

Can I Get A Witness – Epic Church Week 6

3/11/18

I. Acts 1:8 You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

A. As believers, we are to be a witness to the world around us.

1. Webster's Definition: To see, hear and know by personal presence.

2. To testify and give evidence.

The only credible witness is an eye witness

II. Stephen – A Great Witness

A. First deacon and the first martyr

1. Also a miracle worker and performed signs and wonders

2. It's important to note Stephen was chosen by the people and not by the apostles.

3. He was a Hellenistic Jew – One born in a foreign country. (probably Greece)

B. Charged with Blasphemy and defended His belief that Jesus was the Messiah in Acts 7

1. Acts 7 is a masterful apologetic (defense) of the Gospel. Stephen was well versed in the Old Testament.

2. Then he accused the Jews and Sanhedrin of killing the Messiah! That is why he was stoned to death.

C. Stephen was just an ordinary guy, a new believer. (all the deacons were new believers)

III. Witnesses

A. We are not eye witnesses

B. 2 scriptures Acts 22:20 and Acts 8:1

1. The word used in Acts 22 that describes Stephen is *martoos*. This is where we get the English word, martyr.

2. The exact same word is used in Acts 1:8 when it says, You will be my witnesses (*martoos*)

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss ways we are His witnesses today. Are you a good/bad witness? What can you do to be a better witness?

2. How could the New Testament church continue to grow once all the eye-witnesses died off?

3. We know very little of Stephen, but he was chosen by his peers to be a deacon and he was not an apostle, yet God did great miracles through him. What does this say about us today? Would people in your family, your workplace, or this church choose you to be a deacon? Why/why not?

4. Stephen was able to "defend" his belief that Jesus was the Messiah. Would you be able to do the same? Discuss how you would defend your faith to a co-worker, neighbor or friend.

5. What were your thoughts when you learned that "witness" and "martyr" were the same word? Does it make you look at Acts 8:1 differently?

6. Discuss some ways you "die" for the cause of Christ?

7. Discuss the main point of the sermon: God is not looking for people who will die for Him, He is looking for people who will live for Him. Why is living for Him better than dying for Him?