking to avoid?
- What is the solution?
- What are the qualifications required?
- Why might this internal matter be really important to resolve?
- What is the outcome of this situation?

>> **Application & Reflection:** In this scene, Luke shows us the Apostles' solution to an internal matter. What wisdom does this situation offer us as we think about care, ministry, and leadership within the church community?

#### Read: Acts 6:8-15

2. In verses 8-15, Luke depicts Stephen's arrest by the religious leaders. Who is the cause of this arrest? And what are the accusations?

3. Throughout this scene, Luke speaks about the character and appearance of Stephen. How is Stephen different to those who oppose him? Why might Luke be showing us this?

#### Read: Acts 7:1-53

4. In verses 1-50, Luke records the longest (and arguably most significant!) speech in Acts. Throughout this speech, Stephen challenges the Jewish interpretation of the Old Testament events.

- What are the key events of Israel's history that make up the speech?
- What theme(s) is Stephen focusing on as he retells Israel's history?

5. In verses 51-53, Stephen goes on the offensive against the Sanhedrin. What is Stephen's core message to them?

**>> Application & Reflection:** In this scene, Stephen faces his opponents directly. He affirms that the leadership stand in the same line as their forefathers—rejecting the prophets and even the Holy Spirit. How might this speech confront us as listeners/readers? How are we to respond?

**Read: Acts 7:54-8:3**

6. In verses 54-60, Luke depicts the stoning of Stephen at the approval of a man named Saul. What is the manner of Stephen's death? How is his death like his Master's?

**>> Application & Reflection:** In this scene, Stephen becomes the first martyr of this new Christian movement. What do we learn about suffering for the Lord Jesus in this scene? How are we encouraged to be like Stephen? How might this challenge/encourage our view of suffering for the gospel?

7. In verses 1-3 of chapter 8, Luke gives a summary about the impact of Stephen's death. What is the vibe of Luke's summary? What impact does his martyrdom have? What might God be doing in this moment (cf. Acts 1:8)?

**>> Application & Reflection:** In this scene, Luke shows us that God works good out of bad. Even under persecution, the spread of the church becomes the spread of the gospel. What can we learn from this about God and about being the people of God?

**Pray**