

**A Servant Speaks***Stephen*
Acts 6–7

AD 34–36

The Big Picture

As the Church grew, the apostles found that they could not do all the work of preaching and serving by themselves. They appointed deacons to take care of the social service of the Church. Stephen was one of those deacons. The Holy Spirit worked in him to perform signs and wonders. Anti-Christian synagogue leaders started accusing Stephen and bringing false accusations against him. When asked for a response, Stephen gave a speech outlining God's plan of salvation, beginning with Abraham. He showed how the Israelites continually rejected God and His prophets, culminating with the crucifixion of Jesus, the Messiah. The enraged Jews took Stephen out to stone him. As he was dying, Stephen asked God to forgive those who stoned him.

A Servant SpeaksRead **Acts 6:1–7**.**THEN**

- What problem was the Early Church having, and how did they go about solving it?

NOW

- How does your church care for its members and others in need?

Read **Acts 6:8–15**.**THEN**

- Why do you think the synagogue leaders started falsely accusing Stephen?

NOW

- How does Satan attack and persecute the Church today?



Christ Connection

Nothing can separate us from the love of Jesus Christ, our victorious King. He promises us His forgiveness, peace, and comfort through His Holy Spirit.



Witness

► How can I live out my faith?

**THOUGHTS
AND QUESTIONS**



Father, Forgive Them

Read the following verses together:

Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." *Luke 23:34*

And falling to his knees he [Stephen] cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." Acts 7:60

- Has someone betrayed or hurt you? Take a moment to think about Jesus' love and forgiveness for you. Then pray for the strength to forgive those who have hurt you.

BIBLE VERSE

Be kind to one another.

Ephesians 4:32