ACTS: The Church In Motion

A Faith Heaven Stands For

What Fills You When the Stones Fly

Small Group and Family Discussion Guide | Acts 7:54-60 | November 15, 2026

Big Idea: What fills you in the ordinary days will carry you through the hardest ones.

Memory Verse

> *"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." (Acts 7:55, ESV)*

Getting Started

Last week, Stephen stood before the council and told the story of Israel, ending with the charge that they had resisted the Holy Spirit and murdered the Righteous One. This week, we see what that faithful sermon cost him. Read Acts 7:54-60 aloud together, then open with this question: Have you ever been bumped while carrying a full cup? What spilled out, and why?

Observation

1. How did the council respond to Stephen's words (7:54, 57)? What do their actions reveal about what was in their hearts?
2. How does Luke describe Stephen in 7:55? Look back at 6:3, 6:5, and 6:8. Where was Stephen first noticed for being full of the Spirit?
3. What did Stephen see when he looked into heaven (7:55-56)? What position was Jesus in?
4. What two prayers did Stephen pray as he was being stoned (7:59-60)? Compare them with Jesus' words in Luke 23:34 and 23:46.
5. Who is introduced in 7:58? What does Acts 8:1 tell us about him?

Understanding

1. In Acts 4:8, Luke says Peter was "filled" with the Spirit for a moment of bold testimony. In 7:55, he describes Stephen as "full" of the Spirit, a settled condition. What is the difference, and why does it matter for how we face hard days?
2. Stephen's fullness was first recognized while he served widows at the tables (6:1-5). What does that suggest about where faithfulness is formed?
3. Jesus told this same council He would be "seated at the right hand of the power of God" (Luke 22:69), yet Stephen sees Him standing. Read Luke 12:8. Why might Jesus be standing?
4. Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." What does it tell us about who Jesus is that Stephen prayed this prayer to Him?
5. Read Acts 8:4, 11:19, and 22:20. How did God use Stephen's faithfulness and his prayer far beyond his own lifetime?
6. Stephen's death looks a great deal like Jesus' death. Why could Stephen face death this way? Where did his fullness come from?

Personal Reflection

1. When life bumps you (pressure, disappointment, conflict), what tends to spill out of you?
2. What is filling your ordinary days right now? Think about your time, your attention, and what you think about most.
3. Stephen forgave the people who were killing him. Is there someone you are finding it hard to forgive? What makes it so difficult?
4. Who has been faithful in your life in ways that are still bearing fruit, even if they never saw it?

Application

1. Ephesians 5:18 says, “be filled with the Spirit,” which means “keep on being filled.” Choose one ordinary rhythm to strengthen this week: time in God’s Word, prayer, worship, your small group, or a quiet act of service. Share your choice with the group.
2. Stephen prayed for Saul, and God answered in a way Stephen never saw. Who is someone hard to love whom you could begin praying for this week?
3. The Week of Prayer for International Missions is November 29 to December 6, followed by our Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. How will you and your group pray and give so the gospel keeps moving to the nations?

Family Application

1. Fill a cup with water and gently bump it over a sink. What came out? Talk about why. What do we want our hearts to be full of when life bumps us?
2. Read Acts 7:55-56 together. Jesus stood up for Stephen. How does it feel when someone stands up for you? Remind each other that Jesus stands for everyone who trusts Him.
3. Stephen asked God to forgive the people who were hurting him. Talk about a time when forgiving someone was hard, and pray together for someone who is hard to love.
4. Pick one simple family habit for the week, like reading a Bible story at dinner or praying together at bedtime, to help fill your ordinary days.
5. Look up Lottie Moon together. Pray for missionaries who share the gospel around the world, and talk about how your family can give to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering.

Pray Together

Thank God that Jesus stands for His people. Ask Him to fill your ordinary days with His Spirit, to give you grace to forgive, and to use your faithfulness to bear fruit far beyond what you will ever see.