

Name: _____

Date: _____

STEPHEN IS KILLED

“But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: ‘We ought to obey God rather than men.’” (Acts 5:29)

Objectives

<i>Knowledge of God’s Will</i>	God wants us to be victorious over our inner weaknesses and external obstacles.
<i>Knowledge of God</i>	God is a God of victory – He helps us overcome obstacles both internal and external. God blesses those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake.
<i>Good Work</i>	Act on our faith even in difficult situations. Serve others with love and compassion. Preach regardless of the expected outcome.

A. Faith Against Opposition

- Peter:** Although a chosen disciple of the Lord, Peter had many weaknesses. He let his own zeal blind him to the truth when he mistakenly opposed Jesus’ death, and he later denied Jesus three times.
 - *Overcoming Inner Weaknesses:* Our inner weaknesses can only be overcome when we surrender ourselves to the Holy Spirit and allow God to transform us according to His will.
- Stephen:** Stephen was filled with God’s Spirit and was a good witness for Christ, yet he faced serious opposition when he tried to share the gospel.
 - *Overcoming External Obstacles:* Only when we fix our eyes upon Jesus will we be able to overcome the difficult circumstances that we may face when sharing our faith with others.

B. Seven Workers for the Church (Acts 6:2–5)

This passage teaches us that good and faithful workers for Christ must be: of good reputation; filled with the Holy Spirit; and full of wisdom. Being of good reputation means being a good example for others by reflecting God’s character in our lives, something accomplished by being filled with His Spirit. To be filled with His Spirit and with wisdom, we must receive God in faith, for without faith it is impossible to please God (Gal 3:2; Heb 11:6).

C. Submit to the Spirit and Faith in Hardship

Submit to the Spirit: The reason we often resist God’s Spirit is because our own fleshly and sinful desires naturally suppress God’s truth (Rom 1:18; Jas 4:1–2). But the more we surrender ourselves to God’s will, the more we are able to overcome any opposition that arises against us.

Share Our Faith: When we face opposition to our faith, it is easier to give up or give in than to continue. But we must learn to share our faith even when it’s difficult to do so, for the lost can only receive eternal life when someone with enough love shares the truth.

Life Application

- Upholding Faith in Hardship:** It is hard to act when we face opposition against our faith. But that very same faith will help us to overcome our inner weaknesses and external hardships.
- Serve with Love and Compassion:** It’s not always easy to show love to those who are different from us, but if we learn to truly love others, we will find a way to bridge the gaps between us.
- Preach Regardless of Outcome:** Stephen shared the gospel even knowing that his audience was hard-hearted and resistant to the Spirit. We should courageously share Christ with others even if we do not think they will believe.

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Lesson 3 Homework Assignment

Stephen Is Killed

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Read							
Pray							

Memory Verse (Acts 5:29):

1. What does the memory verse teach us about how to preach the word of God?
2. What do Peter and Stephen teach us about overcoming our internal and external obstacles?
3. What stops us from submitting to the Spirit? How can we overcome this?
4. Why is it important that we share our faith even when we face opposition?
5. What does it mean to preach regardless of the outcome?
6. What kind of obstacles do you encounter in your faith? How can you overcome these?