

Small Group Material – Acts, Stephen – Willing to Die for Jesus.

Welcome (10 mins) From your personal experience or from Christian biography, who would you consider to be a good example of a ‘mature’ Christian? Why?

Worship (10 mins) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bgXL3y9R1bl>

Word (30 mins) **Read Acts 6: 1-15, and 7: 54-60**

Discuss the similarities between Stephen and his Lord Jesus

6:3 full of ----- and -----

6:5 full of ----- and -----

6:8 full of ----- and -----

6:8 performed ----- and -----

6:9 experienced ----- and -----

6:10 (cf John 7:46) spoke as powerfully
false witnesses produced against him

6:14 (cf John 14:58) same accusation – against the holy place and
against the law (Word)
Religious leaders condemned him

7:59,60 (cf Luke 24:34 and 46) Identical dying words

Stephen’s face was like the face of an angel? **Reflecting** his Lord in life,
(as above) and in death!

Prayer: “Lord, make us more like Jesus.”

Why do you think Luke records that, when Stephen saw Him, Jesus was
“**standing** at the right hand of God”? 7:55 We usually think “**seated**”?

What a way to go! Do you think Stephen was conscious of any pain? 54-
56, 60 Why, or why not?

What a witness to those around him, Including Saul! (8:1) Discuss
Stephen’s legacy.

Great persecution followed. From your experience and understanding,
what might you expect to happen next?

Few of us will become like Stephen or have his experiences. Some might.

However, all are urged/required to seek to attain

“to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” Ephesians 4:13 **(NIV)**

“the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” **(AV)** and

the **Message** adds “and the completeness found in Him”.

What do you understand this to mean? How can we achieve this? How
might we become more like Stephen, like Jesus?

Witness (20mins) **Then.....** **Ask someone in advance...!**

‘This time tomorrow’ Over the next few weeks, for the Witness section,
we will suggest you ask one person from your group to share a bit about
what their life is like day-by-day, what particular challenges they face and
opportunities they have. *What is on their ‘frontline’?*

Here are some questions which might help:

Presence: How and where do you sense God’s presence?

Pressure: Where are you feeling pressured?

Purpose: What do you feel is your purpose?

Pray for that person, perhaps listening to see if God gives anyone a
picture, Scripture, word of encouragement etc for them.