

Lessons From History

“Living Large”, part 8, Insights from Acts 7:17-60
Pastor Bob Johnson, June 11th, 2023

Why the History Summary?

(Acts 7:51-60)

Why is Stephen’s Story so important?

1. His life led to becoming ...

(Acts 7:58)

2. His death led to advancing ...

(Acts 8:1,1:8, Prov. 20:30, Deuteronomy 23:1)

Why was Moses mentioned so much?

(Acts 6:11, 13-14; 7:37-39, 44, 47-50)

What are some truths to take home?

1. Right choices can seem ...

(Genesis 50:20)

2. Resisting the HS ...

(Acts 7:51, Proverbs 17:10, Hebrews 3:13, Psalm 32:8-9)

3. Partnering & Pursuing ...

(Ezekiel 33:11, Acts 7:60)

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This Week's Discussion Guide

Welcome to our eighth week of our 10 week study and discussion based on our current Sunday series at GPC called, "Living Large". In this series, we are slowly unpacking the Book of Acts. Each week we will read and reflect on a passage and discuss ways we can apply what we reflect on to our daily lives. Our last week in this small group season (before a summer break) will be the week of Sunday, June 25th.

It is our prayer at GPC for our Sundays and small groups to provide the encouragement we all need to support each other as we desire to grow closer to God and build friendships as part of our vision at GPC to raise up committed Christ followers in a healthy church community.

Getting Started:

Each week, we typically start out with a few lighter questions to get us warmed up :).

Last Sunday's message title was, "Lessons From History". Speaking of history, what is a moment of history that inspires you? How about grieves you?

Someone said, if we don't learn from the mistakes of history, we are destined to repeat it. What do you think is a lesson that is worth learning from history?

One of the points from Sunday was 'resisting the Holy Spirit hardens hearts'. In Psalm 32:8-9 we are encouraged to not be like a horse or mule that stubbornly refuses to be guided.

Speaking of animals, have you ever had a stubborn pet that would choose to not listen? Have you ever had a pet that was responsive to you? What was your favorite pet and why?

In Acts 7, Stephen's tragic death, actually led to the Christ followers that were living in Jerusalem to finally leave Jerusalem and by doing so, they took the gospel with them.

When have you experienced something bad that eventually actually led to something good?

As we mentioned last Sunday, "A rebuke goes deeper into a person of understanding than a hundred blows into a fool." Proverbs 17:10

When were you corrected (rebuked, confronted, corrected, challenged etc.) that didn't feel good but you received it and grew from it?

Reviewing and Reflecting on last Sunday's Passage:

Let's read the passage from last Sunday. (Acts 7:17-60)

After reading these chapters and looking back on our notes from Sunday, was there a particular thought, verse or comment that caught your attention, encouraged you, challenged you or raised a question for you?

Digging Deeper:

1. Last Sunday we read how Stephen's accusers were resistant to what God was wanting them to recognize. One of the ways we can be resistant to the Holy Spirit is practicing 'selective obedience' where we pick and choose when to trust God enough to do what He says.

Can you think of a time growing up when you practiced selective or partial obedience with something your parents told you to do? How did your parents react and what were your consequences?

King Rehoboam, son of Solomon, grandson of David is an example of someone who dabbled with selective or partial obedience. Back then and today, there is a difference between 'sort of obeying' and 'all the way obeying'.

Rehoboam was wise enough to seek counsel in an important decision but where he blew it was to listen to counselors who told him what he wanted to hear, not what he needed to hear. Rehoboam knew better than to surround himself with 'yes men'. His dad, Solomon, wrote the Book of Proverbs for him! It is filled with exhortations to heed the counsel of elders and not be hotheaded and impetuous. Let's read 1 Kings 12:1-11

Sadly, because of Rehoboam's pride and insecurity, Israel became a divided Kingdom. When have you sought counsel and had differing opinions? What did you choose to do?

In 2 Chronicles 11:21-23. This passage describes how Rehoboam sadly chose to follow in his father's and grandfather's footsteps! Sadly, it was the cultural thing to do to have many wives which showed the other kingdoms how powerful and wealthy you were. The only problem was what God said in Deuteronomy 17:17. Although he sort of obeyed God and showed some wisdom, he chose to look like all the other kings in the Middle East.

Where in our lives are we tempted to show 'partial obedience' because of cultural pressure or our own insecurities?

2. We also heard last Sunday how partnering with God involves seeking to 'win over people' rather than hoping God just 'wipes them out'. What helps winning people over is not arguing with them, but listening to them. As followers of Jesus, we are free to express our opinions, but we need to be careful to do so in a way that is respectful and loving. How could the following verses help shape how we communicate with those we disagree with?

James 1:26-27, James 3:9-12, Proverbs 15:1, Psalm 19:14

Wrapping Up:

What is an application from what we read or discussed together that you would like to practice in the coming days? Is there anything that came up from this week's sermon or discussion that you would like prayer for? Is there anything else that you would like to express prayer for?