



Stuff They Didn't Teach Me In Sunday School



Episode 148 - Hey! I'm Hungry Too! (Acts 6-7)

A Problem with Food Distribution

A large number of the first members of the growing Church were out-of-towners, who spoke Greek. They had come to Jerusalem to celebrate Pentecost, and stuck around when they came to believe in Jesus as the Christ. They were supported by generous donations from Christians in Judea. But without proper oversight, the food wasn't being distributed equally.

- What was the advantage of the new Christians staying behind in Jerusalem after the Pentecost Feast had ended and all the other pilgrims had gone back home?
- Why did the apostles decline to oversee the distribution of food?
- Why do you think the Church selected seven men who all had Greek names to oversee this distribution?
- What lesson can we learn from their wisdom?

Stephen Mirrors Jesus Christ

One of these seven was Stephen. Though not one of the twelve apostles, the Holy Spirit worked mightily through Stephen to do great wonders and signs among the people. His trial and martyrdom at the hands of the Jewish high court bears a striking similarity at many points to Jesus' trial and execution.

- What does it show that the high priest had to instigate false charges against both Jesus and Stephen to accomplish his purposes?
- Why did Jesus remain silent through His trial, while Stephen spoke up at his own?
- Though he spoke up, Stephen did not defend himself. By the Spirit, he eloquently recalled the history of Israel's rebellion against God and Moses, and convicted them of continuing in this rebellion against the Righteous One. Why was it necessary for Stephen to point out their sin, stirring up their wrath?
- Why would the truth Stephen spoke stir up such rage and hatred from the Jewish leaders and not repentance and faith?
- Why do we sometimes have to tell people things they don't want to hear?
- How did Jesus strengthen Stephen for his impending death?

God Brings Good from Evil

When Jesus was executed on the cross, God brought about the salvation of the world. When Stephen was cast out and executed by stoning, God worked to bring about great things for His Church as well.

- What was the chief benefit when the Christians scattered from Jerusalem back to their homes?
- What good have you seen God bring out of terrible situations?