FALL 2026 BIBLE STUDY | CHURCH OF ST. MARK

THE ACTS
AND PREACHING
OF THE APOSTLES

THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST PROCLAIMED THROUGH THE FIGURES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT



SESSION 4

STEPHEN'S SUMMARY SERMON
(WHICH SPARKS HIS STONING)



SPARKING HIS STONING

SESSION 4

STEPHEN'S SUMMARY SERMON

OPENING HYMN

(tune: Tantum Ergo)

Saint of God, elect and precious,
Protomartyr Stephen, bright
With thy love of amplest measure,
Shining round thee like a light;
Who to God commendest, dying,
Them that did thee all despite.

Glitters now the crown above thee,
Figured in thy honored name:
O that we, who truly love thee,
May have portion in the same;
In the dreadful day of judgment
Fearing neither sin nor shame.

Laud to God, and might, and honor,
Who with flowers of rosy dye
Crowned thy forehead, and hath placed thee
In the starry throne on high:
He direct us, He protect us,
From death's sting eternally.

MISSED A SESSION
OR WANT TO REVIEW?

Session Booklets

Session videos



FALL 2026
BIBLE STUDY

SESSIONS

Oct. 13 - Carolyn Hall

Oct. 20 - Carolyn Hall

Oct. 27 - Carolyn Hall

Nov. 3 - Carolyn Hall

Nov. 10 - Carolyn Hall

Nov. 17 - Carolyn Hall
with potluck dinner

FORMAT

7pm | Opening

Lectio Divina

Study

Q & A

Small group discussion

8:30 pm | Closing

LECTIO DIVINA

ACTS 6:8-7:60

8 And Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people. 9
Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen (as it was called), and
of the Cyre'nians, and of the Alexandrians, and of those from Cili'cia and Asia, arose and
disputed with Stephen. 10 But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with
which he spoke. 11 Then they secretly instigated men, who said, "We have heard him speak
blasphemous words against Moses and God." 12 And they stirred up the people and the
elders and the scribes, and they came upon him and seized him and brought him before the
council, 13 and set up false witnesses who said, "This man never ceases to speak words
against this holy place and the law; 14 for we have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth
will destroy this place, and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us." 15 And
gazing at him, all who sat in the council saw that his face was like the face of an angel.

7 And the high priest said, "Is this so?" 2 And Stephen said:

"Brethren and fathers, hear me. The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham, when
he was in Mesopota'mia, before he lived in Haran, 3 and said to him, 'Depart from your land
and from your kindred and go into the land which I will show you.' 4 Then he departed from
the land of the Chalde'ans, and lived in Haran. And after his father died, God removed him
from there into this land in which you are now living; 5 yet he gave him no inheritance in it,
not even a foot's length, but promised to give it to him in possession and to his posterity
after him, though he had no child. 6 And God spoke to this effect, that his posterity would
be aliens in a land belonging to others, who would enslave them and ill-treat them four
hundred years. 7 'But I will judge the nation which they serve,' said God, 'and after that they
shall come out and worship me in this place.' 8 And he gave him the covenant of
circumcision. And so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the
eighth day; and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs. 9 "And
the patriarchs, jealous of Joseph, sold him into Egypt; but God was with him, 10 and rescued
him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favor and wisdom before Pharaoh, king of
Egypt, who made him governor over Egypt and over all his household. 11 Now there came
a famine throughout all Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction, and our fathers could find
no food. 12 But when Jacob heard that there was grain in Egypt, he sent forth our fathers
the first time. 13 And at the second visit Joseph made himself known to his brothers, and
Joseph's family became known to Pharaoh. 14 And Joseph sent and called to him Jacob his
father and all his kindred, seventy-five souls; 15 and Jacob went down into Egypt. And he
died, himself and our fathers, 16 and they were carried back to Shechem and laid in the tomb
that Abraham had bought for a sum of silver from the sons of Hamor in Shechem.

17 "But as the time of the promise drew near, which God had granted to Abraham, the
people grew and multiplied in Egypt 18 till there arose over Egypt another king who had not
known Joseph. 19 He dealt craftily with our race and forced our fathers to expose their
infants, that they might not be kept alive. 20 At this time Moses was born, and was beautiful
before God. And he was brought up for three months in his father's house; 21 and when he
was exposed, Pharaoh's daughter adopted him and brought him up as her own son. 22 And
Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in his words
and deeds.

23 "When he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the sons of
Israel. 24 And seeing one of them being wronged, he defended the oppressed man and
avenged him by striking the Egyptian. 25 He supposed that his brethren understood that
God was giving them deliverance by his hand, but they did not understand. 26 And on the
following day he appeared to them as they were quarreling and would have reconciled them,
saying, 'Men, you are brethren, why do you wrong each other?' 27 But the man who was
wronging his neighbor thrust him aside, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge over us?

[28] Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' [29] At this retort Moses fled, and became an exile in the land of Mid'ian, where he became the father of two sons. [30] "Now when forty years had passed, an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in a flame of fire in a bush. [31] When Moses saw it he wondered at the sight; and as he drew near to look, the voice of the Lord came, [32] 'I am the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob.' And Moses trembled and did not dare to look. [33] And the Lord said to him, 'Take off the shoes from your feet, for the place where you are standing is holy ground. [34] I have surely seen the ill-treatment of my people that are in Egypt and heard their groaning, and I have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you to Egypt.' [35] "This Moses whom they refused, saying, 'Who made you a ruler and a judge?' God sent as both ruler and deliverer by the hand of the angel that appeared to him in the bush. [36] He led them out, having performed wonders and signs in Egypt and at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness for forty years. [37] This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, 'God will raise up for you a prophet from your brethren as he raised me up.' [38] This is he who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our fathers; and he received living oracles to give to us. [39] Our fathers refused to obey him, but thrust him aside, and in their hearts they turned to Egypt, [40] saying to Aaron, 'Make for us gods to go before us; as for this Moses who led us out from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.' [41] And they made a calf in those days, and offered a sacrifice to the idol and rejoiced in the works of their hands. [42] But God turned and gave them over to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the prophets:

> 'Did you offer to me slain beasts and sacrifices,
> forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?
> [43] And you took up the tent of Moloch,
> and the star of the god Rephan,
> the figures which you made to worship;
> and I will remove you beyond Babylon.'

[44] "Our fathers had the tent of witness in the wilderness, even as he who spoke to Moses directed him to make it, according to the pattern that he had seen. [45] Our fathers in turn brought it in with Joshua when they dispossessed the nations which God thrust out before our fathers. So it was until the days of David, [46] who found favor in the sight of God and asked leave to find a habitation for the God of Jacob. [47] But it was Solomon who built a house for him. [48] Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands; as the prophet says,

> [49] 'Heaven is my throne,
> and earth my footstool.
> What house will you build for me, says the Lord,
> or what is the place of my rest?
> [50] Did not my hand make all these things?'

[51] "You stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears, you always resist the Holy Spirit. As your fathers did, so do you. [52] Which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand the coming of the Righteous One, whom you have now betrayed and murdered, [53] you who received the law as delivered by angels and did not keep it."

[54] Now when they heard these things they were enraged, and they ground their teeth against him. [55] But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God; [56] and he said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing at the right hand of God." [57] But they cried out with a loud voice and stopped their ears and rushed together upon him. [58] Then they cast him out of the city and stoned him; and the witnesses laid down their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. [59] And as they were stoning Stephen, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." 60 And he knelt down and cried with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." And when he had said this, he fell asleep.

STEPHEN, A **PROPHET** SUPERBLY FULL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

V 6:5 "they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit"

V 6:8 "Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs among the people"

V 6:9-10 "Then some of those who belonged to the synagogue of the Freedmen … arose and disputed with Stephen. But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which he spoke."

V:55 "But he, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God…"

THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT: WITNESSING TO CHRIST BY MANIFESTING THE LIFE AND DEATH OF JESUS



Acts 1:8 | "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

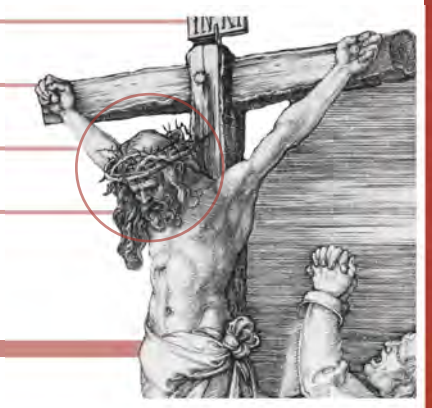
Jn 14:12-17 | "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father….And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you."

NOTES

STEPHEN:

- Appointed to serve (v. 6:2)
- "Did great wonders and signs among the people" (6:8)
- Possessed a wisdom impossible to refute (6:10, cf. Lk 21:15)
- Was falsely accused by false witnesses who accused him of blasphemy (6:11, 13)
- Witnesses to the Son of Man at the right hand of God before the Sanhedrin (7:56, cf. Mt 26:64)
- Is executed outside of Jerusalem through the intervention of an angry mob (7:57-58)
- Commends his spirit to God in his final breaths (7:59)
- Dies forgiving his enemies and with a loud cry (7:60)

NOTES



UNDERSTANDING STEPHEN'S SPEECH

THE CHARGE AGAINST HIM:

Blasphemy, and attempted (predicted?) destruction of public (sacred) property

Stephen is accused of preaching a Jesus who "will destroy this place [the temple], and will change the customs which Moses delivered to us"

Jn 2:18-19 | "The Jews then said to him, 'What sign have you to show us for doing this?' Jesus answered them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.'

Mk 14:57-58 | "And some stood up and bore false witness against him, saying, 'We heard him say, 'I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another, not made with hands.'"

THE REAL ISSUE:

New wine needs new wineskins

Mosaic law had not been abolished, but it had been fulfilled

Mt 5:17 | [17] *"Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them.*

Jerusalem temple had been replaced by the Body of Christ

Jn 2:21 | [21] *But he spoke of the temple of his body.*

Leadership of God's people and prophetic authority has been replaced by the Twelve, and those appointed by them

Mt 19:28 | [28] *Jesus said to them, "Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of man shall sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

> "Stephen's response will not be a narrow response to this narrow vision, but a sweeping condemnation of the religious attitudes that legitimate such rigitity and defensiveness, and with it, a closure to God's activity in the Spirit."
> *(Luke Timothy Johnson, Acts of the Apostles, 113)*

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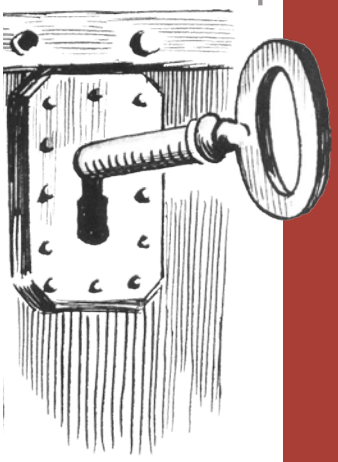


OUTLINE OF STEPHEN'S ARGUMENT

THE PART THAT CONTAINS THE WHOLE

"Stephen's speech is, as a whole, the key Luke provides his readers for the interpretation of his entire two volume narrative... those readers who object that the greater part of Stephen's speech is besides the point simply show that they have not grasped what the point is"

(Johnson, Acts, 119-120.)



Main Point

1 The Pattern of Repudiating the Prophets:

2 The Development of the Dwelling place of God:

3 The Counter-Accusation:

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STEPHEN'S USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Ample:

Stephen's Speech makes ample use of the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, both in direct quotations, and "snippets" woven into the argument

Christian:

Retelling their shared "origin" story: "our fathers…" but now in a Christian key: the importance of history for self-understanding

Typological:

Stephen is attending to patterns and the development of salvation history

Prophet's Pattern | God's people's penchant for rejecting those whom God has anointed with Wisdom

Place and Power | God's freedom to act as and where He pleases

Pointed:

His (not so) implicit point: "you are doing it again!"

THE TYPE OF THE PROPHET



Type/Antitype:
Just as Old Testament figures are fulfilled and perfected in Christ, so the "pattern" or model of Jesus' life is being repeated/echoed in the lives of those who are full of the Spirit of Jesus

A Prophet and a Witness:
Luke the storyteller portrays Stephen the storyteller as revealing the true meaning of the story God tells through Scripture: God speaks through men; those who listen are rescued, those who do not are exiled.

Passing the Mantle:
Is the case of Saul standing over the cloaks at Stephen's stoning an echo of Elijah & Elisha?

A BONUS STORY | PHILIP AND THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH

ACTS 8:26-40

[26] But an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is a desert road. [27] And he rose and went. And behold, an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a minister of the Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of all her treasure, had come to Jerusalem to worship [28] and was returning; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. [29] And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go up and join this chariot." [30] So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading Isaiah the prophet, and asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" [31] And he said, "How can I, unless some one guides me?" And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. [32] Now the passage of the scripture which he was reading was this:

"As a sheep led to the slaughter
or a lamb before its shearer is dumb,
so he opens not his mouth.
[33] In his humiliation justice was denied him.
Who can describe his generation?
For his life is taken up from the earth."

[34] And the eunuch said to Philip, "About whom, pray, does the prophet say this, about himself or about some one else?" [35] Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning with this scripture he told him the good news of Jesus. [36] And as they went along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What is to prevent my being baptized?" [38] And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. [39] And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught up Philip; and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. [40] But Philip was found at Azo'tus, and passing on he preached the gospel to all the towns till he came to Caesarea.



THE APOSTOLIC PATTERN:

CHRIST PROCLAIMED THROUGH THE OLD TESTAMENT FIGURES, LEADING TO (AND INVITATION TO) PARTICIPATION IN CHRIST THROUGH THE SACRAMENTS

NOTES

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How would you put Stephen's argument into your own words? How is it relevant for Christians today?
2. What does it mean that something or someone is a "type" of Christ? How does identifying types enrich your understanding of the Scriptures? Why do you think God embeds types in salvation history?
3. What did the Scriptures say to you tonight? What's one takeaway from the lesson?

NOTES



" BUT HE, **FULL** OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, GAZED INTO **HEAVEN** AND SAW THE **GLORY OF GOD**, AND **JESUS** STANDING AT THE **RIGHT HAND OF GOD**; AND HE SAID, "BEHOLD, I SEE THE **HEAVENS OPENED**, AND THE **SON OF MAN** STANDING AT THE **RIGHT HAND OF GOD**."