



Week #11 // Making Sense of Suffering

May 29, 2022

Coming Together

- What would you like people to remember most about you after you die?
- How do you react when you hear about evil and suffering in our world?

Growing in Our Understanding

- Read Acts 6:1-8, 15. What do we know about Stephen from these verses?
- How did the opposition receive Stephen's message? Why couldn't they seem to offer a reasonable rebuttal to Stephen's reasoning? How did the opposition choose to respond to Stephen? See Acts 6:8-14; 7:1
- What was Stephen's response to persecution and suffering? See Acts 6:15, 7:55-59
- How does the reaction of the Sanhedrin in Acts 7:54 compare with Stephen's reaction in Acts 7:55-60?
- Why did Stephen's enemies yell and cover their ears? See Acts 7:57

Unwrapping God's Principles

- Have you ever reacted to something God asked of you the same way Stephen's enemies did in Acts 7:57? How did it turn out? What would you do differently?
- How does Stephen's Story and James 1:2-4 help us be prepared to handle rejection and persecution?
- Why is it significant that Stephen's enemies laid their clothing at Saul's feet in Acts 7:58?
- Read Romans 8:28. What does this verse promise? How can we apply this truth to the suffering and injustices few see in our world today?

Deepening Our Hearts for God

- Stephen has a vision of heaven in Acts 7:55. In that vision, Jesus is standing. Why is this significant? See 1 John 2:1
- How would you answer this question: Why does God allow suffering and evil in this world?
- How can we as Jesus followers sometimes be "stiff-necked" people in today's world?

Looking Ahead

Read Acts 8. From these verses, what are some characteristics of a healthy church?

