Preschool–Grade 6

# Stephen

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

**Main point:** Stand strong for Jesus, and forgive like Stephen did.
**Bible passage:** Acts 6:1–15 and 7:54–8:2. Read it before class.
**Memory verse:** "And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people." *Acts 6:8 (KJV)*
**You need:** a Bible, 6 paper strips, a marker, tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
**Before class:** write the memory verse on the 6 paper strips (see part 4). Put a bookmark in your Bible at Acts 6:8.

## 1. Opening game: Stand Strong (5 minutes)

Everyone stands like a strong statue. The leader tries to make them laugh or move with funny faces and silly words (no touching). Anyone who moves sits down. Play two or three rounds. Ask: *Was it hard to stand still when someone was trying to make you move?* Say: "Today we will meet a man named Stephen who stood strong for Jesus, even when people were against him."

## 2. Bible story: Stephen Stands Strong (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Acts 6, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

The church in Jerusalem was growing. The apostles asked the believers to choose seven men "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" to help take care of the widows every day (Acts 6:1–3). One of them was **Stephen**, "a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost" (6:5).

Stephen was full of faith and power, and he did great **wonders and miracles** among the people (6:8). Some men argued with Stephen, but they could not win against the wisdom God gave him (6:9–10). So they got men to tell lies about him (6:11, 6:13). They grabbed Stephen and brought him to the **council**, the meeting of the leaders (6:12). Everyone in the council looked hard at Stephen, and they saw that his face looked like the face of an **angel** (6:15).

Stephen spoke to the council for a long time about how God had led His people (Acts 7). The men got very angry (7:54). But Stephen was full of the Holy Ghost. He looked up into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus (7:55)! Stephen said, "Behold, I see the heavens opened" (7:56).


Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post

*The story continues:* The men covered their ears and ran at him (7:57). They took Stephen out of the city, and they threw stones at him (7:58). Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (7:59). Then he **kneeled** down and cried out, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (7:60). That means, "Lord, please don't hold this sin against them." Stephen forgave the people who hurt him. Then Stephen died. He had asked the Lord Jesus to receive him, and God's people who die are "present with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8). Good men buried Stephen, and they were very sad (8:2).

## 3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. What was Stephen full of? *(Faith and power, Acts 6:8; faith and the Holy Ghost, 6:5)*
2. What did Stephen do among the people? *(Great wonders and miracles, 6:8)*
3. What did the council see when they looked at Stephen's face? *(It looked like the face of an angel, 6:15)*
4. What did Stephen see when he looked up into heaven? *(The glory of God, and Jesus, 7:55)*
5. What did Stephen pray for the people who hurt him? *("Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," 7:60)*

## 4. Memory verse: Six Strips game (5 minutes)

Tape the 6 strips up in order: *And Stephen, / full of faith and power, / did great wonders / and miracles / among the people. / Acts 6:8.* Explain the words: **faith** means trusting God, **power** means God's strength working in him, and **wonders** are amazing things only God can do. Read the verse together. Then take one strip away and read it again. Keep taking strips away, one each time, until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

## 5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "Stephen was full of the Holy Ghost (Acts 7:55). God wants to fill you too! God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."

*Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.*

**This week:** tell the truth about Jesus even if someone laughs. When someone is unkind to you, pray for them like Stephen did.


Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post

## 6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Stephen word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/stephen-word-search), crossword, maze or worksheet, the craft (vbshq.com/crafts/stephen-craft), or **Forgive and Pray:** sit in a circle. Each child quietly thinks of someone who was unkind to them (no names out loud). Go around the circle, and each child says, "Lord, help me forgive." Close by praying together for everyone the kids thought of.

## 7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for Stephen, who was full of faith and power. Help us stand strong for Jesus, even when it's hard. Help us forgive people who hurt us and pray for them. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

**Telling Stephen's death gently:** tell it once, in the Bible's words ("stoned him," 7:58), with no details, and keep the focus on what Stephen saw (7:55–56) and on his prayer (7:60). If a child is upset, or has lost someone they love, say: "Stephen asked the Lord Jesus to receive his spirit (7:59). God's people who die are with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8)." Let the child talk to you or a parent after class.

**If a child asks why Jesus was "on the right hand of God":** in the Bible, the right hand means power and honor ("Thy right hand, O LORD, is become glorious in power," Exodus 15:6). Stephen saw Jesus in the place of all power, and Stephen prayed to the Lord Jesus himself (Acts 7:59).


Free to print & copy for church, classroom & home · Please don't resell or re-post