

The Witness Distinction: Christlikeness!

Text: Acts 6:8-7:60

April 22, 2023

Big Idea: To live as a faithful witness, you must with Christ-like distinction.

Context is key!

Question #1 (Context)

Ask Yourself: What is going on in the text?

- a) What is the setting and what is happening?
- b) Who are the main characters?
- c) Are there any words/phrases that are repeated?

Question #2 (Context)

Ask Yourself: What does the text say about God and about me?

- a) Is God saying or showing something about Himself? If so, what?
- b) Do the words in the text predict, prophesy or picture something about Jesus? If so, what?
- c) Is God saying or showing something about us? If so, what?
- d) Does the text point to my need for Jesus? How?

Question #3 (Context)

Ask Yourself: What are the principles, commands or promises given?

- a) What is the overall theme of the text?
- b) Does the passage include any promise from God? If so, what?

Question #4 (Context)

Ask Yourself: What is the application?

- a) What is one specific way I can live by these truths, or trust in these promises today?
- b) What is the next step that I need to take to see this happen?

Question #5

- a) **Rd. Acts 1:8:** What is the main theme of the book of Acts?
- b) What does it mean to live as a witness for Jesus Christ?
- c) Which of the characteristics of a faithful witness (ie-power, mindset, priority, community, etc.) do you need to grow in the most? Why those?
- d) Spend time in prayer as a group bringing these areas before the Lord, and discuss how you can keep one another accountable in these areas.

Living with Christ-like distinction means you live...

Point 1: By the **POWER** of Jesus (vv. 8-15)

Question: When you live by Jesus' power, you display Jesus' posture. Are you?

Question #6

- a) **Rd. vv. 8-15:** What was Stephen's character like? (See v. 5 too)
- b) How was Stephen's posture distinct from those who confronted him?
- c) How would you be tempted to respond if you were in the same situation as Stephen?
- d) Why is the power of the gospel foundational if you are to live as a faithful witness?
- e) What ways has God given us to grow in living on mission in Jesus' power?

Living with Christ-like distinction means you live...

Point 2: With the COURAGE of Jesus (7:1-53)

Question: When you live with the courage of Jesus, you declare the truth of Jesus. Will you?

Question #7

- a) How did Stephen address the 2 charges brought against him (ie-blaspheming God's Law & God's house)? What was he ultimately trying to show his opponents?
- b) Based on Stephen's sermon, work together as a group to share how Jesus fulfilled both God's Law & the purpose of God's Temple. (Note: This is called "Biblical Theology")
- c) How does Stephen's courage mirror the courage of Jesus when he was before his opponents?
- d) When do you find it most difficult to witness with courage? Why?
- e) Spend time in prayer as a group for one another about these areas and ask for accountability.

Living with Christ-like distinction means you live...

Point 3: With the PERSPECTIVE of Jesus (vv. 54-58)

Question: When you live with Jesus' perspective, your eyes are on eternity. Are yours?

Question #8

- a) **Rd. vv.54-58:** What is Stephen's gaze fixed upon as he is about to be stoned? What does he see?
- b) How does Stephen's perspective mirror Jesus' perspective during His time on earth? (Use Scripture)
- c) Why is living with an eternal perspective crucial for faithfulness in our witness?
- d) When do you find it most difficult to live with an eternal perspective? Why then?
- e) What tools has God given us that help us grow in living with our eyes on eternity? How can you encourage one another in doing this?

Living with Christ-like distinction means you live...

Point 4: With the LOVE of Jesus (vv. 59-60)

Question: When you live with Jesus' love, you extend Jesus' grace. Will you?

Question #9

- a) **Rd vv. 59-60:** How did Stephen respond to those who were stoning him?
- b) How does this mirror how Jesus responded to those who crucified Him?
- c) Why is responding from salvation and not retaliation a major distinction of Christ in our witness?
- d) Where are you not responding with Christ's love to those who've hurt you? Why is hard for you?
- e) Spend time praying for one another in accountability specifically for these areas.

Question #10

Chapter 7 concludes Part 1 of the book of Acts: The Witness to Jerusalem.

- a) What are 2-3 things you learned about God? Yourself? The Church (Local & Universal)?
- b) What are you looking forward to the most as we, Lord willing, continue through the book?
- c) Spend time in prayer thanking the Lord for His work through His Word.

Prayer Application

Pick any prayer application from the points above to pray through as a group.

Memory Verse:

"But 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."-Acts 1:8

