

# WEEK 3: WEDNESDAY NIGHT

## SMALL GROUP GUIDE

ONE  
SMALL  
STEP

### BIG IDEA

Take a big step — the Holy Spirit makes us brave.

### BIBLE

Acts 6, 7:54–59; Acts 2:1–21

### WELCOME!

Hey guys!

Welcome back! We're in week 3 of our new series called "One Small Step!"

This series provides a snap shot look at the **Book of Acts** to learn from the first Christians.

Through their stories of faith and bravery, all of you will learn how to take the first step of believing in Jesus – to learning how the Holy Spirit makes us brave. And trust me – you won't want to skip the last step of telling others about Jesus! So, make sure you're here EVERY week!

Ok...let's get started!

### "Star Cards"

- Attendance
- Bring Someone?
- Bring Your Bibles
- New Bible Verse! – Psalm 19:1 (NIV)

### MEMORY VERSE | Psalm 19:1 (NIV)

- "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands."

Great Job!

### QUESTION | "What's it like to be an astronaut?"

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Show a video of a space shuttle lift off*
- Wow! Could you do that?!?
- Could you ride a rocket into space – or do you think you would be
  - Nervous? Excited? Queasy?

- I don't know about you, but I would think that an astronaut would have to be really brave to blast off into outer space!

And you know, astronauts aren't the only ones who have to be brave. Scripture tells us that Christians have to be brave also...and share the gospel of Jesus Christ with those who do not know Him!

And that's a great reminder of what our BIG IDEA is today...

**BIG IDEA** | Take a big step — the Holy Spirit makes us brave.

- Take a big step — the Holy Spirit makes us brave.

And we're going to learn about a REALLY brave guy tonight. His name was Stephen.

And when we meet Stephen [Acts 6], he is involved in another story about the early days of when the church was growing. Remember, Jesus had left a big job for His friends — to tell everyone on the planet about Him!

So they working to do that. As the number of people following Jesus grew, the apostles, who were the main leaders of this new church, decided they needed more help.

So they selected seven people, who were known to be filled with the Spirit and wisdom, to take care of the day-to-day responsibilities of taking care of members of the church. This is where Stephen came in — and Stephen did his job really well.

So well that he received a promotion [deacon to evangelist] and went around telling others about Jesus!

And that's what happens when we pick up in Acts 7! Stephen had been telling others about Jesus — and they didn't like what he was saying. So they took him to Jewish "court."

Stephen gave his defense.

- He told them all about the history of God's people.
- He talked about how God had been there for them through it all but they in turn rejected the Messiah — Jesus, the Savior — when He was here on Earth.

He called them out on all the ways they were disobeying God, even right then.

That was a risky move on Stephen's part because his life was on the line. The Sanhedrin had the power to release him or execute him, but he chose to speak the truth no matter the consequences. Sadly, the truth did not register with his listeners.

Let's read what happens next...

**[Read or Summarize Acts 7:54-60]**

<sup>54</sup> When they heard these things, they were enraged and gnashed their teeth at him. <sup>55</sup> Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven. He saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. <sup>56</sup> He said, "Look, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!"

<sup>57</sup> They yelled at the top of their voices, covered their ears, and together rushed against him. <sup>58</sup> They dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. And the witnesses laid their garments at the feet of a young man named Saul. <sup>59</sup> While they were stoning Stephen, he called out, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" <sup>60</sup> He knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!" And after saying this, he fell asleep.

It was at this court that the people became angry at what he was saying.

Scripture says they gnashed their teeth at him...what does that look like??

But in the same Scripture – as they were gnashing their teeth at him – Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, *"saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God,"* and *"Lord, do not hold this sin against them!"*

But they dragged him out of the city and took stoned him [throw big rocks at him until he died].

A couple of things here...

1. How angry do people have to be to want to kill someone over the gospel?
2. And, how brave and how much love did Stephen have for these people!

Because Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit, he wasn't afraid of public opinion or even death.

- Even up until the moment he died, he remained brave, and the last thing he did before he died was to pray for the people who were throwing stones at him.

What Stephen did was more than *one small step*. He took a giant leap and risked it all for God. And he was only able to do that because the Holy Spirit was with him.

And you know guys – the Holy Spirit is with us as we share the gospel with our friends at school and our family.

Even in Stephen’s death – his mortal body was dead – but he knew that Jesus had saved his soul and he would spend eternity in Heaven!

## DISCUSSION

- **SCRIPTURE QUESTIONS**
  - What qualities did the chosen seven, including Stephen, have? *They were full of the Spirit and wisdom.*
  - Why was Stephen brought before the Sanhedrin? *Because people made up lies that Stephen was making false statements against Moses and God.*
  - What did Stephen pray while the people were throwing stones at him? *For God to forgive the crowd, to not hold their sin against them.*
  - Read Acts 2:2–4. What happened when the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit? *They were able to speak in other languages.*
- **APPLICATION QUESTIONS**
  - What does being brave look and feel like to you?
  - What can you ask the Holy Spirit to help you be brave with?
  - How can you help someone take their big step in allowing the Holy Spirit to make them brave for Jesus?

## OPTIONAL VIDEO | *One Small Step*, Episode 3

- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Play this week's episode of [Press Play](#).*

## PRAYER

- Ask someone to dismiss in prayer
- Or pray for the class
  - God, thank you for sending the Holy Spirit to be with us as we take big steps in following Jesus. Please make us brave so we can share the good news with others. We want the whole world to know you! Amen.